

curriculum guide

2023–2024

Academics at Bay

Course offerings, schedule, and curriculum highlights

Bay’s program develops students into sophisticated, ethical thinkers. From Humanities I to Honors Calculus, our teaching continually encourages students to go further, always asking, *How? Why? Is there a better way?* Our schedule, with its long blocks during semesters and three-week Immersive terms, reflects the value we place on digging into thorny problems, having deep discussions, collaborating, and working together in community. Everything we do reflects our mission to provide a rigorous academic experience with “a mindful approach to learning and life.”

The Bay School is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, allowing us to reflect on the many paths taken by our alumni. They’ve created their own interdisciplinary majors in college, pursued PhDs and Fulbright scholarships, and started companies—it’s clear that from a strong foundation, you can take big leaps. This guide will help you imagine your own path at Bay.

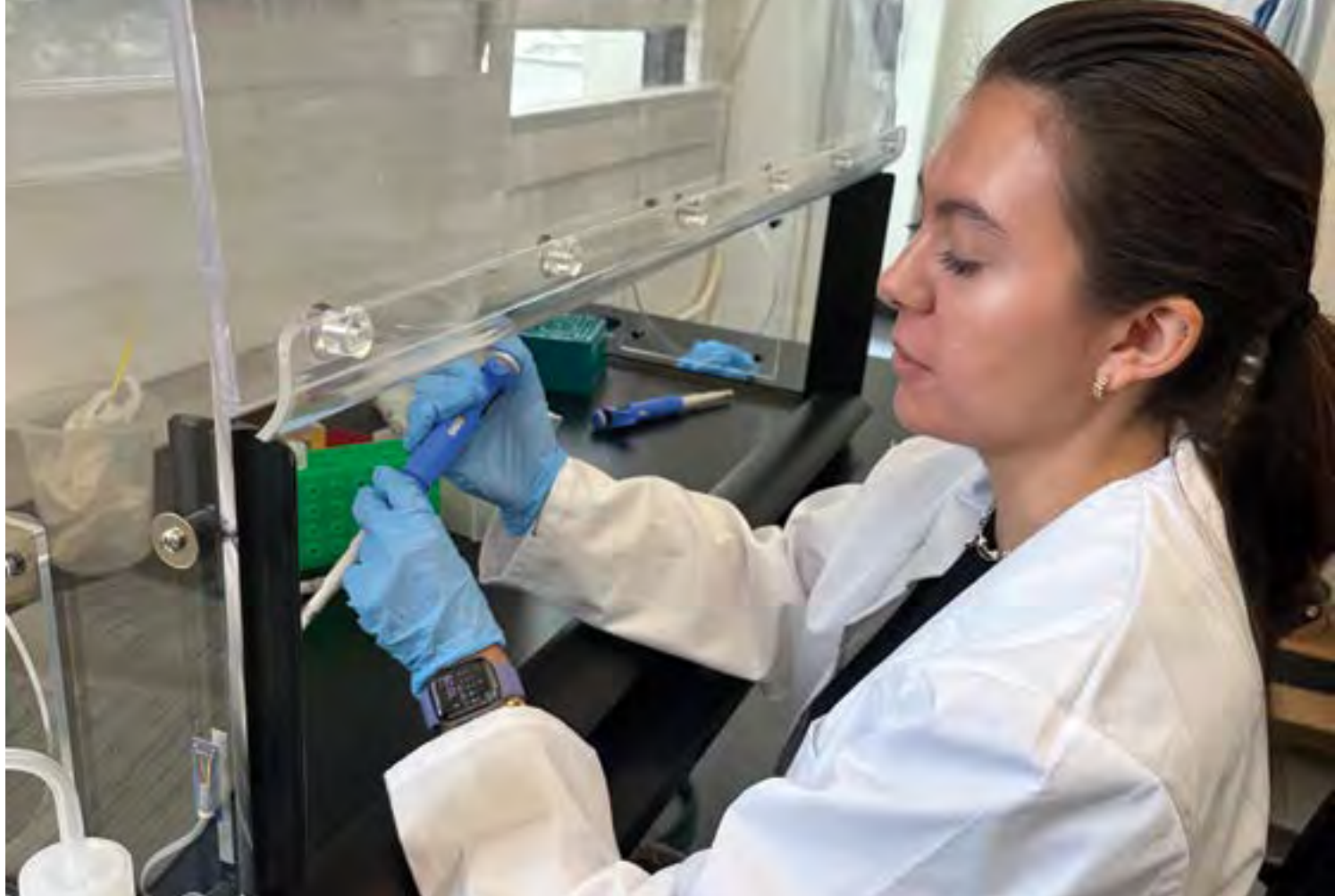
Honors Courses

Whether they're learning to derive and prove their own equations in Physics 2 or collaborating to analyze a surprising data set in Chem 2, students get next-level challenge in our honors courses. "I never give my physics students the equations—we spend the time to learn mathematical principles," says teacher Julie Spector-Sprague. "And I had a student recently come up with a way to represent average velocity that I had not considered. That's a beautiful thing."

