



Academic Overview

Students come to a Traveling School semester with various academic backgrounds and our school builds an inclusive academic setting for each student to gain confidence sharing ideas, asking questions, actively listening and engaging in thought-provoking dialogues. Traveling School classes provide an integrated education that stretches beyond the boundaries of a single course or textbook. Teachers and students bring knowledge from one course to another and implement learning through primary sources in the course region to add context and meaning to the curriculum. The reflective academic environment is based on mutual respect, incorporating thoughtful silence and student-to-student discussion which creates space for diverse viewpoints.

The Traveling School academic schedule and themes are place-based and relevant to engage students in their surroundings. Students are immersed in challenging topics and learn nuanced perspectives through their teachers, community members, guides and their geographic



settings. Although the academic schedule varies from day to day and week to week, The Traveling School carefully records academic hours for each class whether a seminar-style lecture, an interactive academic exploration or a cultural exchange.

Traveling School courses focus on critical thinking and the ability to access, synthesize, evaluate and communicate information through various formats. Students are assessed through class discussion and participation, projects, presentations,

homework, quizzes and tests. After the semester, each student and her sending school receive a traditional grade transcript accompanied with specific course details plus student specific comments about growth, proficiency and achievements.

The Traveling School is accredited through the Council for Standards on International Educational Travel (CSIET), a private, not-for-profit organization, which establishes standards and monitors international youth education and exchange programs. As well, The Traveling School's Supplementary Education Programs are accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACS-WASC).

Course Offerings and Descriptions

The Traveling School is a transformative hands-on, minds-on interdisciplinary experience; topics transcend classes to promote engaging and diverse class discussions. The required Traveling

School courses integrate creative lessons, immersive experiences and multiple modes of thinking allowing for students to develop critical thinking skills, empathy and passion for education in a variety of ways. The supplementary courses help students progress classes needed by their sending schools but do not allow for as much place-based, interactive teaching. *Each student must enroll in a minimum of five required courses and can choose a sixth course as desired.*

Course Offerings	
Required Courses	Semester Credits
Global Studies	2
Physical Education & Independent Life Skills	2*
Honors World Literature & Composition	1
Honors History & Politics	1
Honors Natural Science	1
Supplementary Course	
Algebra 2	1
Conversational Spanish (Beginning, Honors Intermediate or Honors Advanced)	1

Notes:

- *Physical Education & Independent Life Skills is pass/fail with no numerical grade.
- Algebra 2 curriculum does not match the curriculum of each sending school. Content will differ and each student is encouraged to address the differences with her sending school.
- A minimum of three students is required for a supplementary course to be offered. If the minimum is not met, we may be able to establish an independent study.
- Independent Study requests are not guaranteed. The Traveling School must approve requests and will determine additional student fee.
- Course changes during semester require the approval of a Traveling School administrator, student's home high school and her parents.

GLOBAL STUDIES (Required)

This two-credit class is designed to be a thought-provoking, discussion-based forum that teaches and helps students make connections between recurring themes, ideas and concepts from the semester. The class has two primary focuses: first, this class uses multiple methods to provide students with critical thinking tools essential for higher level reasoning and critique; second, Global Studies uses an interdisciplinary and transnational framework to explore regional economic, political, social, and environmental issues to better understand how globalization

operates in our world today. The class is designed as an academic and reflective space for students and teachers to work through the complex questions that arise when investigating relevant topics in our region of travel.

The course poses essential questions for students to draw important connections between the impacts of globalization on this region as it relates to both the material conditions of everyday lives and governmental structure and policy. Each unit engages diverse material through multiple disciplines, schools of thought and perspectives.

The Global Studies course will also emphasize active citizenship through community service and local engagement. Students perform approximately 15-20 hours of community service and engagement with The Traveling School. during the semester. During these experiences, students will engage curiously, ask questions and reflect to better understand local and regional issues. This course encourages students to return home and turn this knowledge into action.



Global Studies Final Presentation

Each student is required to give a final public presentation for a group of their peers within ten days of returning home. This presentation must be verified by a supervising adult and sent to The Traveling School for a final grade. Details are further described in the Student and Parent Handbook.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION & INDEPENDENT LIFE SKILLS (Required)

Physical Education (PE) & Independent Life Skills (iLife) is a 2-credit pass/fail* class that focuses on academic, physical and emotional successes and challenges. The PE component helps students develop strength and cardiovascular endurance. Being an active participant in PE enables each student to be a productive member of the group and will help to keep the group physically healthy throughout the semester. Weekly iLife workshops help students develop skills to become healthy, productive citizens who take responsibility for personal well-being, as well as a social responsibility for participating positively in the larger community. These workshops explore and develop key aspects of communication, group dynamics, conflict resolution and leadership skills. The combination of PE & iLife helps students develop an awareness of balance and well-being. This is a participation-based class during workouts and class discussions.

