



## **2026-2027 – High School Program of Studies**

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### **ACADEMIC COURSE OFFERINGS**

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# Practices and Protocols

*The courses listed in this Program of Studies may not be the same as the final courses offered during the school year. The number of students registered for a course, scheduling priorities, and personnel will determine final course offerings.*

This Program of Studies has been designed to provide information for students and parents as they make informed decisions regarding course selection during their years at Benilde-St. Margaret's.

Students are strongly encouraged to discuss their course selections with their counselors, teachers, and parents/guardians. The high school experience is intended to be a four-year process in which students complete an extensive curriculum in preparation for post-secondary studies. Benilde-St. Margaret's offers a variety of elective courses that enhance a college preparatory curriculum. Students are required to take a minimum of seven academic classes per semester at BSM.

With this philosophy in mind, we will not allow students to complete their studies after the first semester of senior year.

*The table at right provides a summary of the courses required for graduation. One credit equals one semester of satisfactory completion of coursework.*

## BSM Graduation Requirements

English	8 credits
Fine Arts	2 credits
College/Career	.5 credit
Health	1 credit
Mathematics	6 credits
Phy Ed	1 credit
Science	6 credits
Social Studies	7 credits
Theology	8 credits
World Language	4 credits
Electives	13 credits
<b>Total credits</b>	<b>56.5</b>

*\*Transfer students will have their transcripts reviewed on a case by case basis.*

## BSM College and School Counselors

*Counselors follow the same group of students from 9<sup>th</sup> grade through graduation.*

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# Practices and Protocols

## Grading

Grade Scale	Letter Grade	Standard GPA	Honors GPA (Using 1.0625)	AP/CIS/PACC GPA (Using 1.125)
93-100	A	4.000	4.25	4.5
90-92	A-	3.700	3.93	4.16
86-89	B+	3.300	3.5	3.71
83-85	B	3.000	3.19	3.38
80-82	B-	2.700	2.87	3.04
76-79	C+	2.300	2.44	2.59
73-75	C	2.000	2.12	2.25
70-72	C-	1.670	1.81	1.91
66-69	D+	1.300	1.38	1.46
63-65	D	1.000	1.06	1.13
60-62	D-	.700	0.74	0.79
59 & below	F	.000	.000	.000

### BSM GPA

Only courses taken at BSM will have grades factored into BSM GPA.

### AP Courses

Advanced Placement (AP) courses, College in the Schools (CIS) courses, and Program for Advanced College Credit (PACC) courses will carry an additional weighted grade of 1.125%.

### Honors Courses

Effective with the start of the 2025-2026 school year, Honors Courses will carry an additional weighted grade of 1.0625%. Honors courses are designed to challenge capable and motivated students by providing them with clearly stated expectations specifying the rigorous nature of the curriculum.

### College Credit Options

Refer to pages 8-11 of this document for information regarding courses available to students for college credit. Courses taken at Benilde-St. Margaret's under AP, CIS or PACC will carry a weighted grade and are included in the student's gpa calculation. Courses taken under the PSEO option ARE NOT factored into the student's gpa. These grades will be recorded on the student's transcript under the specific college name, with a grade and credit(s) institution. Students will be responsible for obtaining copies of these transcripts as needed. Students taking the CIS or PACC courses will have the credit fees charged to their BSM tuition account, if they choose to pursue the college credit.

### Honor Rolls

Honor rolls are determined at the end of each semester. Honors (3.5-3.79) High Honors (3.8-3.8+)

# Practices and Protocols

*Students register for courses in the spring of each year, and it is important for students to select courses carefully. This BSM High School Program of Studies contains a listing of all courses offered, and prerequisite information is noted if appropriate. BSM administration may change the semester from which a course is originally offered or cancel any course due to insufficient numbers or personnel changes.*

## **Auditing a Class**

Sometimes a student may need to take a course for review or to strengthen their skills to progress through the sequence in an academic area. This can be done through auditing a class.