Students in 11th and 12th grades can take honors courses, which we offer in all subject areas. These classes let students who are academically ready for college-level work drill down into subjects of interest. You'll see the wide range of options in the course list on the following pages.

Honors classes are developed by Bay faculty and reflect our commitment to depth over breadth. The curriculum of Advanced Placement courses, with its emphasis on memorization, does not provide the opportunity to incorporate the depth and interdisciplinary perspective that distinguish a Bay education. For this reason, prepackaged AP content does not align with Bay's curriculum.

To take honors courses, Bay students must fill out an application and get approval from current teachers and their advisor. These classes are challenging, but the view from the top is worth the climb.



Immersives

Immersives are hands-on academic courses structured around a final project. These UC-approved classes offer a greater level of experiential learning than can take place during a semester. What else makes Immersives different? They offer a whole other way of learning. Here's what might happen for you in just three weeks:

In the Mathematics of Democracy, you'll explore the fundamental features of democratic government—voting and representation—through the lens of data.

In Modern American Family, you'll examine the depiction and remaking of family structures in our culture *and* write your own memoir.

In Biotechnology, you'll learn and apply the lab techniques for isolating, cloning, and analyzing plant gene sequences.

And the possibilities go on. What the courses have in common is that you'll learn by doing every day. Immersives are different from the non-academic experiential intersessions offered between terms at some schools. Immersives are graded, college-prep courses that are required for graduation.

Bay's two Immersive terms end with an exhibition and presentations of learning—or POLs—during which student groups discuss their project, process, obstacles, and successes. Through this consistent practice, Bay students become adept at analyzing and explaining their work.

2023–2024 Offerings

19
honors courses

75
semester courses

42
Immersive courses

The Bay School Year

The school year at Bay is divided into four terms: fall semester, winter Immersive, spring semester, and spring Immersive. In a semester, you'll take five classes. During Immersives, you'll take one class for three weeks. The structure of our school year means that Bay's annual schedule differs slightly from those of other schools.

Daily Schedule: Semesters

Our day begins at 8:30 a.m. We have Morning Meeting on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays—it's as important as class time. Advisory groups meet on Tuesdays or Thursdays, and tutorial and after-school activities take place three days a week.

Daily Schedule: Immersives

We switch it all up for Immersives. The official school day runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., but many classes are held off-campus or do extended field study. Some courses—like Negotiation, Legislation, and Diplomacy—include travel within the United States, which may affect the start and end date.

A Sample Year in 9th Grade

FALL SEMESTER	
Spanish 1A Math 2A Conceptual Physics 1A	Flex block 9th-Grade Seminar The Creative Process
After-school activity: Bay Theater	
WINTER IMMERSIVE: The Mathematics of Digital Animation	
SPRING SEMESTER	
Math 2B Humanities 1B Photography 1A	Flex block 9th-Grade Seminar Spanish 1B
After school activity: Bay Theater	
SPRING IMMERSIVE: Humanities 1: Everyone Has a Story	

A Sample Year in 11th Grade

FALL SEMESTER	
Asian American Literature Calculus (Honors) Biology 2 (Honors)	American Studies A Flex block Spanish 3A
After-school activity: Varsity soccer	
WINTER IMMERSIVE: Rhetoric and Debate	
SPRING SEMESTER	
Biology 2 (H) Spanish 3B Computer Science 1	Calculus (H) American Studies B Flex / College Counseling
After-school activity: Varsity tennis	
SPRING IMMERSIVE: Biotechnology	

2023-2024 Course Offerings

FALL SEMESTER: AUGUST 24–DECEMBER 17, 2023






SPRING SEMESTER: FEBRUARY 1–MAY 18, 2024

 = interdisciplinary



 = honors

 = Project Center-based




ARTS

-  Advanced Drama: Creating and Performing
-  Advanced Drawing and Painting Studio
-  Advanced Projects in Digital Arts
-  Artist as Activist
The Creative Process
(9th grade requirement)
-  Design 1A-1B
- Drama 1A-1B
- Drawing 1A-1B
- Jazz 1A-1B
- Jazz 2 (H)
- Music Production 1A-1B
- Painting 1A-1B
- Photography 1A-1B
- Video Production 1A-1B
- Vocal Music 1A-1B

