



Academics and Curriculum

Cornerstone Academy

607 Harvard Street

Oak Park, IL 60304

312-600-0953

Core Curriculum

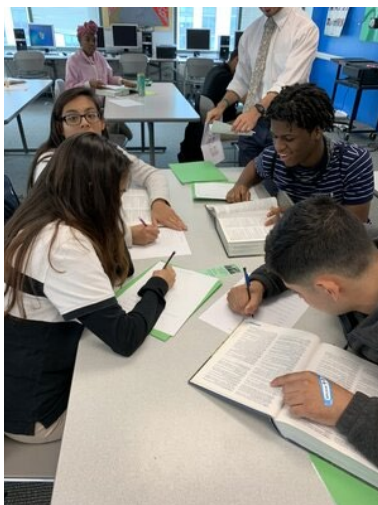
Cornerstone Academy is a State of Illinois Recognized School; hence, its graduates are eligible for Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) awards and scholarships when applying to colleges. Classes come from the core of the State of Illinois curriculum. Additional courses are offered through partner agencies and part-time staff.

Small Classes

Cornerstone Academy provides students with a family-like environment conducive to learning, offering highly individualized instruction. Combined with our focused student-to-faculty ratio, we can provide personalized attention and support to each of our students. Class size is typically between 7-12 students.

The Academy is typically a two-year program or less as the average student enrolls at age 16 with 10 credits. The Academy helps these students finish their high school program.

While college entrance requirements vary, the best preparation for college, work, and the ACT exam is to be an avid reader and to take full advantage of the course offerings in all the academic areas.



Graduation Requirements

Bible *0.5 credits*

Language Arts *4.0 credits*

Writing *2.0 years (1 year must be an English course and 1 year may be part of any course offered)*

Mathematics *3.0 credits (must include algebra 1 and geometry)*

Science *2.0 credits*

Social Studies *2.0 credits (must include U.S. History or equivalent)*

Chicago Geography *0.25 credits (a social studies class)*

Cooperative Work *1.0 credits (part-time after-school job held for 3 consecutive months)*

Consumer Educ. *0.25 credits*

Health *0.50 credits*

Flexible Credits *5.5 credits*

20 Total Credits Needed for Graduation also include:

- ✓ two years of Writing
- ✓ 50 hours Community Service



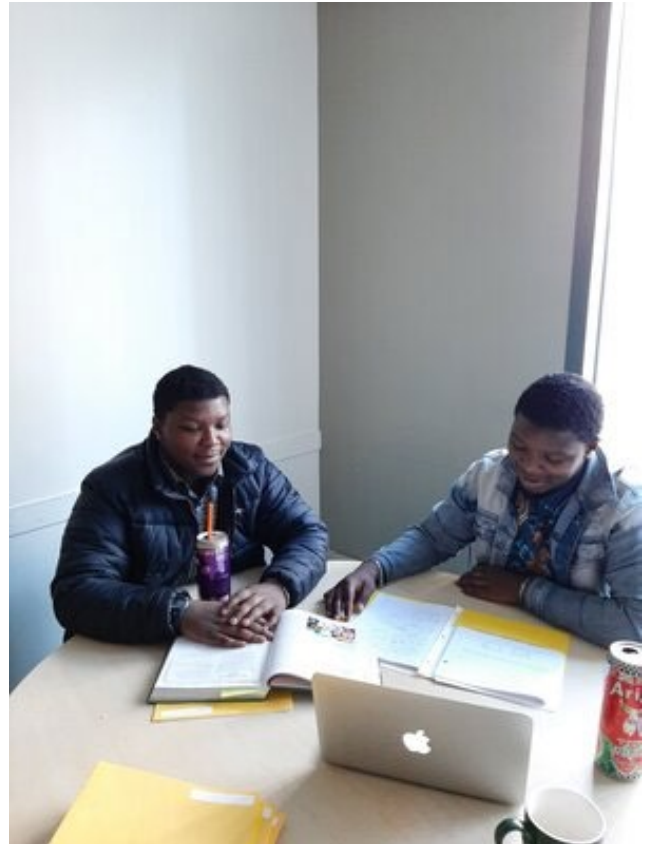
The School Day

The school day begins at 8:30 and ends at 3:30 on Fridays, 3:00 on Mondays through Thursdays. The regular day typically includes the following:

