



ACA Distinctives

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR AN ADVANCED ACADEMIC FUTURE

Purpose

At ACA, our goal is to provide Christ-centered excellence in education while partnering with the church and home to advance God's kingdom. Critical to this mission is our need to provide opportunities for students to excel in areas where they are honoring God by exercising their gifting. We want this to be more than just getting good grades or taking lots of advanced classes. We want to give an opportunity for students to focus on an area of passion, both in the classroom and in the "real" world and be recognized for it.

The ACA Distinctives program is designed to equip, challenge, and encourage students to maximize their God-given talents and time in high school to prepare for advanced education and future employment. To accomplish these goals, students will be required to complete several advanced-level courses that are beyond the standard graduation requirements, while also completing supporting work and practical experience that encourages life skill development.

STEM Distinctive	Exercise Science Distinctive
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 years of Mathematics at ACA, including Pre-Calculus, and AP Calculus and/or AP Statistics• 4 years of science<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Mandatory – Biology, Chemistry○ 2 years of upper-division science courses for which Chemistry is a pre-requisite. AP Computer Science will also be considered.• Participate in at least 1 external STEM-related competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 Required Science courses – Biology, Chemistry, Anatomy & Physiology, Sports Medicine• 2 years of Performance Training or Strength & Conditioning• Participation as a team trainer for at least one season during junior or senior year (3-sport athletes may contact the counselor for other options or ideas for fulfilling this requirement)
Visual & Performing Arts Distinctive	Global Studies Distinctive
<p>Art & Design Concentration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 years of art• 1 additional credit in a different fine arts area <p>Music Concentration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 years in a performance group (Cambiata, Kerygma, Wind Ensemble, Jazz Band)• Hold a position of leadership for at least one year in any performance group• 1 additional credit in a different fine arts area <p>Theater Concentration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 credits Theater Arts• Participation in (either performing or supporting) at least 3 shows• 1 additional credit in different fine arts areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must take at least 3 of these 4 yearlong humanities-based AP courses (others may be offered in the future):<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ AP US History○ AP Government/Macroeconomics○ AP English Literature○ AP Psychology• A third year of a foreign language• Participation in at least 1 approved Leadership Seminars (RYLA, Boys and Girls State, Pepperdine, Chick-fil-A, etc.)• Leadership in one of the following activities: ASB, Global Vision Leadership, NHS, other clubs, or other community-focused activities.• Participation in at least one missions trip
Journalism Distinctive	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 years of Journalism• 2 years of upper-division English courses<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ AP Lang. and AP Lit.• 1 year in an Editorial Leadership role:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Editor in Chief, Managing Editor, Copy Editor, Photography Editor, Design/Layout Editor, Section Editor, Digital Media/Social Media Editor, Business/Advertising Manager.• Participate in 2 yearbook/journalism competitions OR completion of Adobe certification:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Competitions of Walsworth Photo Contest or Writing Contest. Adobe InDesign, Photoshop, or Illustrator certification.	



Additional Requirements for all Distinctive Paths

Students interested in participating in an ACA Distinctive have until May 1st of their junior year to complete the online application form.

- At least 40 hours of related work and/or volunteer experience in the field (typically done off-campus in the summer after sophomore and/or junior year), completed before the end of first semester of senior year
 - Journalism Distinctive requires only 20 hours of related work and/or volunteer experience in the field.
- 20 hours of job shadowing for all Distinctives, with the following requirements:
 - A maximum of 10 hours from any one shadowee
 - A career appropriate to the chosen Distinctive (must be pre-approved)
 - A final reflection essay submitted as part of the Portfolio
- Portfolio of work to document both the work experience and the job shadow experience (submitted in January of senior year)
- Complete the school-day ACT or SAT exams at ACA
- Maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher (measured each semester)
- Courses taken off-campus to fulfill ACA Distinctive requirements will be included on ACA transcripts.
- Demonstrate integrity and good character throughout high school

Recognition

Completion of a Distinctive will be recognized at awards night, in the graduation program, and on the diploma or transcript.

More Information

For more information, the application form, or answers to frequently asked questions, please visit:

www.redlandschristian.org/aca-upper-school/aca-distinctives