COMPUTER SCIENCE, DESIGN/ENGINEERING

-  Advanced Mechanism Design
-  Advanced Product Design
- Computer Science 1 & 2

HUMANITIES CORE




-  American Studies (11th grade)
- Civics (10th grade)
-  Humanities 1A-1B (9th grade)
-  Humanities 2A-2B (10th grade)

LITERATURE



- Advanced Composition
-  Essay and Memoir

-  Gothic Literature
-  Russian Literature
Creative Writing
Breaking the Singular Story
Dramatic Literature
-  The Good Life
American Rage: A Course in
Political Discourse
Asian American Literature
Indigenous American
Literature
Literature of Neurodivergence


MATH

- Analysis of Functions
-  Calculus
-  Group Theory
- Math 1A-1B
- Math 2A-2B
- Math 3A-3B
- Statistics
-  Topology
- Data Science



RELIGION/PHILOSOPHY

-  Comparative Philosophy
Ethics and Ethical Decision
Making
-  The Good Life

SCIENCE

- Astronomical Research
Seminar
- Biological Psychology
- Biology 1A-1B
-  Biology 2



Chemistry 1A-1B

-  Chemistry 2
- Climate Change
- Conceptual Physics 1A-1B
- Environmental Science
-  Physics 2





SENIOR PROJECTS

In 2023–2024, there will be a makers' section for those doing product design or engineering projects. Juniors now have the option to start SPs in their spring semester with teacher permission.

SOCIAL STUDIES

-  Artist as Activist
- Ethical Economics
- Ethnic Studies: Race, Class, and Gender
-  Regional Studies: Africa
-  U.S. Foreign Policy

WORLD LANGUAGES

- Mandarin 1–4
-  Mandarin 5
-  Advanced Topics in
Mandarin
- Spanish 1–4
-  Advanced Topics in Spanish:
Literature & Culture
- Spanish for Spanish
Speakers 1–2
-  Spanish for Spanish
Speakers 3

WINTER IMMERSIVES: JANUARY 2024

9TH GRADE

Assembling San Francisco: Geology of the Greater Bay Region
Biology of Health and Wellness
Geometry in Islamic Art
How Can We All Get Along?
Mathematics of Digital Animation

10TH GRADE REQUIREMENT

Humanities 2: Shakespeare Unbound

11TH AND 12TH GRADE BY SUBJECT

ARTS

Immersive Art Studio
Modern American Family

LITERATURE

Essential Questions Through Film
Futures Past and Present
Modern American Family
Rhetoric & Debate
Stories of San Francisco

MATH

Cryptography
Mathematics of Democracy

RELIGION/PHILOSOPHY

Buddhism

SCIENCE

Applied Chemistry: Better Cooking Through Chemistry
Astronomy: Observatory Experience
Marine Biology
Robotics
Wilderness First Responder

SOCIAL STUDIES

Art History: Museum Studies at the de Young
Mathematics of Democracy
Poverty and Justice

SPRING IMMERSIVES: MAY 25–JUNE 16, 2024

9TH GRADE REQUIREMENT

Humanities 1: Everyone Has a Story (immigration, law, and government)

10TH AND 11TH GRADE BY SUBJECT

ARTS

Filmmaking
Painting in Nature

LITERATURE

Art of the Short Story
Mythology
Novels in Nature
The Writer's Life: A Creative Exploration

RELIGION/PHILOSOPHY

Buddhism

SCIENCE

Atmospheric Science and Engineering: Launching Near-Space Weather Balloons
Biotechnology
California Geology: A Field Experience
Design 2
Fire Ecology
Water in the American West

SOCIAL STUDIES

Civil Rights in the American South
Bay Area Culture: The Evolution of Food
Water in the American West

CO-CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Activities or athletic team participation—3 years

9th Grade Seminar—2 semesters

10th Grade—1 semester of Choices (health and relationships class)

College counseling: 2 semesters (spring of 11th grade–fall of 12th grade)



Bay Requirements

A few of Bay's required courses are intentionally designed to set our students up for meaningful engagement with ideas, help them develop ethical frameworks, and give them confidence in their ability to solve problems.

The Creative Process

Where do ideas come from? How do we put them into action? The principles of design thinking give us a reliable foundation for problem solving in so many areas. This course, required for all 9th graders, walks students through the processes of identifying and researching problems, coming up with solutions, and then testing and changing their solutions in response to feedback.

