



30 YEARS

Igniting creative
excellence since 1981

School Profile 2011-2012

The Chicago Academy for the Arts prepares young artists for life through rigorous academic education and professional arts training.

Established in 1981, the Chicago Academy for the Arts is a nationally recognized, internationally influential independent high school acclaimed for its successful academic model and intellectually savvy graduates. Designated a National School of Distinction by the John F. Kennedy Center, CAA offers a rich, interwoven, and stimulating curriculum comprised of rigorous courses, workshops, and practicums that encourage complex creation and problem solving through both collaboration and self-motivated learning. Urging students to dig deep into their potential, CAA prepares curious young minds to meet and master an increasingly challenging and diverse world.

CAA students are award-winning intellectuals and artists. Within recent years, CAA has produced a National Merit Scholar, a Presidential Scholar, a YoungArts finalist, and numerous winners and finalists in major national and international arts competitions. CAA graduates are sought after by colleges, universities, and conservatories across the nation; they are described by admissions directors as focused, disciplined, ambitious, and self-aware. 95% of 2011 graduates are continuing their education at leading universities, colleges, art institutes, and conservatories across the United States and the UK. The 44 students comprising the Class of 2011 were collectively awarded nearly \$4 million in college scholarships.

Graduates leave CAA as artists, thinkers, doers, and culturally fluent leaders who can make the conceptual leaps and forge the personal bonds essential to creative thought and action. Notable alumni include nuclear physicist Jeremy Callner, Emmy Award-winning composer Alex Wurman, filmmakers Adam Rifkin and Tom Hodges, organist David Miller, costume designer Catherine Thomas, actress and singer Elisabeth Withers, artist Michael Ferris, Jr., and dancers Randy Herrera, Jonathan Alsberry, Craig Hall, and Tom Gold.

CAA faculty members are nationally published authors, distinguished professional artists, and award-winning teachers. Honors include the Fulbright Award, the Golden Apple Award, the Albert Einstein Distinguished Teacher Award, the Chicago Tribune "Chicagoan of the Year" Award, and nominations for the American Choreography Award, the Joseph Jefferson Award, and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History "History Teacher of the Year Award". The entirety of CAA's arts faculty are practicing professional artists within their respective fields. Master classes and guest artists provide context for learning not possible in traditional schools; guest lecturers have included Pulitzer Prize-winning critic Roger Ebert, Oscar-winning actor and director Philip Seymour Hoffman, and Grammy Award-winning singer and songwriter Garth Brooks.

Chicago Academy for the Arts

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College Acceptances 2006 - 2011

Of the schools below cataloged in Peterson's 2012 Four-Year Colleges Guide, 95% are listed as having a "Moderately Difficult" entrance difficulty or higher. 50% are listed as having a "Very Difficult" or "Most Difficult" entrance difficulty.

