

The Academy at Charlemont

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2022-2023 School Profile
CEEB: 220552

The School

Founded in 1981, the Academy at Charlemont is a small independent day school enrolling approximately 100 students in grades six through twelve. The Academy draws primarily from a rural population in the poorest county in Massachusetts, and the school serves its commitment to a diverse student body by offering financial aid to 80% of its students. The school provides a rigorous college preparatory academic program for all students, a diverse arts and music program, and athletics. We do not calculate class rankings. The Academy believes that innovative teaching works best without Advanced Placement preparation as the goal of an entire year's course, though we do allow students to take Advanced Placement courses through accredited online providers.

The Academy is a school community based on values such as self-reliance, industry, integrity, and compassion. As such, we encourage the development of intellectual and social standards that reflect those values. These values are supported in the curriculum, particularly in our four unique Studio Block periods each week in which professional artists and performers work shoulder-to-shoulder with students, sharing their passions and providing windows into these broad areas of expression. Affirming the uniqueness of each individual and at the same time insisting that individuals subscribe to a set of commonly held standards – civility, respect, concern for others – produces a healthy tension that helps students learn, grow, and become productive citizens.

Making positive contributions to school life is an integral part of Academy culture. The school fosters a close and mutually respectful relationship between students and faculty. Students regularly support the school through meal preparation, cleaning chores, eight volunteer councils, and other meaningful activities. School governance is based on all-school meetings and an honor code; there are no elected class officers, except for one senior who is elected to represent the student body to the Board of Trustees. There is a Student Advisory Board led by students that meets regularly with school administration.

The Students

Academy students represent a broad cross section of local hill-town and Pioneer Valley populations, as well as a small number of international students. Their parents work in a wide range of occupations that support and enrich the greater community: from farmers to artisans to physicians. Their households range from lower to upper income.

All students are strongly influenced by the rural nature of this community. Students are more acutely aware of their connection to the land, the rhythms of the seasons, and the sources of their food. Many students live in communities without cellular phone service, without cable television, and where supermarkets are a 20-minute drive away. In a world where instant access to everything is becoming increasingly common, these students live with greater awareness of the essentials of family, community, and purpose.

The Faculty

There are 9 full time faculty, all holding advanced degrees. There is one part-time faculty member, our music director, who has experience as a professional musician and holds a bachelor's degree.

Accreditation and Associations

The Academy at Charlemont is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). The school holds memberships in:

- New England Association of Schools and Colleges
- National Association of Independent Schools
- Association of Independent Schools of New England
- Franklin County Chamber of Commerce
- Shelburne Falls Area Business Association

Curriculum

The core curriculum provides a broad common ground on which students with different views, interests, goals, and backgrounds can come together and form an intellectual community based on shared knowledge and common purpose. At the same time, opportunities to

pursue independent scholarship and unique intellectual interests are offered in every course as well as required by the capstone Senior Independent Project.

Specifically, every semester students are engaged in the study of English and History through their Humanities courses. Students are also required to take Math and Science every semester, and they also typically study either French or Spanish. Students participate in Studio Block courses, with most students filling their schedules with unique opportunities in the arts and music. First year Latin and Foundations in Art are both required for the 9th grade. Students may continue to take Latin throughout their high school career, and may opt to more seriously pursue painting and photography as academic electives after their freshman year. Senior students engage in a year-long independent project of their choosing. All students must participate in fall and spring sports. About half of the student body participates in winter drama or a winter sport.

Covid-19 and the Class of 2023

Covid-19 has continued to deeply affect our community. At the height of the pandemic, Franklin County had the highest number of deaths per-capita in Massachusetts. Many of our students come from this county and from the more heavily populated Hampshire County, which houses UMass Amherst, Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, and Smith College. We began a period of remote learning on March 24th of 2020, which coincided with the end of our spring break. We continued to be remote until February of 2021. This resulted in students not missing any days of school in order to accommodate faculty preparation. The small size of our school afforded us the opportunity to continue our academic programming through a synchronous online platform.

As a result of the COVID-19, we allowed students to take courses on a pass/fail basis for the 2020-2021 school year. Many students opted to do this in some of their classes. This is reflected by a P or F on their transcript.

Courses Offered

Full Credit (yearlong or yearlong equivalent)

World Literature I, World Literature II, American Literature Philosophical Viewpoints
 World History I, World History II, American History, Global Perspectives,
 Biology, Environmental Science, Chemistry, Physics, Advanced Physics
 Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II and Trigonometry, Algebra III, Statistics, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, Advanced Topics in Mathematics
 French and Spanish I, II, III, IV, V
 Latin I
 Foundations in Art (9)
 Studio Art (10, 11, 12)

Half Credit (one semester or yearlong equivalent)

Photography (I, II, III)
 Latin (II, III, IV)

Studio Block Options

Art	Music
Ceramics: Wheel Throwing	Off the Grid Ensemble (acoustic music)
Ceramics: Advanced	Blues Ensemble
Project Upcycle: Textiles Reimagined	Music and Politics
Creative Writing	Musical Theater
Mosaics	New Wave Ensemble
French Pastry	British Invasion Ensemble
Analogue Photography	Beat Making and Digital Music
Digital Photography	Bluegrass Ensemble
Printmaking	Songwriting
The Human Form	Women Who Rock Ensemble
Silk Painting	Music of Canada Ensemble

Coding	Generation Y2K Ensemble (music of the early 2000s)
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Senior Graduation Requirements

Four years of English and four years of History
 Three years of Laboratory Science
 Mathematics through Algebra II and Trigonometry
 Four years of Mathematics
 A fourth year of Science
 Four years of a modern foreign language
 Latin I
 Foundations in Art
 Senior Independent Project

Semester and Grading Systems

The Academy operates on a 16-week semester system. Most courses are yearlong, one credit classes. Half-credit courses meet for either the full amount of weekly classroom hours but for only one semester, or half of the number of weekly hours for the whole year.

Academic courses are graded using the letters A+ through F. Studio Block art and music classes are graded on a pass/fail basis and do not carry credit value. If a student studied elsewhere, then a separate transcript is attached. Students are not ranked.

A+ = 97-99	B+ = 87-89	C+ = 77-79	D+ = 66-69
A = 93-96	B = 83-86	C = 73-76	D = 63-65
A- = 90-92	B- = 80-82	C- = 70-73	F = 0-64

College Matriculation – Classes of 2019-2022

100% of the last four graduating classes have gone on to college. They have matriculated at the following colleges and universities:

Amherst College
 Bard College
 Barnard College
 Carleton College
 Castleton University
 Goucher College
 Greenfield Community College
 Macalester College
 University of Maine
 Massachusetts College of Art and Design
 University of Massachusetts-Lowell
 Mount Holyoke College
 University of New Mexico-Main Campus
 Northeastern University
 Northwestern University
 Oberlin College
 Pitzer College
 Prescott College
 SUNY at Purchase College
 Rhode Island School of Design
 Sarah Lawrence College
 Skidmore College
 Smith College
 Tufts University
 Vassar College
 Warren Wilson College
 Washington and Lee University

