



NOTRE DAME ACADEMY

THE ACADEMIC ADVANTAGE

Notre Dame Academy is a Catholic, all-girls, college-preparatory high school, sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame of Covington, Kentucky. Notre Dame Academy provides a premier education infused with the spirit of St. Julie Billiart proclaiming God's goodness and provident care.

At NDA, we have a strong academic tradition of empowering young women to make a difference in the world. Notre Dame Academy helps develop each student in an environment that fosters growth of the whole person. Our curriculum is designed to challenge the abilities of our students while captivating their interests and providing support where needed. The NDA community strives to instill in young women not only knowledge, but also spiritual and moral values that will help them grow as women of faith, vision and purpose.

The goal of our Academic Program is to educate young women by cultivating their God given intellectual abilities in order that they can make a difference in our world. We believe in an education that combines the timeless wisdom of our Catholic Faith with the necessary skills that our students will need to adapt to a continuously changing world. To that end, we offer a curriculum that will prepare each young woman for the many challenges that she will face in college and life. Our highly qualified teachers demand excellence in the classroom and encourage each student to work to her full potential. With an approach that integrates academics, service, arts and athletics, we are molding young women to have a vibrant faith and a passion for learning.

Curriculum

College and universities base their acceptance of students on how well the student performs in high school and her program of studies. Historically, over 99% of Notre Dame Academy graduates go to college/university. The majority of our students attend 4-year colleges, however students are also prepared for 2-year and vocational courses of study. The NDA curriculum is designed to prepare our students not only for a positive and successful college experience but for the total formation of our young women as well.

Courses are offered on three levels of difficulty: College Preparatory, Honors, and Advanced Placement/College Level (Dual Credit). Academic departments recommend a course level for the required classes that in their professional judgment, are appropriate for each student. Students are encouraged to select elective courses according to their ability and interest. Students may take courses in all levels based on their experience and interests. College Preparatory level courses provide a solid educational foundation for higher education. The majority of students study at this level. A copy of Notre Dame Academy's Curriculum Guide can be found on our website at www.ndapandas.org.

Academic Opportunities

Students at Notre Dame Academy are offered many opportunities for academic enrichment. Several courses are offered at the Honors, Advanced Placement and College Level (Dual Credit). Honors level courses involve higher academic standards and a greater workload than College Preparatory courses. Advanced Placement (AP) or College Level (Dual Credit) courses provide the opportunity to earn college credit while remaining enrolled in high school. These courses are for students who excel academically. Students are invited by the respective department to be enrolled in these courses.

Historically NDA has been very strong in the disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, providing our students with a comprehensive curriculum that emphasizes critical thinking, creativity, innovation, and real-world problem solving. That tradition continues today at NDA with our 1:1 iPad Initiative and the development of our Instructional Technology Department.

Notre Dame Academy strives to be innovative and current in our educational efforts. This can be seen in the Accelerated Learning Opportunities at NDA as well as in the many courses added to our curriculum over the past three years that are relevant to today's learners.

**Notre Dame Academy currently offers
Advanced Placement courses in:**

- Biology
- Calculus AB
- Chemistry
- English Language
- English Literature
- European History
- French Lang. & Cult.
- Physics 1
- Physics 2
- Spanish Lang. & Cult.
- Statistics
- Studio Art
- U.S. History
- World History

**The following courses may be taken for dual credit
by NDA faculty. (Partner colleges: Northern Ken-
tucky University, Thomas More College,
University of Cincinnati)**

- Advanced Theatre (NKU)
- AP European History (TMC)
- AP Chemistry (TMC)
- AP World History (TMC)
- Current Issues (TMC)
- Government (TMC)
- Intro. to Engineering (UC)
- Latin 3 (TMC)
- Latin 4 (TMC)

These courses have been added to NDA's Curriculum Guide in the past four years:

- Advanced Theatre
- AP Statistics
- Business Principles and Application
- Creative Writing
- Entrepreneurship
- Graphic Design
- History of Rock and Roll
- Innovative Technology
- Introduction to Engineering
- Introduction to Computer Science
- Law and Justice
- Media Production
- Piano Lab
- Public Speaking
- Support Strategies
- Research Strategies and Applications
- Women in Literature

Academic Counseling & Support Services

At Notre Dame Academy, we do our best to be sensitive to the needs of all students and we are committed to assist students who struggle at times in various areas of their high school experience. In order to provide academic, emotional, physical, social and career support to all of our students, Notre Dame Academy has a full-time Intervention Specialist, two full-time Academic Counselors and two part-time Personal Counselors.

Our highly qualified and dedicated counseling staff collaborates with faculty and parents to address student needs, offer college and career assistance, and connect students and parents with community resources.

We offer the following Academic Counseling Services at Notre Dame Academy:

- **Academic Enhancement Program**
NDA offers courses to assist students with academic needs in the freshman through senior years. These courses are taught by an Intervention Specialist who works closely with the Counseling Staff to assist these students.
- **Educational Plans for Students with Diagnosed Learning Issues**
NDA recognizes that many students have a diagnosed learning issue and will work with these students and their parents to set up an educational plan that will address any accommodations that can be made for the student, such as extended time for assessments or having a test read aloud. This is important to have in place for extended time allowances on standardized tests such as the SAT/PSAT and ACT.
- **The Bridge Program (for Incoming Freshmen)**
Notre Dame hosts The Bridge Program each summer for Incoming Freshmen. The goal of this program is to provide incoming freshmen with a bridge from middle school to high school. It strengthens skills in the areas of Math, English and Study Skills. Besides the academic assistance, The Bridge Program is a great opportunity for students to get an early start on making new friends and finding their way around NDA. This program generally takes place the week before school starts and is from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. There is a fee to attend this program, but scholarships are available to those who need them.