NOTE: A *Physical Education & Independent Life Skills* pass grade requires a 70%. The Traveling School can award a traditional percentage grade if required. This request must be noted prior to the start of the semester on the Credit Transfer Form.

HONORS LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION (Required)

Honors World Literature and Composition is designed to provide students with critical reading and writing skills to engage with salient historical and socio-political issues in the region.

Designed to expose students to an assortment of highly acclaimed authors, students read two



novels as well as short fiction, non-fiction and poetry focused on the region. Students will develop their abilities to analyze texts, articulate and express their views, and understand the drafting and editing process. This course combines reading with rigorous writing workshop practice to develop writing skills focusing on clarity and creativity. Students will produce three major compositions and develop their ability to analyze literature, create an original thesis and effectively communicate ideas through various types of writing.

HONORS HISTORY AND POLITICS (Required)

This course offers students a thematic exploration of the history and politics of the semester region. Students are asked to think critically about how contemporary regional issues reflect pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial historical events. Throughout the course, students will consider how the region's past continues to shape its present realities. Using a historical lens, students will situate the region within the larger context of global economics, politics, and social dynamics in order to study the ways in which power relations such as race, class, and gender produce hierarchical social, political and economic realities for diverse groups of people on both local and global scales. In addition to thematic units, students will engage with the geographic, historical and political particularities of areas visited on the semester. Finally, students will build a variety of disciplinary skills including assessing and distinguishing between different kinds of sources, researching and presenting on various regional topics, creating and studying maps, interviewing and oral communication, and writing an historical essay. During this course, students will access, synthesize, and evaluate information to communicate and apply social studies knowledge to real world situations.

HONORS NATURAL SCIENCE (Required)

As we become an increasingly global society responsible for the planet and its environmental challenges, we need to develop the skills to critically assess problems and logically develop solutions. This course enhances students' understanding of the natural systems that surround us, both in our immediate surroundings on semester and worldwide.

Through a hands-on interdisciplinary approach, students will use observation and inquiry skills to explore these surroundings and make connections between the economic, social and political impacts on the natural world.

Students will read selections from journal articles, textbooks and other scientific literature as well as attend guest lectures, participate in discussions, lectures and in-depth field studies. This multi-faceted approach allows students to learn, process, evaluate and communicate reasonable conclusions using scientific inquiry and investigation. With the diverse environments of the region as our classroom, students will discover the value of observation and inference in science. This course is designed around and meets the Next Generation Science Standards.



CONVERSATIONAL SPANISH – *Beginning, Honors Intermediate or Honors Advanced* (Required on Latin America semester)

Prior to the semester, each student will complete a written and oral Spanish assessment in order to create three class levels composed of students with similar skill levels. While content varies from sending schools, course material is developed to increase each student's Spanish fluency through reading, writing and speaking during in-class discussions and interactive academic activities.

Each interactive Conversational Spanish course implements the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century from the National Standards in Foreign Language Education. These courses are taught using the 5 C's: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities. Students will interact and practice their language acquisition skills to engage with, learn about and understand the people, cultures and communities through which we travel.

ALGEBRA 2 (Supplementary)

Fall Semester Prerequisite: Algebra 1

Spring Semester Prerequisite: Algebra 1 and first semester Algebra 2

Note: *The Traveling School cannot guarantee complete overlap between a sending school math curriculum and The Traveling School curriculum. Our syllabi absolutely vary from the curriculum of each student's home high school. Students must work with their schools to recognize these differences and, if necessary, be prepared to do any additional work necessary to stay on track with her home high school requirements.*

Algebra 2 is a sequential curriculum that enables students to build the foundations for a strong understanding of higher-level math. Students learn to conceptualize, analyze and identify relationships among functions graphically and analytically. Students are encouraged to master the concepts of various problem types and solution tactics, and a graphing calculator will often be used as a helpful tool to solve problems and analyze data. During this course, students will connect with the mathematical procedures of problem solving and analysis, estimation, communication, associations and applications, and use appropriate technology.

First semester topics:

Linear Functions
Systems of Linear Equations and
Inequalities
Matrices
Quadratic functions
Introduction to Polynomial Functions

Second semester topics:

Logarithms
Rational Functions
Radical Functions
Conic Sections
Probability & Statistics