Although a student receives a grade for this course, no credit is issued when auditing a class. The grade is not computed into a student's cumulative grade point average. The student may plan to audit a class by contacting their counselor. Students can choose to show their grade on their transcript or can leave the grade marking as an "X" indicating an audited course.

## **Course Change**

Follow the link for our new 2026-2027 [Course Change Procedures](#).

## **Shortage of Credits**

Students are required to be making satisfactory progress toward graduation to be allowed to continue enrollment at Benilde-St. Margaret's School. If a student fails a course and is subsequently short of the required number of credits toward graduation, it is the responsibility of the student and their parents/guardians to arrange to make up the failed course and the loss of credit. Credit may be recovered by enrolling in an approved course offered at BSM, or by completing an approved, online course. The course must be approved by the student's counselor prior to enrollment.

## **Withdrawals from a Course**

Once a course has begun, withdrawing from a course is only an option for students enrolled in 8 academic courses. After conversation with, and with the consent of, a student's parent/guardian, counselor, and teacher, it is deemed to be in the best interest of the student, a student may withdraw from a course (if they have 8 academic courses). The student will receive a grade of "W" (withdraw) on their permanent record if consent to withdraw is during the first six weeks of the semester. After the first six weeks of the semester, no withdrawals will be permitted except for serious and prolonged illness or other unavoidable emergencies. Students who withdraw from a class after the first six weeks of the semester will receive a "WF" on their permanent record.

## **Withdrawal from a Yearlong Course**

When enrolling in a yearlong course, students should expect to remain in the course for both semesters. When applying to colleges, students are required to list their course of studies. Colleges look for successful completion of yearlong courses. A grade issued for only one semester of a yearlong course may be a red flag to a college admissions office. Any student wishing to withdraw from a yearlong course must receive permission from the instructor of the course. Seniors should also consult with their counselor and college admission offices before making course changes.

## **AP Capstone Diploma™**

AP Capstone is an innovative diploma program providing students with an opportunity to engage in rigorous scholarly practice of the core academic skills necessary for successful college completion. Students who earn scores of 3 or higher in AP Seminar: Biomedical Science and AP Research: Biomedical Science AND on 4 additional AP Exams of the student's choosing to receive the AP Capstone Diploma™. Students who earn scores of 3 or higher in AP Seminar and AP Research but, not on the four additional AP Exams, receive the AP Seminar and Research Certificate™. The AP Capstone Program cultivates curious, independent, and collaborative scholars and prepares them to make logical, evidence-based decisions.

## **MN Platinum/Gold Bilingual Seal or World Language Certificate**

Students in grades 10, 11, 12 who demonstrate required levels of proficiency in a world language may be eligible to receive a MN Bilingual/Multilingual seal or certificate (depending on their proficiency) on their diploma. These awards verify professional-level bilingualism in both English and another World Language. There are two tests available to students for demonstrating proficiency, the STAMP test (\$36 and hosted at BSM in May) or the AP language exams. The award is granted in a student's senior year and added to their BSM transcript. It is a rare accomplishment and one that students should consider highlighting on future applications including those for college, graduate school, and on job applications. Also, MN State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) award college credit based on the student's level of proficiency, i.e. their test results. The student is responsible for seeking MnSCU credit by contacting their college advisor upon enrollment in a MnSCU institution.

# Practices and Protocols

## NCAA Eligibility Requirements

Students wishing to participate in inter-collegiate athletics on a Division I or Division II level must abide by NCAA guidelines. Students must register and be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center. The NCAA selects courses from English, Math, Social Studies, Science and World Language to use in their core course guideline. Students should be aware some courses offered at Benilde-St. Margaret's School do not meet NCAA core course guidelines.

