

SCHOOL PROFILE

2026-27



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Urban School of San Francisco: Learning in the Heart of the City

In the heart of San Francisco's Haight Ashbury neighborhood, Urban is a nationally-recognized leader among high schools. At Urban, the city is more than a backdrop — it's our classroom, our canvas, and our compass.

Founded in 1966 on principles of inclusion, creativity, academic rigor, and real-world relevance, Urban fosters a community where students are known, challenged, and supported. An Urban education measures success by cultivating deep thinkers and engaged citizens: people who are curious, empathetic, imaginative, and determined to make a difference. Our community thrives on meaningful relationships between teachers and students, an environment of mutual respect and accountability, and the belief that learning should be rooted in curiosity and connection.

- » Grades 9-12
- » 420 students
- » 1:9 faculty to student ratio
- » 14 average class size
- » 57% of Faculty hold advanced degrees
- » 162 courses; 63 honors level (UAS)
- » 49% students of color
- » 29% of students receive financial assistance

Understanding Urban: Curriculum, Culture, and Community

Three Term Schedule

Academic year divided into three 12-week terms (Fall, Winter, Spring).
Two terms equal one year in a subject.

Immersive Coursework

Students take four classes per term and all classes are college preparatory, with extended periods multiple times each week allowing for concentrated learning, interdisciplinary projects, and college-like labs.

Academic Evaluation

Written reports are provided twice per term: at the midpoint and at the end of each 12-week term. **A final letter grade is given at the end of every course.** Cycles of ongoing teacher feedback, as well as an emphasis on student self-reflection, emphasize a growth mindset, collaboration, and self-advocacy.

Four-Year Service Learning

Structured four-year service curriculum engages students in conversations about identity, equity, and community impact, with site placements across the San Francisco Bay Area.

Urban Advanced Studies (UAS)

63 honors-level courses designed by Urban faculty. *** UAS courses are the most rigorous on offer and are recognized as "honors level"** by all colleges, including the University of California system.

Four-Year Arts Program

Core visual, musical, and performing arts are built into our academic requirements across all four years.

Integrated Fieldwork

Extended class periods allow for regular excursions so that museums, artist studios, natural (and human-made) ecosystems, archives, courthouses, prisons, shelters (and more) extend the classroom into the city.

Science

Urban's science program moves students through Science 1 and 2 using a "spiral" method that revisits key concepts in increasing depth. The required science curriculum includes Biology, Chemistry, and introductory Physics.

Mathematics

Urban's math program is organized around integrated **Math 1, 2, and 3** courses, which are close to traditional Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2; and **Functions** equates to precalculus. Urban elective offerings include highly conceptual options, such as the honors-level **UAS Infinity** and **UAS Space** (both as rigorous as **UAS Calculus**), and our advanced **UAS Computer Science 2 and 3** are college-level classes that prepare students for programming in any language.

Understanding Urban: Curriculum, Culture, and Community

UrbanX Labs

An innovation hub where students engage in both rigorous academic and hands-on, interdisciplinary work in courses like robotics, engineering, physics, and computer science, bringing theory to life through advanced design and prototyping with professional tools and expert mentorship.

Multidisciplinary Approach

Electives such as **California Studies**, **UAS Infectious Disease**, **Voices of Incarceration** and **Homelands: Discovering Diaspora** are academically intense and focus beyond the traditional classroom and across disciplines.

Student-Led Culture

Urban features 40+ student clubs, leadership in governance and campus life, and direct input into school decision-making, as well as a robust journalism program with multiple publications that appear throughout the year.

Affinity & Ally Spaces

More than 15 identity-based spaces foster belonging and inclusion, including in the student-led “Month of Understanding” — a school-wide series of events, discussions, performances, and celebrations.

Athletics

74% of students participate in sports — fostering teamwork, resilience, and school spirit no matter the level of ability.

Wellness Embedded in Schedule

Tutorials, advising, and mental health supports are intentionally structured into the week, along with periods for co-curricular recreation.

Admissions

Urban is highly selective, and seeks students with an enthusiastic approach to learning and a clear capacity for success in a challenging academic program:

- » Approximately 650-700 applications annually.
- » Students come from public, independent, and parochial schools.
- » Urban is committed to reflecting the ethnic, racial, and socio-economic diversity of the Bay Area.
- » \$5.65 million in financial aid annually.

Graduation Requirements	22 academic credits (a typical course is ½ credit; 1 credit = 1 year of coursework, so 2 terms in a subject = 1 year of coursework)	
English Requirement	4 years	
History Requirement	2 years (including 1 year US History; 1 year World History)	
Math Requirement	3 years	
Science Requirement	2 years (including Biology, Chemistry, and introductory Physics)	
World Language Requirement	3 years of the same language	
Arts Requirement	4-year program with 2 required credits in visual or performing arts	
Service Learning	4-year program with 2 required credits	
Health Education	Required in 9th and 10th grade (Pass/Fail)	
Physical Activity	Required for all students (non-credit)	
College Matriculation	137 Colleges, 35 states, six countries (2022-2026)	
Accreditation	WASC; member of NAIS, CAIS, NACAC	
SAT Middle 50% (Class of 2026)	1290-1510	
ACT Middle 50% (Class of 2026)	29-34	
GPA Quintiles (Class of 2026 and Class of 2025)	CLASS OF 2026	CLASS OF 2025
	1st: 4.00-3.87	1st: 3.99-3.86
	2nd: 3.86-3.73	2nd: 3.84-3.72
	3rd: 3.72-3.53	3rd: 3.71-3.53
	4th: 3.53-3.38	4th: 3.52-3.37
	5th: 3.38-2.86	5th: 3.36-2.72



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Curriculum Guide



College Matriculation
List 2022-2026

* Urban does not offer AP courses, though we do support students interested in AP testing with prep and study resources.