Will you make an app to help other new students find their way around campus? Reinterpret a classical

piano composition? *Try to reinvent the wheel?* These are real projects that Bay 9th graders have done.

Much of Bay's academic program relies on sustained project work. The Creative Process gives you skills in idea generation, design, experimentation, and collaboration. Most importantly, you'll practice iteration, learn the value of failure, and see that there is usually more than one way to solve a problem. It develops a mindset that students continue to build upon during their time at Bay and will serve them well beyond our hallways.



Senior Projects

Now it's time to apply those problem-solving skills to devising and completing a project of your own. Over the course of two semesters, you will propose a project, define your goals, work with a community mentor who provides expertise and guidance, and plan and execute the process of creating the final product. You will encounter obstacles, twists and turns, and probably some failure. But you'll learn to analyze the problems along the way, change your method (or even your goal), and keep going.

A (very) short list of recent senior projects:

- A system for prison inmates to play chess by mail with members of a well-established San Francisco chess club
- An improved cargo system for bike commuters
- A working prototype of a handheld light that does not require batteries
- A solar-powered battery for small boats

Civics

This course helps students develop skills in creating the conditions needed for productive civic conversations and expands their sense of agency and responsibility in civic life. From the starting point of several contemporary issues, students investigate the role of government in our lives, learn the ways they can make informed decisions, and start gaining the tools they need to responsibly formulate ideas and ideals for their lives within society.

Religion or Philosophy

Global citizens need to understand a wide range of religious and philosophical traditions. Students also benefit from examining a diversity of ethical frameworks—whether philosophic or religious in nature—as they develop their own.

Every Bay student must take one semester of religion or philosophy, and our Humanities 2 course begins with the study of the Abrahamic religions to examine how religious values inform historical and contemporary social systems. We offer a rotating selection of electives, including Islam, Buddhism, Ethics, Comparative Philosophy, and more.





College Acceptances and Matriculations 2019–2023

Agnes Scott College
American University
Amherst College
 Appalachian State
Arizona State (Barrett Honors College)
 Art Center College
Babson College
Bard College
Barnard College
Bates College
 Baylor University
Beloit College
Bennington College
 Bentley University
Berklee College of Music
 Boise State University
Boston College
Boston University
Bowdoin College
Brandeis University
Brown University
Bryn Mawr College
 Bucknell University
 California College of the Arts
 California Lutheran
Cal Poly Humboldt
 Cal Poly Pomona
Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
 Cal State Channel Islands
 CSU Chico
 CSU Dominguez Hills
 CSU Bay
 CSU Fullerton
CSU Long Beach
 CSU Los Angeles
 CSU Maritime Academy
 CSU Monterey Bay
 CSU Northridge
 CSU Sacramento
Carleton College
Carnegie Mellon
Case Western Reserve
Chapman University
City College of SF
 Clark Atlanta University
Clark University
 Clemson University
Colby College
Colgate University
 College of Charleston
 College of Marin
Colorado College
 Colorado School of Mines
Colorado State University
 Columbia College
 (Chicago)
Columbia University
Connecticut College
Contra Costa College
 Cooper Union
Cornell University
 Dalhousie University
Dartmouth College
 Davidson College
 Denison University
 DePaul University
 Dickinson College
 Dillard University
 Dominican University of California
 Drew University
Drexel University
Duke University
 Durham University
Eckerd College
Elon University
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

Emerson College
Emory University
 Eugene Lang College at The New School
 Florida Institute of Technology
Fordham University
 Franklin & Marshall
 Furman University
 George Mason University
George Washington
 Georgetown University
 Georgia Tech
 Gonzaga University
Goucher College
Grinnell College
Hamilton College
 Hampshire College
 Hampton University
Harvey Mudd College
Haverford College
 Hawai'i Pacific University
Hobart and William Smith Colleges
 Hofstra University
Howard University
 Illinois Institute of Technology
Indiana University
 Ithaca College
Johns Hopkins University
 Johnson & Wales University
 Kalamazoo College
 Kansas State University
Kenyon College
 Lafayette College
 Lake Forest College
 Landmark College
Lawrence University
Lehigh University
 Lesley University
Lewis & Clark College
 Liberty University
 Linfield University
 Loughborough University
 Louisiana State University
Loyola Marymount
Loyola Chicago
 Loyola New Orleans
Macalester College
 Marian University
 Marist College
 Marquette University
 Maryland College of Art
 Marymount Manhattan College
 Massachusetts College of Art and Design
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology
McGill University
 Mercy College
 Miami University (Ohio)
 Michigan State University
Middlebury College
Montana State
 Morehouse College
 Mount Holyoke College
New York University
NYU Shanghai
 Newcastle University
Northeastern University
Northern Arizona University
Northwestern University
 Norwich University
 Oberlin College
Occidental College
 Ohio University