Below are the core curriculum courses offered at BSM **not approved** by the NCAA:

### MATHEMATICS

Intermediate Algebra

### ENGLISH

Editorial Leadership

For additional information about DI or DII course, grade and test score requirements go to the NCAA website:

[www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org)

Select: "enter here">"resources">"US Students">"Eligibility Quick Reference Sheet"

## Study Abroad Program

Benilde-St. Margaret's School graduation requirements will not be waived for any student choosing to study abroad for one or more semesters.

- The student must meet with their academic counselor concerning transfer of grades, and to ensure credits earned through studying abroad meet the criteria to remain on track to graduate from BSM.
- The student must meet with the principal to receive written consent to study abroad.

# High School Program of Studies – Four Year Plan

## Four-Year Plan

**Freshman Year – Minimum Credit Requirement = 14, Maximum Credits = 16**

First Semester	Credits	Second Semester	Credits
English	1	English	1
Mathematics	1	Mathematics	1
Science	1	Science	1
Theology	1	Theology	1
World Language	1	World Language	1
Physical Education or Health	1	Physical Education or Health	1
Human Geography or Elective*	1	Human Geography or Elective*	1
Study Hall/Learning Lab/Elective	0/0.5/ 1	Study Hall/Learning Lab/Elective	0/0.5/1
<b>Total credits per semester</b>	<b>7 or 8</b>	<b>Total credits per semester</b>	<b>7 or 8</b>

*\*PE and Human Geography are typically in the same semester opposite Health and optional elective*

**Sophomore Year – Minimum Credit Requirement = 14, Maximum Credits = 16**

First Semester	Credits	Second Semester	Credits
English	1	English	1
Mathematics	1	Mathematics	1
Social Studies	1	Social Studies	1
Theology	1	Theology	1
World Language	1	World Language	1
Science	1	Science	1
Elective	1	Elective	1
Study Hall/Academic Support	0	Study Hall/Academic Support	0
<b>Total credits per semester</b>	<b>7 to 8</b>	<b>Total credits per semester</b>	<b>7 to 8</b>

**Junior Year – Minimum Credit Requirement = 14.5, Maximum Credits = 16.5**

First Semester	Credits	Second Semester	Credits
English	1	English	1
Mathematics	1	Mathematics	1
Science	1	Science	1
Social Studies	1	Social Studies	1
Theology	1	Theology	1
Elective	1	Elective	1
Elective	1	Elective	1
BSM Hour	0	BSM Hour/ College and Career Portfolio	.5
<b>Total credits per semester</b>	<b>7 to 8</b>	<b>Total credits per semester</b>	<b>7.5 to 8.5</b>

**Senior Year – Minimum Credit Requirement = 14, Maximum Credits = 16**

First Semester	Credits	Second Semester	Credits
English	1	English	1
Theology	1	Theology	1
Social Studies	1	Social Studies	1
Elective	1	Elective	1
Elective	1	Elective	1
Elective	1	Elective	1
Elective	1	Elective	1
BSM Hour	0	BSM Hour	0
<b>Total credits per semester</b>	<b>7 to 8</b>	<b>Total credits per semester</b>	<b>7 to 8</b>

# Beyond the Minimum at BSM

## Minimum College Requirements

- 4 years of English
- 3 years of Math
- 3 years of Science
- 3.5 years of History / Social Studies
- 2 years of a world language
- 1 year of visual or performing arts

Note: These college requirements are **MINIMUM** standards, not recommended coursework.

## Colleges Want Students Who Go Beyond the Minimum

What you find published on a college's website should not serve as your course selection guide because the admissions office will be looking for students who have challenged themselves academically and gone beyond the minimum graduation requirements.

