EXTENSION PROGRAMS (NCS WEBSITE)

Overview

Extension programs are semester or year-long academic studies away from NCS that provide a unique opportunity for students to experience a different classroom or learning environment. These programs typically offer traditional classes, but may also include an opportunity to dig into a particular discipline or topic such as language, leadership or science.

There are many extension programs available to high school students, and NCS supports student participation in those programs that offer a rigorous academic experience without significantly delaying or interrupting a student’s course of study at NCS.

Students who participate in extension programs have the opportunity to develop independence, gain leadership skills, explore areas of interest, take risks, meet students from all over the world, and, in some ways, preview a college experience. They can be incredible experiences, but they aren’t for everyone, and it takes careful planning to participate in such a program; this site is designed to provide some of the information students and families will need to decide if an extension program is right for them.

Intent to Apply

Students interested in participating in an extension program must submit an Intent to Apply form (available in Downloads) to their grade dean by January 1 in the academic year before they will participate. (For example, if a student wishes to participate in a semester program in the fall or spring of her 11th grade year, she would submit the form by January 1 of her 10th grade year; for a year-long program, she would submit this form by January 1 of the year before she would participate.) The Head of Upper School and grade deans will consider interested students and, if approved for participation, students will be encouraged to apply directly to that extension program. Students should not submit applications to extension programs until approved by the Head of Upper School and grade deans.

Because a semester or year away impacts the traditional sequence of classes before and after the extension program experience, students must think ahead. As part of the Intent to Apply process, students submit a Graduation Requirements planning chart; on this document, they list courses they have already taken at NCS, those they hope to take through an extension program, as well as courses they plan to take upon return to NCS. Considering graduation requirements in advance allows students to map out how an extension program will fit within the bigger picture of their high school course of study, also allowing them to plan a path toward courses of interest or AP classes upon return to NCS, if appropriate.

NCS limits the number of semester-long leaves of absence for extension programs. NCS permits a maximum of four students to attend an approved semester-long extension program each year. The Head of Upper School and grade deans determine eligibility based on criteria that vary with each group of applicants, including fit as well as students’ academic and extracurricular programs and interests.

Tuition

Extension programs require tuition like any other school, although the programs that are listed through this page all offer financial aid. In addition to covering the cost of tuition for an extension program, families are expected to pay a portion of their NCS tuition during a student’s absence. For a semester program, families pay 60% of NCS tuition for the year, in addition to any tuition owed to the extension program; for year-long programs, families pay a $1000 deposit to hold the student’s place until her return to NCS the following year.

While extension programs offer financial aid, NCS financial aid does not carry over to an extension program; any financial aid received at NCS will not be applied to fees due to an extension program. Families are encouraged to apply for tuition assistance available through the extension programs.
Families are asked to take note of published deadlines and communicate early about plans to participate in extension programs or take leaves of absence. Without advanced notice to the school, families may be responsible for total annual tuition at NCS.

Planning Coursework

The opportunity to take new and interesting elective courses while away from NCS allows students to explore areas of interest; it can also impact a student’s course of study at NCS. In 9th and 10th grades, students develop critical skills in foundational courses, allowing them to pursue more advanced and specialized coursework in 11th and 12th grades.

Depending on the grade-level or semester in which a student participates in an extension program, the sequence of her NCS coursework (including prerequisite courses) may be adjusted. In order to ensure students develop a critical base of skills in foundational and prerequisite courses, we do not support participation in extension programs during the fall semester of their 10th grade year. The spring semester of 10th grade, as well as the 11th and 12th grade years, allow more flexibility in terms of core courses and electives, and for this reason, students typically have had more success transitioning in and out of extension programs and maintaining their course of study at NCS.

Each extension program offers a unique academic program, and while many strive to offer coursework comparable to that of their sending schools or even to parallel sending schools’ curriculum in classes like Math and language, NCS determines course credit on a case-by-case basis. Additionally, in some cases, summer work or online work may be appropriate before, during or after an extension program to ensure continuity in a course of study. Students participating in extension programs will work closely with the Head of Upper School and grade deans to plan courses and graduation requirements, and the Head of Upper School and grade deans will make final determinations of approved courses.

Participation in extension programs is indicated on an NCS transcript, but extension program grades are not listed on the NCS transcript or factored into NCS grades. Instead, a student will receive a separate transcript from the extension program.