Ohio Wesleyan University
 Oklahoma State
Olin College of Engineering
Oregon Institute of Technology
 Oregon State University
 Oxford College of Emory University
 Pace University
 Pacific Northwest College of Art
Parsons School of Design
 Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
Pennsylvania State
Pepperdine University
Pitzer College
Pomona College
Portland State University
Pratt Institute
Princeton University
Purdue University
 Purdue University Northwest
 Quinnipiac University
Reed College
 Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Rhode Island School of Design
 Rice University
 Richmond, The American International College in London
 Ringling College of Art and Design
Rochester Institute of Technology
 Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
 Rutgers University, New Brunswick
Saint Joseph's University
 Saint Louis University
Saint Mary's College of California
 Salve Regina University
San Diego State
San Francisco State
 San Jose State
Santa Clara University
Sarah Lawrence College
Savannah College of Art and Design
 School of the Art Institute of Chicago
School of Visual Arts
Scripps College
Seattle University
 Simmons University
 Skidmore College
Smith College
 Sonoma State
Southern Methodist
 St. John's College, Santa Fe
 St. Olaf College
Stanford University
 Stevens Institute of Technology
 Stony Brook University
 Suffolk University
Syracuse University
 Temple University
Texas Christian
The Boston Conservatory at Berklee
 The College of William and Mary

The College of Wooster
 The Evergreen State College
 The New School
The Ohio State University
The University of Edinburgh
 The University of Montana
 The University of Sheffield
 The University of Tampa
 The University of Tennessee
The University of Texas at Austin
 The University of the Arts
Trinity College (CT)
Trinity College Dublin
 Trinity University
 Tufts University
Tulane University of Louisiana
 Tuskegee University
 Underwood International College, Yonsei University (Seoul)
 Union College
 University College Dublin
University of Arizona
 University of Bath
University of British Columbia, Vancouver
 UBC Okanagan
UC Berkeley
UC Davis
UC Irvine
UC Los Angeles
UC Merced
UC Riverside
UC San Diego
UC Santa Barbara
UC Santa Cruz
 University of Chicago
 University of Cincinnati
University of Colorado, Boulder
 University of Colorado, Denver
 University of Connecticut
 University of Dallas
 University of Delaware
University of Denver
 University of Exeter (England)
 University of Florida
 University of Georgia
University of Glasgow
University of Hartford
 University of Hawai'i at Hilo
University of Hawai'i at Manoa
 University of Houston
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
 University of Iowa
 University of Maryland, Baltimore County
University of Maryland, College Park
 University of Massachusetts, Amherst
University of Miami
University of Michigan
 University of Minnesota
 University of Nevada, Las Vegas
 UN Reno
 University of New Hampshire

University of New Haven
 University of New Mexico
 University of North Carolina School of the Arts
 UNC Chapel Hill
 UNC Charlotte
University of North Dakota
University of Notre Dame
 University of Ontario Institute of Technology
University of Oregon
University of Pennsylvania
 University of Pittsburgh
University of Portland
University of Puget Sound
 University of Redlands
University of Richmond
University of Rochester
University of San Diego
University of San Francisco
 University of South Carolina
University of Southern California
University of St. Andrews
 University of the Pacific
University of Toronto
University of Utah
University of Vermont
 University of Victoria
University of Virginia
 University of Washington, Bothell
University of Washington, Seattle
University of Wisconsin, Madison
 University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh
 Utah Valley University
Vanderbilt University
Vassar College
Villanova University
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Wake Forest University
 Washington State
Washington University in St. Louis
Wellesley College
 Wentworth Institute of Technology
Wesleyan University
 Western Michigan
 Western University
Western Washington University
 Westmont College
 Wheaton College (MA)
Whitman College
 Whittier College
Willamette University
Williams College
 Woodbury University
 Worcester Polytechnic Institute
 Xavier University of Louisiana
Yale University

Future Forward

Why do more than 180 colleges and universities visit Bay every year? Because they know our graduates to be inventive, thoughtful, and exceedingly well-prepared.

Our college counselors have decades of experience helping students find the path that is right for them.

Text in bold indicates schools attended.