### Here are some better guidelines:

- **English** — 4 years of English with a mix of literature and composition work.
- **Math** — take math every year in high school. (Note that getting an early start by taking Algebra or Geometry in junior high does not mean you can skip math as a junior or senior.) Colleges will expect to see Algebra II at a minimum and some type of math course every year.
- **Science** — 4 years of science. Most colleges expect to see Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.
- **History / Social Studies** — 3-4 years - Most colleges like to see a geography, history, and government class.
- **World Language** — 2 years of the same language is the minimum; 3 is recommended. If you are applying to highly selective schools, you should give serious consideration to 4 years.
- **Visual or Performing Art** - 1 year

Challenging yourself beyond the minimum requirements is one of the easiest ways to distinguish yourself from other applicants. Some high schools require four years of English, math, science, and social studies, so taking that many years of each puts you on par with those students. BSM requires two years of a world language, so by taking a third or fourth year, you will show your willingness to complete challenging academic work.

## High Achievers

The recommendations above apply to all college-bound students, but if you are a high achiever and may consider some of the most highly selective colleges, you need to select courses that will make you competitive with other applicants. BSM offers nine honors courses in English, math, science, and Spanish, and 26 AP courses in English, math, science, social studies, world language, studio art, music and computer science. We also offer college credit courses through St. Mary's University and the University of Minnesota.

### Here are some high achiever course selection tips:

- Make sure you are on track to take the highest level of math offered. Depending on where you start at BSM, this means taking AP Calculus AB or AP Calculus BC your senior year. AP Calculus is generally seen as more challenging than AP Statistics, so if you can take only one, make it Calculus.
- Four years of the same language is highly recommended.

# College Credit Options

## Obtaining College Credit

There are four main options to obtain college credit while enrolled at BSM. A brief explanation of the options are offered below. Be sure to access each website for specific information as well as researching the requirements of any college or university you are interested in.

<b>Advanced Placement</b> AP course grades are weighted and factored into BSM GPA	<b>College in the Schools</b> CIS course grades are weighted and factored into BSM GPA	<b>PACC</b> PACC course grades are weighted and factored into BSM GPA	<b>PSEO</b> PSEO course grades are NOT weighted or factored into BSM GPA
<p>Benilde-St. Margaret's School offers over twenty AP courses to interested and eligible students. AP courses at BSM are first year-college equivalent courses, approved by the College Board. BSM does require students who enroll in any AP course to sit for the AP exam OR submit the required portfolio of work. Many colleges and universities will provide college credit based on these test results.</p> <p>Course descriptions and requirements will be found under each academic department.</p> <p><b>Of note:</b> At an information session presented by Georgetown, Harvard, Penn, Duke and Stanford, the admission reps indicated that whether a college accepts the credit or not, the expectation at highly selective schools is that students have taken AP courses <b>and exams</b> because these are the best ways to prepare for the rigors of the freshman year in college.</p>	<p>College in the Schools (CIS) allows motivated juniors and seniors to earn college credits by taking University of Minnesota, Twin Cities courses, at BSM.</p> <p>Students receive both high school and college credits.</p> <p>For more information online users select <a href="#">Learn more about CIS</a></p> <p>Other users copy and paste this address in your browser: <a href="https://ccaps.umn.edu/college-in-the-schools">https://ccaps.umn.edu/college-in-the-schools</a></p> <p>* \$145.00/ Course if seeking college credit.</p>	<p>Saint Mary's Program for Advanced College Credit (PACC) offers college-level learning experiences and college credit to participating private high school programs, with the same expectations, workload, learning activities, projects, and exams as the courses taught to first-year students at Saint Mary's.</p> <p>Students receive both high school and college credits.</p> <p><i>For more information:</i> Online users select: <a href="#">Learn more about PACC.</a></p> <p>Other users copy and paste this address in your browser: <a href="https://www.smumn.edu/admission/undergraduate/college-credit-in-high-school/pacc/">https://www.smumn.edu/admission/undergraduate/college-credit-in-high-school/pacc/</a></p> <p>* \$300.00/ Course if seeking College Credit.</p>	<p>Post-Secondary Education Options (PSEO) is a program allowing high school students to get a head start by taking college courses at colleges and universities. BSM juniors and seniors in high school may enroll, full-or part-time in courses and will receive concurrent high school and college credit.</p> <p>Students may apply to the University of Minnesota and all of its branches, all the Minnesota State Universities, community colleges, technical colleges or Minnesota private liberal arts colleges. College tuition, fees and textbooks are paid for by the State of Minnesota.</p> <p>PSEO students will be required to take a minimum of 6 courses per semester between BSM and PSEO.</p> <p><i>For more information:</i> Online users select: <a href="#">Learn more about PSEO.</a></p> <p>Other users copy and paste this address in your browser: <a href="https://education.mn.gov/mde/fam/dual/pseo/index.htm">https://education.mn.gov/mde/fam/dual/pseo/index.htm</a></p>