Academy of Art University • Agnes Scott College • Allegheny College • American Music & Drama Academy • American Academy of Dramatic Arts • American University • Antioch College • Atlanta College of Art • Baldwin-Wallace College • Ball State University • Bard College • Belmont University • Beloit College • Bennington College • Berklee College of Music • Boston Conservatory • Boston University • Bradley University • Brandeis University • Brooks Institute of Photography • Butler University • California College of the Arts • California Institute of Art • California State University, Long Beach • California State University, Sacramento • CAP 21 • Carnegie Mellon University • Carthage College • Catholic University of America • College-Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati • Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design • Chapman University • Chicago State University • Cleveland Institute of Music • Coe College • Colby-Sawyer College • College for Creative Studies • College of DuPage • College of Santa Fe • College of the Holy Cross • Colorado College • Columbia Basin College • Columbia College • Columbus College of Art and Design • Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science & Art • Cornell College • Cornish College of the Arts • Curry College • Dean College • DePaul University • DePauw University • Dickinson College • Dominican University, California • Drake University • Earlham College • Eastman School of Music • Edinburgh College of Art • Elmhurst College • Elmira College • Elon University • Emerson College • Emily Carr University of Art + Design • Emory University • Fairfield University • Florida State University • Fordham University • Friends University • Goucher College • Grand Valley State University • Green Mountain College • Greenville College • Grinnell College • Guildford School of Acting • Hamilton College • Hampshire College • Hampton University • Hawaii Pacific University • Hofstra University • Hope College • Houston Ballet Academy • Howard University • Illinois State University • Illinois Wesleyan University • Indiana State University • Indiana University – Hutton Honors College, Bloomington • Indiana University at Bloomington • International Academy of Design & Technology • Ithaca College • Kansas City Art Institute • Knox College • Lawrence University • Lewis & Clark College • Lewis University • Loyola Marymount University • Loyola University Chicago • Mannes College of Music • Marlboro College • Maryland Institute College of Art • Marymount Manhattan College • McGill University • McNally Smith College of Music • Mercy-Hurst College • Michigan State University • Millikin University • Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design • Minneapolis College of Art and Design • Moore College of Art and Design • Mount Holyoke College • Mulhensberg College • New England Center for Circus Arts • New England Conservatory of Music • New World School of the Arts

Students must pass a rigorous arts audition and academic review to gain acceptance to CAA, and only 60% of applicants for the 2011-12 school year were offered admission. (Enrollment for the 2011-12 school year is 143 students.) Slightly more than half of CAA's students commute from outside the city of Chicago; many travel several hours per day to and from school. CAA's student body is 62% Caucasian, 13% African American, 12% Hispanic, 8% Multi-Racial, 4% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 2% American Indian or Alaskan Native.

CAA's school day consists of six 45-minute academic periods followed by a three-hour immersion in one of six arts departments: Dance, Media Arts (filmmaking and writing), Music, Musical Theatre, Theatre, and Visual Arts. While the school day officially ends at 4:30 pm, most students stay after school to attend rehearsals, practice, attend performances, participate in recording sessions, work in the labs, or meet with teachers.

CAA's rigorous academic program is built around core studies in English, mathematics, social studies, world language, science, and elective courses. While CAA does not "track" its students, the scope and sequence of courses is designed to meet the needs of incoming and returning students with a variety of backgrounds and strengths. The average academic class size is 13; the average underclassman math course has seven students.

Throughout the school year, students participate in nearly 100 productions, including concerts and recitals, musicals, plays, readings, screenings, exhibitions, outreach opportunities, and benefits. Additionally, CAA's location just outside Chicago's Loop provides faculty and students with unparalleled access to (and partnerships with) museums, professional theatre and dance organizations, recording studios, galleries, and local professionals.

Arts departments conclude each semester with a one-on-one student assessment and review process that includes self-reflections and goal-setting, juries, portfolio reviews, and interviews with faculty.

Major art events at CAA include:

- Visual arts exhibitions including figure drawings, paintings, prints, and sculpture;
- the Senior- and Faculty-Choreographed Dance Concerts;
- the "Big Movie," a feature-length film produced, directed, edited, and written by the Media Arts Department;
- Jazz Fest, Opera Scenes, and various classical and jazz concerts;
- Several plays and a set of student-directed one-act plays; and
- The "All-School Musical," produced by the Musical Theatre Department and featuring the contributions of students from across the school.

Current special initiatives include:

- The CAA Global Exchange Program, which gives students and faculty the opportunity to think and act with global perspective while connecting with partner schools such as the School of the Arts, Singapore and Collège Sainte-Anne de Lachine in Montreal, Quebec;
- The Music Department's Composition program which, among other major projects, produces an original opera each year with a libretto and score created by the CAA Student "Opera Team"; and,
- The CAA Repertory Dance Company, which gives select CAA dancers the opportunity to perform the works of nationally recognized choreographers in professional venues.

The Chicago Academy for the Arts is accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS), is recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), is a member of good standing of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), and is also a member of the Arts Schools Network. CAA maintains an active chapter of the National Honor Society.