- ✓ Three 60-minute periods, 5 days per week (English, math, writing)
- ✓ A 50-minute period, 5 days per week (science, social studies)
- ✓ A 50-minute period, 4 days per week (enrichment, senior seminar, health)
- ✓ A 90-minute period, 1 day per week (physical education)
- ✓ A 50-minute period, 1 day per week (group psychology)
- ✓ A 20-minute period, 1 day per week (advisor/advisee time)
- ✓ A 40-minute lunch, 5 days per week

We also provide three to four Two-Week Block classes per year: one in late August, one in January, one in March, and one in May. For two weeks we schedule the following:

- ✓ A 3-hour period, for 10 days (research paper)
- ✓ A 50-minute period, for 10 days (enrichment math/English, senior seminar or health)
- ✓ A 2-hour period for 8 days, and 150 period day for 2 days (art)



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Curriculum

Cornerstone Academy aligns itself with the Common Core standards. The courses are given at the college preparatory level. Cornerstone Academy does not offer Honor or Advanced Placement coursework.

Grade Reports

Grades are updated every week (save in a Two-Week Block schedule) on RenWeb, the school software. Report cards are mailed home quarterly. Credits are given quarterly. Both semester credits and quarter credits appear on a student's permanent record. Some courses, like Group Psychology or Enrichment, may be given in smaller increments than the quarter credit.

Credits

Students, typically, can earn 7.0 credits per year. We do not divide our school up by freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior rankings. But we do make a point of working with seniors in a special way, preparing them for the world of work and college with certain classes and assignments. We will consider a student a senior when they have 12 credits.

Grading Scale

| Letter Grade | Number Grade | GPA |
|--------------|--------------|-----|
| A | 95-99 | 4 |
| A- | 93-94 | 4 |
| B+ | 91-92 | 3 |
| B | 87-90 | 3 |
| B- | 85-86 | 3 |
| C+ | 83-84 | 2 |
| C | 79-82 | 2 |
| C- | 77-78 | 2 |
| D+ | 75-76 | 1 |
| D | 72-74 | 1 |
| D- | 70-71 | 1 |
| F | Under 70 | 0 |

Overview of the two-year schedule

Year One

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Bible | English |
| Medieval Art | Writing |
| Health or English/Math Enrichment | Pre-Algebra, Algebra, or Geometry |
| Group Psychology | U.S. History, Columbus – 1900 |
| Research Writing Course | Integrated Science – Biochemistry |

Year Two

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Medieval Art | Writing |
| Senior Seminar | Geometry or Algebra 2 |
| Group Psychology | U.S. History, 1900 – 2013 |
| Research Writing Course | Integrated Science – Physical Sciences |
| Cooperative Work Assignment | Bible |
| English | |

Course Descriptions



English

The English courses emphasize the importance of writing effectively, having a command of good grammar, reading literature critically and appreciating a variety of genres, themes, authors, and ideas.

- **English 2 (high-level), Yr. 1 (1 credit):** Students gain competence in writing skills (essay writing) and the ability to read critically the various genres such as short story, fiction and non-fiction, poetry, drama, and the novel. Emphasis is on vocabulary, note-taking, paragraph and essay writing, and careful reading.

- **English 2 (high-level)**, Yr. 2 (1 credit): Students continue to gain competence in writing skills (essay writing) and the ability to read critically the various genres such as short story, fiction and non-fiction, poetry, drama, and the novel. Emphasis is on vocabulary, note-taking, paragraph and essay writing, and careful reading.
- **English 1 (low-level)**, Yr. 1 (1 credit): Students gain improved competence in writing skills (essay writing) and ability to read critically the various genres such as short story, fiction and non-fiction, poetry, drama, and the novel. A strong emphasis is also placed on vocabulary and basic reading comprehension.
- **English 1 (low-level)**, Yr. 2 (1 credit): Students gain improved competence in writing skills (essay writing) and ability to read critically the various genres such as short story, fiction and non-fiction, poetry, drama, and the novel. A strong emphasis is also placed on vocabulary and basic reading comprehension.
- **Research Class** (0.25 credit): Students learn the steps in the writing process, from prewriting to a final draft, stressing notetaking, outlining, rough drafts, and final drafts.
- **Writing** (1 credit): Students learn to use correct writing and grammar tactics in written assignments. Using proper grammar students will complete essays and reports from the following genres: description, narration, analysis, classification, and explanation. Emphasis is placed on discovering main ideas, making inferences, distinguishing between opinion and fact, and using context clues with vocabulary.