# College Credit Options

## College in the Schools (CIS)

Benilde-St. Margaret's School is partnering with the University of Minnesota College in the Schools to bring undergraduate-level courses into our classrooms. Students choosing to attend University of Minnesota College in the Schools courses will earn college credit. Colleges and universities may recognize coursework completed at other institutions. Check with your college of choice regarding their individual transfer credit policy.

\*There is a \$145 registration fee per student, plus the cost of textbooks, technology and supplies. Students may also need to pay for transportation to and from Field Day activities. Cost for credits (\$145/student) will be charged to BSM Tuition account.

Here are BSM's CIS Options:

### **Creative Problem Solving (S1 or S2)**

*One semester, one credit, open to juniors and seniors  
Three college credits from the University of Minnesota*

*Sophomores may register with instructor permission and a 3.0 or better GPA. Full course description and requirements will be found on 54 of the Program of Studies.*

Creativity is essential for success across disciplines and highly valued by employers. Embracing creativity gives meaning and value to how you approach your life, solve problems, and pretty much everything you do. A creative mindset not only unveils opportunities but also nurtures an appreciation for the iterative nature of the creative process, embracing growth arising from perceived setbacks or failures. This course is designed to move you out of your existing comfort zones, encouraging you to explore beyond initial solutions and recognize the inherent value of considering multiple perspectives. The only wrong answer is having only one answer. Central to the mission of the course is the development of your personal traits of creativity, thoughtful analysis, ingenuity, experimentation, and the ability to solve problems both individually and collaboratively. The curriculum, provided by the College of Design at the University of Minnesota, awards 3 college credit hours upon successful completion. It will be necessary for students to put in additional time outside of class to fully complete required projects, readings and assignments.

### **Introduction to Literature: Poetry, Drama, Narrative (LITR, WI)**

*One semester, one credit, open to seniors.  
Four college credits from the University of Minnesota.*

This is a writing-intensive course that also meets the Literature Core requirement. From epic battles against monsters in legendary kingdoms to stories about characters in worlds like our own, literature engages us with the diverse perspectives and experiences that make up our communities and world. This course introduces students to ways of understanding and appreciating literature in English across cultures and historical periods. Through this course, we will develop skills to help us understand literature, especially the ability to read language closely (a skill valuable in many disciplines beyond literature).

We will explore how writers use language and literary aspects, such as genre, voice, tone, symbol, motif, theme, imagery, narrative, and form. We also will learn how to write about literature, sharing our interpretations of how and why literary works have meaning for ourselves and others, while viewing them through critical cultural lenses, including ways to understand how gender, race, ethnicity, religion, and class can function in literary texts.

# College Credit Options

## St. Mary's University of Minnesota Program of Advance College Credit

Benilde-St. Margaret's School is partnering with Saint Mary's University of Minnesota Program of Advanced College Credit (PACC) to bring undergraduate-level courses into our classrooms. Students choosing to attend Saint Mary's University will earn college credit. Colleges and universities may recognize coursework completed at other institutions. Check with your college of choice regarding their individual transfer credit policy.