CURRICULUM GUIDE

UAS denotes Urban Advanced Studies, Urban's most rigorous coursework.

Math Three credits required* Math 1A and 1B Math 2A and 2B	Math 3A and 3B Advanced Math Applications UAS Analytic Geometry UAS Calculus A	UAS Calculus B Computer Science 1 UAS Computer Science 2 UAS Computer Science 3	Data Science Discrete Mathematics: Puzzles and Graphs UAS Functions	UAS Infinity: Theory of Infinite Sets and Chaos Theory Statistics & Probability UAS Space: Group Theory
Science Two credits required Fundamentals of Science 1A and 1B Fundamentals of Science 2A and 2B	UAS Advanced Biology: Genetics UAS Advanced Biology: Infectious Disease UAS Advanced Chemistry A UAS Advanced Chemistry B UAS Advanced Physics: Electricity & Magnetism	UAS Advanced Physics: Mechanics UAS Advanced Physics: Waves & Light Applied Biology: Biotechnology Applied Chemistry: Materials Science	Applied Physics: Electronics & Robotics Applied Physics: Motion & Machines Astronomy UAS Environmental Science: Ecology	UAS Environmental Science: Physical Resources Geology Human Anatomy and Physiology Marine Biology Neuroscience
History Two credits required World History (A) World History (B) UAS Making America UAS Remaking America	UAS America Transformed: 1865–1929 UAS Asian American History Birth of Modern China California History Civics and Society	Comparative Religion: Our Search for Meaning UAS Constitutional Law Economics UAS Environmental History French Revolution	Globalization UAS History of South Asia History of US Foreign Policy UAS Modern Middle East UAS Race in Latin American History	Screening History South African History UAS Women's United States History
English Four credits required English 1A Stories of Us English 1B Journeys English 2A American Voices English 2B Languages of Love and Power	UAS American Romanticism UAS British Literature: Breaking Boundaries UAS Creative Nonfiction Immigrant Legacies: A Literature of Innovation UAS Latin American Literature	UAS Literature of Dystopia and Sci Fi Literature and Film UAS Modern American Literature The Naturalist as Writer: Environmental Change and Justice Poetry: Form and Meaning	UAS Shakespeare UAS The Unconscious: Stories and Theories Voices of Incarceration Journalism Children's Literature Analysis Examining the Good Life UAS Creative Writing	UAS Nigerian Literature UAS Russian Literature Stories on Stage UAS Toni Morrison UAS William Faulkner and Marlon James: Stop Making Sense
World Languages Three credits required*	Chinese 1-3 UAS Chinese 4A UAS Chinese 4B: Communication and Culture: Campus Life and Social Situations UAS Chinese 5/6A: Consumption, Academics, and Interpersonal Relationships	UAS Chinese 5/6B: Modern Life: Technology, Work, and Education French 1-3 UAS French 4A: Post-Colonial Africa/Indochina and Neocolonialism UAS French 4B: Literature "Fantastique" – Creative Writing	UAS French 5/6A: Theater of Ideas UAS French 5/6B: The Heroine in Literature and Films Spanish 1-3 UAS Spanish 4A: Immigration in the US: New Identities in a Globalized World	UAS Spanish 4B: 20th Century Latin America: What is Modernity? UAS Spanish 5A/6A: España: historia, sociedad, identidad, arte y cultura(s) UAS Spanish 5B/6B: Historia, sociedad, identidad, arte y culturas en América Latina
Service Learning Two credits required, distributed over four years	Service Learning 9 — Self: Identity and Ethnic Studies	Service Learning 10 — Stories: Empathy in Community	Service Learning 11 — Social Movements: Organizing for Justice	Service Learning 12 — Systems: Solidarity and Narratives of Resilience
Visual and Performing Arts Two credits required	UAS Architectural Design Art as a Daily Practice Drawing/Mixed Media Graphic Design Industrial Design UAS Media Arts Painting Photography Portfolio Prep UAS Printmaking	Sculpture: Clay and Mixed Media UAS Stone Carving UAS Advanced Art Exhibition Video Production Advanced Musical Ensemble UAS Advanced Theater: Musical Production UAS Advanced Theater: Theater Production Circus Techniques	Essentials of Comedy One Acts Festival Peer Education Theater Theater 1: Performance Lab UAS Theater 2: Performance Ensemble Introduction to Urban Singers Urban Singers Introduction to Jazz Band Lab Jazz Band Advanced Jazz Band	Introduction to Chamber Orchestra Chamber Orchestra Chamber Orchestra Music Theory 1 UAS Music Theory 2: Composition UAS Music Production and Engineering UAS Applied Music Theory: Tools for Performing Musicians 20th Century American Popular Music: From Ragtime to Rap
Multidisciplinary Courses	California Studies	Homelands: Discovering Diaspora through Oral History and Media	Voices of Incarceration	

* Some students may test into 2nd or 3rd year math or language as incoming 9th graders. Courses are subject to change annually.