Mathematics

- **Basic Mathematics** (1 credit) Students will learn basic concepts needed as prerequisites for understanding algebra and geometry. These concepts will include the following: whole numbers, systems of measurement, geometric shapes, and real-world math (fractions, decimals, percents).
- **Algebra 1** (1 credit): Students learn to generalize arithmetic operations, to solve and graph equations and to apply algebra in problem solving. Emphasis is placed on developing reasoning skills, communicating mathematically and making connections between mathematics and other fields of study.
- **Geometry** (1 credit): Geometry enables students to connect the physical and visual world with algebra, to become independent thinkers and learners, and to strengthen their intuitive skills. Transformations, constructions, algebraic and geometric properties, deductive and inductive reasoning, geometric concepts with respect to the coordinate plane, and three-dimensional objects are some of the topics studied.

- **Algebra 2** (1 credit): Algebra 2 reinforces the concepts and skills of Algebra 1 and introduces the topics necessary for further study in mathematics. It includes a study of expressions, equations, inequalities, functions, graphs, linear systems, quadratic functions and equations, polynomials and polynomial functions, radical functions, and rational exponents.

Biblical Studies

- **New Testament** (0.25 - 0.75 credit) This course will cover topic such as understanding the life of Jesus in the Gospels, comparing the Old and New Testaments, becoming familiar with the historical setting of the New Testament, and understanding major biblical themes and how they relate to life today. An emphasis is placed on the stories, not the epistles, of the New Testament.
- **Old Testament** (0.25 - 0.75 credit) This course will cover the biblical books Genesis through Samuel with an emphasis placed on reading the Bible and learning the basic story line and themes running through it.

Science

- **Interdisciplinary Science 1** (1 credit) Students study ecology, atomic structure and bonding, genetics, cell biology, and human anatomy.
- **Interdisciplinary Science 2** (1 credit) Students study motion, energy, density, center of gravity, electricity, astronomy, and aerodynamics.

Social Studies

- **U. S. History from the Discoveries of America to 1899** (1 credit) In this year-long course, students will learn the historical events that lead to the discovery and creation of the United States of America. They will cover such historical events as the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War and the Era of Expansion.
- **U. S. History from 1900 to Present** (1 credit) In this year-long course, students will study such historical topics as the development of the presidency, Prohibition, World War I and World War II, and the development of industrialized America.
- **Consumer Education** (0.25 credit) Students learn to budget, manage time and make wise consumer choices based on their rights and responsibilities as citizens in the consumer society.

- **Urban Survival** (0.25 credit) In this course students will learn how to navigate the City of Chicago without the use of phones and GPS devices. Students memorize the major streets of the city; they learn to read city maps; they learn to use the parts of the phone book; and they learn to physically take the CTA/RTA systems and find locations.

Fine Arts

- **Medieval Studies** (0.25 credit) Students help prepare for a large Medieval Feast for the Christmas season. They split into groups, some of them learning to be jesters and juggle and do magic; some learning to play recorder; some painting large medieval-like murals; others preparing a large Christmas play. All these teams come together in a large holiday presentation.

Physical Education

- **Physical Education** (0.25 credit per year) This course, as the Solheim gym allows, engages the students in activities like basketball, walleyball, volley ball, bombardment, jogging, walking, swimming, soccer, softball, and ultimate Frisbee. Participation and sportsmanship are emphasized.
- **Health** (0.25 credit) This course stresses the parts and functions of the major systems of the human body. Diseases of the major systems are also a focus. Topics such as nutrition, alcohol, tobacco, drug use and abuse, the prevention of diseases, including STDs are herein also discussed.

Electives

- **Cooperative Work** (1 credit) Each student must hold a part-time job (volunteer or paid) for a consecutive three months (or the equivalent). The three month job should average 12 hours per week. The job, if it is a paid job, must take out the taxes. If it is a volunteer job, it must meet with staff approval, which usually means it must be for a not-for-profit business.
- **Senior Seminar** (0.5 credit) Seniors herein sign up for their ACT tests, fill out forms for FASFA, go to college fairs, apply to colleges, create resumes, visit college, and listen to visiting college representatives.
- **Group Psychology** (0.125 credit) In small groups managed by psychologists, students explore issues pertaining to school and work: study habits, test-taking skills, interview skills, and more.