\*Students can choose whether to earn PACC Credit. The cost is \$100.00 per credit. Fee will be charged to tuition at BSM and sent to St. Mary's. The PACC courses we offer are 3-credit courses, so total cost for taking a PACC course for college credit will be \$300.00

### **PACC: Accounting II (S1) or (S2)**

*One semester, one credit, open to juniors, and seniors*

*Prerequisite: Accounting I*

This course may be taken for college credit through St. Mary's PACC program (see page 10). Accounting II builds on concepts from Accounting I to provide a more complex understanding of financial accounting with sections on inventory, specialized journals, and corporate accounting. The class also introduces students to managerial accounting concepts.

### **AP Chemistry (YR)**

*Two semesters, two credits, open to juniors and seniors*

*Prerequisite: Completion of Chemistry or Honors Chemistry.*

This course is available for PACC credit. This course is a second-year chemistry course, designed to be the equivalent of the general course taken during the first year of college. This course prepares students for the Advanced Placement exam. It is structured around the six big ideas as described in the AP Curriculum Framework: including the structure of matter, properties of matter, chemical reactions, the rates of chemical reactions, thermodynamics, and equilibrium. A special emphasis will be placed on the seven science practices, which capture important aspects of the work in which scientists engage. Learning objectives will combine content with inquiry and reasoning skills during multiple hands-on laboratory investigations.

### **AP Statistics (YR)**

*Two semesters, two credits*

*This course may be taken for college credit through St. Mary's PACC program (see page 10)*

*Prerequisite: Completion of two semesters of one of the following courses with the required grade indicated Algebra II with a grade of "A" in both semesters.*

*FST with a grade of "A-" or higher. Precalculus with a grade of "C+" or higher.*

This is a rigorous writing intensive course designed to teach students how to organize, display, and interpret data. An emphasis will be placed on the four major themes of the AP Statistics curriculum: exploring data, sampling, and experimental design, anticipating patterns with probability and simulation, and statistical inference. A TI-Nspire graphing calculator is required.

### **PACC: Spanish IV (YR)**

*Two semesters, two credits, open to all grade levels*

*Prerequisite: Spanish III*

This course may be taken for college credit through St. Mary's PACC program

This fourth-year Spanish course is designed to start developing intermediate skills of listening, reading, speaking, and writing through conversations, discussions, authentic readings, and composition writing. The study of Spanish speakers and their culture will include units on conflict resolution and relationships, the workplace, Aztec and Mayan civilizations and their myths and legends, the fusion of cultures in Spain before 1492 and in the Americas after the arrival of Europeans, the environment, civil rights as well as government. Participation and conversation are key components of this course, and one focus will be speaking in Spanish. Students will be engaged in a variety of activities by means of authentic materials, interactive technology, music, and movies.

# College Credit Options

## **PACC: Spanish V (YR)**

*Two semesters, two credits, open to sophomores, juniors, and seniors*

*Prerequisite: Spanish IV or Pre-AP Spanish*

This course may be taken for college credit through St. Mary's PACC program

This fifth-year Spanish course is designed to continue developing intermediate skills of listening, reading, speaking, and writing through conversations, discussions, authentic readings, and composition writing. The study of Spanish speakers and their culture will include units on fashion trends, the environment, human rights, personalities and conflict resolution, entertainment, diversity, the culinary arts, our societal issues, the economy, our free time, and 21st century challenges and advancements. Participation and conversation are key components of this course, and two main focuses will be speaking and writing in Spanish. Students will be engaged in a variety of activities by means of authentic materials, interactive technology, music, and movies.

## **PACC: Thinking Theologically (S1) or (S2)**

*One semester, one BSM credit, open to seniors*

*Prerequisite: satisfactory completion of Theology 10 Discipleship and Theology 10 Morality with a "B" in both semesters.*

*Three credit college level options*

This course is eligible for PACC credit (see page 58). This **college-level** course introduces students to the methods and practices of thinking theologically through an examination of some of the major questions people have asked and found answers to within religious contexts, especially the Judeo-Christian narrative. This course pays particular attention to the human experience of suffering, and how those different experiences shape our theological questions, both past and present. The course also embeds how theology is examined at a university defined by multidisciplinary approaches to truth and knowledge.