

Academics

Our academic program prepares every girl not just for the rigors of college, but also for the sheer joy of lifelong intellectual curiosity. SEM’s interdisciplinary curriculum emphasizes academic scholarship, service to the community, leadership skills, physical and emotional well-being, creative expression, and personal integrity. At SEM, our students learn how to approach a difficult academic subject or a new activity with vigor and confidence. They aren’t afraid to take risks or to challenge themselves to excel.

More Opportunities for Academic Excellence

Throughout her years at SEM, each student is expected to develop core competencies in all five of the major disciplines, giving her a solid foundation in the humanities, the sciences, and the arts. She is also encouraged to pursue Honors and Advanced Placement courses in areas of particular strength. Advanced electives during junior and senior year cover a range of topics, and opportunities for independent study can be arranged for self-motivated scholars.

HONOR CODE: Buffalo Seminary is dedicated to being a school where integrity, honesty, and empathy guide our thoughts and deeds. Academic Honor requires respect for the intellectual and artistic property of others. Social Honor requires treating ourselves and the other members of our community with respect, communicating honestly with one another, valuing our differences, and representing our school in a positive way. The Honor Pledge is written on all tests, papers, examinations, and designated homework assignments: “I pledge on my honor that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance.” Faculty and students sign the Academic & Social Honor Code poster in an annual fall ceremony.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT POLICY & SCORES: Students who are enrolled in an AP class are required to sit for the AP exam. Students must receive either teacher or department chair approval to enroll in an AP and/or honors course. We cap the number of AP courses a student can take at 3 per year unless the student has received special permission from the Dean of Students. In May 2020, 72 students sat for 137 total exams. Students earned a score of 3 or higher on 77% of those exams.

CLASS OF 2021: 49 students 8 AP Scholars, 5 AP Scholars with Honors, 1 AP Scholar with Distinction

COURSE DESIGNATIONS: AP (Advanced Placement); H (Honors) – Courses designed to provide more intensive study for students of superior ability and interest; No Letter Designation (Standard) – College Preparatory course.

EXPLANATION OF GRADES

A+ 100-97	B+ 89-87	C+ 79-77	D 65-69
A 96-93	B 86-83	C 73-76	F 64+
A- 92-90	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	

Merit Roll: Earned by students averaging 3.33 (B+) or greater (with no grade lower than C+) Honor Roll: Earned by students averaging 3.67 (A-) or greater (with no grade lower than B) High Honor Roll: Earned by students averaging 4.33 (with no grade lower than A-)

Students are only awarded these honors at the end of the year based on their final grades. For this purpose alone, grade point averages are calculated on a 4-point scale, with added weight given to Honors and Advanced Placement courses.

Buffalo Seminary students may be inducted into the National Honors Society and the Cum Laude Society.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

English - 4 years

History - 3 years

Foreign Language - 3 years through advanced level

Mathematics - 3 years

Science - 3 years + A 4th year of either Math or Science

Fine Arts - 2 years and 2 trimesters

We are on a trimester system. All attempted courses appear on a student’s transcript. English electives, with the exception of AP English Language & Composition and Foundational Junior English are open to juniors and seniors. Students are encouraged to volunteer 10 hours of community service per trimester.

FRESHMEN:

Preparation for college begins the moment a student walks in the door in her freshman year. Each girl is assigned to a faculty advisor, a sponsor, and a class dean, all of whom become her guides and mentors as she engages with our community and begins to establish herself in her classes, sports and extracurricular activities on campus. We encourage girls to try new things, stretch themselves, and find and pursue passions. In the third trimester, freshmen will engage in course planning for the following year and goal setting for continued growth and exploration.

SCHEDULES:

At SEM our class schedule is designed for course flexibility and to encourage independence. By creating a schedule that more closely resembles a college schedule, students learn to be in charge of their learning, to master time management, and to be responsible. SEM uses a 6 day class rotation over 5 week days with short periods of 40 minutes and long periods of 80 minutes. The schedule is designed with class and 'free' periods. Free periods allow students time for independent study, to collaborate on class projects or form study groups, to meet with teachers, or to socialize. Freshman year faculty and advisors work with students on responsible time management, important study skills, and goal setting!

Below are two examples of Freshman Schedules and a daily time schedule:

Legend: GeometryH = Honors Geometry, FrHlth = Freshman Health/Leadership, Citizens = Global Citizens Class, IntroSpan = Introduction to Spanish (Intermediate level is also available to freshman)

QUARTER : QTR 1
ROTATION : 1

	A Day	B Day	C Day	D Day	E DAY	F Day
Period 1	A1 200 History1	A2 PHYS Fr Physics	A3 PHYS Fr Physics	A4 200 History1	A5	A6 PHYS Fr Physics
Period 2	B1 PAC ArtsEye	B2 PAC ArtsEye	B3 PAC ArtsEye	B4 PAC ArtsEye	B5 PAC ArtsEye	B6 PAC ArtsEye
Period 3	C1 PHYS Fr Physics	C2 125 FrHlth-1	C3	C4 PHYS Fr Physics	C5	C6
Period 4	D1 111 English1	D2	D3	D4 111 English1	D5	D6
Period 5	E1	E2 111 English1	E3 200 History1	E4 307 Citizens	E5 111 English1	E6 200 History1
Period 6	F1 114 IntroSpan	F2 114 IntroSpan	F3 114 IntroSpan	F4 114 IntroSpan	F5 114 IntroSpan	F6 114 IntroSpan
Period 7	G1 227 GeometryH	G2 227 GeometryH	G3 227 GeometryH	G4 227 GeometryH	G5 227 GeometryH	G6 227 GeometryH

Legend: ArtsEye = Freshman arts foundation includes theatre, visual arts, and music, Coding = introduction to computer coding, IntroFr = Introduction to French (Intermediate level is also available to freshman)

QUARTER : QTR 1
ROTATION : 1

	A Day	B Day	C Day	D Day	E DAY	F Day
Period 1	A1 205 Algebra	A2 205 Algebra	A3 205 Algebra	A4 205 Algebra	A5 205 Algebra	A6 205 Algebra
Period 2	B1 PAC ArtsEye	B2 PAC ArtsEye	B3 PAC ArtsEye	B4 PAC ArtsEye	B5 PAC ArtsEye	B6 PAC ArtsEye
Period 3	C1 200 History1	C2 PHYS Fr Physics	C3	C4 200 History1	C5 PHYS Fr Physics	C6
Period 4	D1 111 English1	D2	D3 200 History1	D4 111 English1	D5	D6 200 History1
Period 5	E1 125 FrHlth-1	E2 111 English1	E3	E4 200 Coding	E5 111 English1	E6
Period 6	F1 110 IntroFr	F2 110 IntroFr	F3 110 IntroFr	F4 110 IntroFr	F5 110 IntroFr	F6 110 IntroFr
Period 7	G1 PHYS Fr Physics	G2	G3	G4 PHYS Fr Physics	G5	G6 PHYS Fr Physics

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:55 AM Morning Meeting (All school assembly in Chapel)

8:15 AM 1st Period

8:57 AM 2nd Period

9:39 AM 3rd Period (80 Minutes)

10:59 AM 4th Period Early Lunch/Help

11:41 AM 1st Lunch

12:11 PM 2nd Lunch

12:31 PM Help/Advisory or Club meetings

12:46 PM 5th Period (80 Minutes)

2:06 PM 6th Period

2:48 PM 7th Period

3:30 PM Dismissal