- **Mentor Center**
NDA offers a Peer Mentoring Center for students throughout the entire school year. NDA's academic counselors manage the center and peer mentors are National Honor Society members.
- **Homework Lab**
Students who are struggling to complete and turn in homework are assigned to Homework Lab after school to work with staff to finish assignments and turn them in.
- **Scheduling Meetings with Each Student and Follow-up Assistance with Scheduling**
Incoming freshmen and their parents are invited to a conference held with a member of the NDA faculty to discuss curriculum and co-curricular opportunities and receive an overview of the freshman schedule.

Current freshmen, sophomore, and junior students along with their parents are invited to attend an informational grade level scheduling meeting in January at NDA. Prior to the meeting, students will meet during a long homeroom period to discuss course options. The various departments recommend students for specific courses and levels (College Prep, Honors, AP). Students and parents receive a tentative schedule at the meeting.
- **Meetings with Parents and Students**
NDA's Academic Counselors work with students and their parents to address academic concerns and set goals.
- **Family Meetings with Every Rising Senior to Discuss College/Career Planning**
We strive to assist students and families with every step of navigating the college admissions process. Our counselors serve students and families of all grade levels in the area of College Counseling.
- **Career Development Opportunities**
NDA's Academic Counselors offer each student at Notre Dame Academy support and resources that will prepare her to reach her future goals. This includes career fairs and community service opportunities. We also utilize a college and career information system called Naviance. Naviance is a comprehensive program that assists all students in their college and career preparation.
- **Financial Aid Presentations to Assist Parents/Students**
We are committed to helping parents and students in their efforts to understand the financial aid process when applying for college.
- **Administration of Standardized Testing**
NDA works hard to prepare students to take the necessary standardized tests in order for our students to pursue college or the world of work. Here are the standardized tests that students will take at NDA.
 - **Freshmen:** CERT (College Equipped Readiness Test) Practice ACT test format taken electronically
 - **Sophomores:** Students take the PSAT (Practice SAT Test) and CERT (College Equipped Readiness Test) Practice ACT test format taken electronically
 - **Juniors:** Students take the PSAT/NMSQT (National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test).
NDA Juniors also take an official ACT Test during a school day in the spring. This test will not include the Plus-Writing as of Spring 2016. Students can send the Composite Score from this test to colleges/military/etc. It is an official test. Students will register for this special ACT Test during school with NDA's Academic Counselors. Students do not register online for this test. They will also take a full-length practice ACT prior to the in-school test.
- **Test Preparation**
NDA offers an ACT prep class as needed. The class is coordinated and taught by NDA counselors faculty members. and NDA also works with Torch Prep to provide preparation for standardized tests.

Students can sign up to attend Torch Prep Boot Camps outside of school hours. A practice ACT test is given at NDA to help students assess their areas of focus in the Torch Prep program. Results of these tests can be reviewed with our Academic Counselors. Work is also done in the following subject areas during class time to prepare students for the PSAT, ACT and SAT prep: mathematics, science and English.
- **Parent Meetings to Assist in Interpretation of Standardized Tests**
Meetings are held following standardized tests administered at NDA in order to review results with students and parents and help them interpret their scores.
- **Student Records**
NDA's Student Services/Records Coordinator organizes student transcripts and standardized test scores and aids students in the college application process.

THE CASE FOR GIRLS' SCHOOLS



At Notre Dame Academy, it's all about girls! It has been since 1906, when the Sisters of Notre Dame first opened the doors to Notre Dame Academy. Although there was no research to support the value of an all-girls school a century ago, the sisters were keenly aware of the tremendous advantages. Today we have both extensive research and over 110 years of experience to support the countless benefits of girls' schools.

All-girls' schools offer enormous value to their students, value that cannot be duplicated in other school settings. NDA students are empowered to transcend traditional stereotypical roles and they quickly become fearless, curious, and enthusiastic in their learning. At NDA girls are the first ones to raise their hands in class, they are the leaders of the school, and those planning masses and service projects. Every science research student, academic team captain, writer, singer, artist, and athlete is a girl. They are more comfortable being themselves and take pride in who they are as students and young women. At Notre Dame Academy, our students are uniquely prepared to manage leadership positions in society.

Recent research by the National Coalition of Girls' Schools (NCGS) shows unequivocal support for the value of an all-girls educational environment. In particular, students at all-girls schools report:

- Having higher aspirations and greater motivation
- Being challenged to achieve more
- Engaging more actively in the learning process
- Participating in activities that prepare them for the world outside of school
- Feeling more comfortable being themselves and expressing their ideas
- Showing greater gains on core academic and life skills
- Being and feeling more supported in their endeavors

In another national study commissioned by the NCGS, the statistically significant edge girls' school graduates have over their coed peers is clear. The report also notes that girls benefit from a single-gender education in the following ways:

- Greater academic engagement
- Higher SAT scores
- Greater interest in graduate school
- Higher academic self-confidence
- Greater interest in engineering careers
- Greater political engagement

The voices of young women are not silenced in the educational environment of an all-girls' school. There is no reason for concern about teachers calling on boys more often than girls. At an all-girls' school, young women learn self-confidence and leadership skills, and they excel in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics and science.

At Notre Dame Academy, we strongly believe in the advantages of a single-gender learning environment for young women. While research supports our convictions, we have over 10,000 other reasons for our way of thinking - our graduates. NDA graduates are poised, confident, and prepared for a life of service to others centered in the Catholic faith. They are empowered, loving, and intellectually competent women committed to using their God-given gifts to make a difference in the world.