Approved Extension Programs

NCS has approved the following extension programs based on their academic rigor and cohesion with our own academic program. In the list below, the number indicates eligible grade levels; “F” and “S” indicate whether the program runs in Fall or Spring semesters, or both.

**Alzar School** (10, 11; FS)
*Note: Interested 10th graders should participate in the spring semester of this program.*
This Idaho-based program emphasizes outdoor education as well as leadership and Spanish language development; for 4-6 weeks of the program, students travel to Chile for classes, language immersion and cultural exploration.

**Chewonki Semester School** (11; FS)
*Students take advantage of the school’s location on a Maine peninsula, exploring the area’s local ecosystems, tides, streams and shores in addition to standard academic courses.*

**CITYterm** (11, 12; FS)
*In addition to core courses, students explore the history and vibrant urban culture of New York City.*

**Coastal Studies for Girls** (10; FS)
*Note: Interested 10th graders should participate in the spring semester of this program.*
10th graders explore marine ecosystems as well as the history of the Maine coast during this semester program.

**Conserve School** (11; FS)
*Environmental science is the focus of this Idaho-based program, and a core academic program is supplemented with backpacking trips and an emphasis on environmental stewardship.*
**High Mountain Institute** (11; FS)
Students are challenged to embrace both rigorous academics and experiential learning in this Colorado-based program. Students participate in wilderness expeditions, including treks to the area’s mountains and canyons. No outdoor experience necessary.

**Island School** (11; FS)
Based in the Bahamas, this program gives students hands-on opportunities to learn about ecological science; even core classes like English and History focus on stories of the islands and sea. Students also participate in experiential programs such as training for an open-ocean swim, sea kayaking and diving.

**Mountain School** (11; FS)
Located in rural Vermont, this program combines academics and hard work—when classes aren’t in session, students and faculty work together to maintain the school’s farm, including feeding animals, planting and harvesting.

**Outdoor Academy** (10; FS)
*Note: Interested 10th graders should participate in the spring semester of this program.*
The great outdoors of North Carolina is the classroom, and in addition to core courses, students develop wilderness skills as well as participate in camping, climbing and rafting trips in the area.

**Oxbow School** (11, 12; FS)
Students interested in visual art might consider this California-based program. In addition to standard academic courses, students also enroll in a variety of art classes emphasizing different types of media.

**School Year Abroad** (11, 12; full year)
SYA offers year-long study programs in four countries: China, France, Italy and Spain. In France and Spain, students take several classes in the local language; in Italy and China, most classes are conducted in English. All students live in a homestay during their time abroad.

**Traveling School** (10-12; FS)
*Note: Interested 10th graders should participate in the spring semester of this program.*
As the name suggests, this school doesn’t stay in one place! Students can participate in semester programs in Southern Africa or Latin America. Core courses are available, but electives are based on location, and emphasize local culture and issues.

**Woolman Semester** (11, 12; FS)
Peace, justice and sustainability are the key themes of this California program. Founded in the Quaker tradition, classes include global issues, nonviolent communication and peace studies in addition to traditional courses.

**Other Extension Programs**
The Head of Upper School and grade deans will consider extension programs and other leaves of absence on a case-by-case basis. Please be in touch directly to begin this conversation.
Extension Program—Intent to Apply

Students interested in participating in an extension program should complete the information below and submit to their grade dean by January 1 in the academic year before they wish to participate.

The Head of Upper School and grade deans will review Intent to Apply forms to determine which students are eligible to participate. Only those students deemed eligible will be permitted to apply directly to their chosen extension programs; students should not submit any application materials to extension programs until approved to do so by the Head of Upper School and grade deans.

A complete Intent to Apply request includes the following items:

- Intent to Apply form
- Statement of Interest
- Graduation Requirements Chart

Student Information

Name: ____________________________ Grade: _______ Advisor: ____________________________

Extension program in which you are interested: _____________________________________________

Which semester would you like to participate, if applicable? __________________________________

Statement of Interest

On a separate, typed page, explain your interest in the extension program listed above, how participation in this particular program would benefit you as a student, and how you would share your experiences with the NCS community upon your return.

Student Submission Statement

I have discussed my interest in this extension program with my parent(s)/guardian(s) as well as with my advisor.

_________________________   __________________________   __________________________
Student Signature            Parent/Guardian Signature         Advisor Signature