Standardized Test Data

CAA students routinely score above the state and national averages on standardized tests. The graduating class of 2011 scored 11% higher than the Illinois state average on the ACT and 15% higher than the Illinois average on the SAT.

Additionally, CAA students demonstrate high readiness for college (as demonstrated on the ACT exam), exceeding Illinois "college readiness" averages by 67% (Social Science), 38% (English), and 29% (Math).

| Section | CAA Average Score | Illinois Average Score | National Average Score |
|-----------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| English | 24.6 | 20.6 | 20.6 |
| Math | 21.8 | 20.9 | 21.1 |
| Reading | 24.3 | 20.8 | 21.3 |
| Science | 21.6 | 20.7 | 20.9 |
| Composite | 23.3 | 20.9 | 21.1 |

| Section | % of CAA ACT test-takers demonstrating college readiness | % of Illinois ACT test-takers demonstrating college readiness | % of national ACT test-takers demonstrating college readiness |
|----------------|--|---|---|
| English | 90 | 65 | 66 |
| Math | 54 | 42 | 45 |
| Social Science | 80 | 48 | 52 |

| Section | CAA Average Score | National Average Score |
|------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Critical Reading | 574 | 497 |
| Math | 519 | 514 |
| Writing | 568 | 489 |
| Composite | 1731 | 1509 |

AP and Honors Courses

CAA offers ten honors-level courses, which are offered to students by recommendation only. Additionally, students in upperclassman English courses may earn honors credit by earning a grade of at least 97% during the semester.

CAA offers seven AP courses: Art History, Calculus AB, Calculus BC, European History, French, Literature, and Spanish. AP courses are available to students by recommendation only.

More than half of CAA students typically enroll in one or more honors-level or AP courses.

In 2010-11, CAA students earned a score of 3 or higher on 70% of the AP exams taken.

Grading Scale and Course Weights

Courses are graded and weighted as follows in GPA calculations. CAA does not rank its students.

| Grade | Standard | Honors | AP |
|-------|----------|--------|-----|
| A | 4 | 4.5 | 5 |
| B | 3 | 4 | 4.5 |
| C | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| D | 1 | 1 | 1 |

Graduation Requirements

English 4 years
Social Studies 3 years
Mathematics 3 years
Science 3 years
World Language 2 years
Arts Electives 1* fewer than the total years a student attends CAA.
(*May be waived to accommodate additional college admission requirements.)

Additionally, students in the Music, Media Arts, Musical Theatre, and Theatre Departments present senior recitals as a requirement for graduation.

Transcript Release & College Visits

Official CAA transcripts are released only to accredited educational institutions. Test scores are not included on the transcript unless specifically requested by the student. Students are responsible for requesting that test scores be forwarded directly from the testing agency.

College visits are welcomed as time permits and may be scheduled by contacting Melania Lancy, College Counselor:
mlancy@chicagoartsacademy.org.

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New York University • North Central College
Northeastern Illinois University • Northern Illinois University • Northwestern University
Oakland University • Oberlin College
Occidental College • Ohio Wesleyan University
Oklahoma City University • Otis College of Art and Design • Otterbein University • Pace University, Pleasantville Campus • Parsons The New School for Design • Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts • Pennsylvania State University, University Park • Pitzer College
Point Park University • Pratt Institute • Reed College • Rhode Island School of Design
Rhodes College • Ringling College of Art and Design • Ripon College • Rochester Institute of Technology • Rockford College • Roosevelt University • Rose Bruford College • Rutgers, New Brunswick • Saint John's University
Saint Mary's College • Saint Xavier University
Sam Houston State University • San Diego State University • San Francisco Art Institute
San Francisco Conservatory of Music • San Francisco State University • Santa Barbara City College • Santa Fe University of Art and Design
Santa Monica College • Sarah Lawrence College • Savannah College of Art and Design
School of the Art Institute of Chicago • School of the Museum of Fine Arts • School of the Visual Arts • Scripps College • Simpson College • Southern Illinois University, Carbondale • Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville • Southern Methodist University
Springfield College • St. Andrew's University
St. Olaf College • Stephens College • Suffolk University • SUNY Purchase College • Syracuse University • Temple University • The Juilliard School • The Naropa University • The New School • The New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music • The University of Iowa
The University of the Arts • Triton College
University of Arizona • University of California at Los Angeles • University of California, Santa Barbara • University of California, Santa Cruz
University of Chicago • University of Cincinnati
University of Colorado at Boulder • University of Dayton • University of Essex • University of Evansville • University of Hartford • University of Hawaii at Manoa • University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign • University of Illinois, Chicago • University of Iowa • University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth • University of Miami • University of Michigan • University of Minnesota, Twin Cities • University of Missouri
University of Missouri, Kansas City • University of North Carolina School of the Arts • University of North Texas • University of Northern Colorado • University of San Francisco
University of Southern California • University of St. Andrews, Scotland • University of Washington • University of Wisconsin, Madison
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee • Vassar College • Viterbo University • Wagner College
Warren Wilson College • Webster University
Western Illinois University • Western Michigan University • Wittenberg University

Academic Courses Offered by Approximate Grade Level and Subject Area

| Grade | English | Math | Science | Social Studies | World Language | Electives |
|-------|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| 9 | Freshman English | Algebra 1A Algebra 1 Honors Algebra 1 | Science Investigations | World History | French 1 Spanish 1 | Business and the Arts Introduction to Acting Music Theory and Composition Studio Art Urban Design Video Production |
| 10 | American Literature | Algebra 1B Geometry Honors Geometry | Biology | American History | French 2 Spanish 2 | |
| 11 | Literature and Composition* Literature Through Film* Literature and the Comedic Form *‡ | Algebra 2 Honors Algebra and Trigonometry | Chemistry Physics Anatomy and Physiology | Modern American History Through Film | French 3 Spanish 3 | |
| 12 | Chicago Literature *‡ Shakespeare as Literature and Drama *‡ Heroes and Myths *‡ Native American Literature *‡ Literature of World War I *‡ African American Literature *‡ Latin American Literature *‡ AP Literature | Discrete Mathematics Honors Introduction to Calculus AP Calculus AB AP Calculus BC | | Global Affairs Honors World Religions‡ Honors Philosophy‡ Art History‡ AP Art History‡ AP European History | Honors French 4 AP French Honors Spanish 4 AP Spanish | |

Learning Resource / Study Skills is offered for credit and may be repeated.

*one-semester course ‡offered in alternating years

Arts Courses by Department

| Dance | Media Arts | Music |
|---|---|--|
| Ballet, levels A-C (Ballet also includes classes in pas de deux, men's ballet, and pointe) Dance Composition Dance Survey Jazz Dance, levels A-C Modern Graham Technique, levels A-C | Animation Cinematography Fiction 1 & 2 Film Aesthetics Form and Structure Media Design 2D Poetry 1 & 2 Screenwriting 1 & 2 Sound Production Video Production 1 - 4 Workshop | Chamber Ensemble Composition Ear Training 1, 2, and Advanced Film Scoring Jazz Combo Jazz Improvisation Music Theory 1, 2, and Advanced Piano Lab Private Lesson Studio World Music Ensemble |
| Musical Theatre | Theatre | Visual Arts |
| Acting 1-4 Musicianship Musical Theatre Studio 1-4 Musical Theatre History Private Voice Lesson Musical Theatre students also take dance courses (including Ballet, Jazz, and Modern) offered by the Dance Department. | Acting 1-4 Design Directing Eight-Week Workshop Movement 1-3 Professional Internship Script Analysis Senior Seminar Stagecraft 1 & 2 Theatre History Theatre Literature Voice and Speech | Color Theory Design Drawing 1 - 4 Interdisciplinary Arts Painting Printmaking Sculpture |