

Academy of Classical Studies Newsletter

November 2022

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Important Dates

12/2: [Link Crew applications](#) due

12/8 - 12/12: AHS Fall Theatre
[Almost, Maine](#)

12/7: [ACS Speaker Series](#) - 10:35am

12/10: [AHS Winter Formal](#) - 7:00pm

12/13: [Winter Wonderbrains](#) -4:30pm

12/16 - 12/17: AHS Fall Theatre
[Musical Kickoff to the Holidays](#)

12/16 - 12/21: Final Exams

1/19: ACS Parent Board Mtg - 11:30am



The Academy of Classical Studies 2022-2023

ACS Parent Board Update

The Academy of Classical Studies parent board works closely with **ACS Assistant Principal, Elizabeth Jenkins**, as well as **Director of Academies, Lacy Blakley**, in planning and supporting the staff and students of the Classical Academy.

ACS Parent Board leadership *Next meeting: Thursday, January 19th @ 11:30am (via Zoom)*

President - Jacy Donovan

VP PTSA liaison - Leslie Davenport

Volunteer Coordinator - Lauren Whelan

Parent Mingle - Lily Lloyd, Megan Sink

Teacher Appreciation - Elise Bridges, Molly Jones

Speaker Series - Denise Belkin Anderson (**seeking co-chairs**)

Fundraising & Community Partners - Jacy Donovan, Robyn Malloy

Senior Breakfast - Shelley Kilday, Jennifer Foucher, Amy Corbett

Newsletter & Secretary - Amy Beisenherz

Membership

We are always welcoming new members! Additionally, to continue our popular [Speaker Series](#), we are looking for **co-chairs to assist Denise Belkin Anderson** in securing speakers and coordinating the webinar with our Academy Director. Please reach out to board president Jacy Donovan j.donovan@sbcglobal.net.

ACS Fall Parent Mingle

THANK YOU to all ACS parents and staff that joined us for the Fall Parent Mingle last month. Many thanks to **Lily Lloyd** and **Megan Sink** for organizing and to **Gottesman Residential Real Estate** for providing the perfect space for gathering. We hope to see you at our next Parent Mingle in the spring!



ACS Fall Fundraising

2022 Community Partners Campaign



Our goal for ACS is to raise \$25,000 by December 31 to provide scholarships to ensure every student is able to participate in our learning experiences.

DONATIONS AT ANY LEVEL ARE NEEDED AND WELCOME!

Please join us as one of our Community Partners and make a tax-deductible donation now

CLICK HERE TO DONATE: [ACS COMMUNITY PARTNERS](https://form.jotform.com/212635159776162)

<https://form.jotform.com/212635159776162>

WE ALL TRAVEL, OR WE DON'T TRAVEL AT ALL!

2022-2023 Academy-based Travel for Academy for Classical Studies

- * **9th Grade:** Truth, Beauty, & Goodness Scavenger Hunt; Pillar Project Field Experience
- * **10th Grade:** World Religions Field Experience and Humanity's Connection with Nature; Overnight Learning Expedition in Marfa, TX
- * **11th Grade:** Students enrolled in AP US History/American Studies travel to New Mexico
- * **12th Grade:** ACS Culminating Learning Expedition to Italy

Community Partners is an annual fall fundraiser that brings AHS families and local businesses together to raise funds for travel scholarships, field trips, and curriculum-based learning expeditions. **More than 25% of our students require financial assistance** and Community Partners donations help to ensure **equal opportunity** for all students, regardless of a student's ability to pay.

Many of you have already supported your academy by paying your student's annual Program Fee for the school year. The Academy Program Fee helps lower or completely cover the cost of local trips. Community Partners is an additional, academy-specific fundraiser that gives you the opportunity to directly support our AHS students in need.

Fundraising at the high school level can be confusing and parents may feel like they are repeatedly being asked for money. Check out [AHS Fundraising 101](#) to understand all the options for supporting our school.

Teacher Appreciation

100% of Academy Program Fees and Community Partners Campaign contributions are used to directly support programs and travel for ACS students. Thus, our ACS Parent Board plans teacher appreciation events throughout the year to show our Classical Academy teachers and staff how grateful we are for their hard work and dedication.

★**THANK YOU!**★

Our ACS teachers and staff would like to thank ACS students and their families for thinking of them at Thanksgiving!

Our next luncheon for ACS teachers and staff is scheduled for **Thursday, December 15th.**



You can still donate to ACS Teacher Appreciation efforts!

The ACS Board is collecting funds for Teacher Appreciation

We will provide things to the ACS teachers and staff throughout the year- lunches, snacks, gift cards for Christmas, and treats daily during teacher appreciation week.

Donations in the past have ranged from \$10-\$100!

Thank you!
Elise Bridges & Molly Jones
Teacher Appreciation Co-Chairs

Molly Jones
@mollyteamanjones



venmo

ACS Speaker Series

Thanks to **Denise Belkin Anderson** for taking the lead on the ACS Speaker Series. Denise could use the help of one or two additional co-chairs to assist in securing speakers and coordinating the webinars with our Academy Director. Please reach out to board president Jacy Donovan at j.donovan@sbcglobal.net

For our *next Speaker Series event*, we are honored and excited to welcome **Jeremiah Kuria**, Co-founder and Executive Director of [Ubuntu Life Foundation](#).



UBUNTU LIFE FOUNDATION

Wednesday, December 7 @ 10:35 AM (during FIT)
Jeremiah Kuria, Co-Founder & Executive Director, Ubuntu Life Foundation

Jeremiah Kuria will be sharing about the Ubuntu Life partnership that uses the power of global commerce to create social impact for mothers and children in Kenya. The partnership includes Ubuntu Life PBC, a public benefit corporation founded in 2019 that makes beautiful products for sale in Kenya and internationally, and the Ubuntu Life Foundation. Every dollar donated to the Ubuntu Life Foundation has a direct impact on lives in Kenya.

The [ACS Speaker Series](#) is a great way for students, teachers and parents to engage with important people in our community through a 30 minute webinar during FIT (Wed/Thu/Fri). The speaker encompasses/ties their profession/passion to the 4 pillars of learning: Think Logically, Speak Eloquently, Write Persuasively, and Live Ethically.

- All are welcome! The speaker series is open to the entire Austin High student body and will take place on FIT days at 10:35AM.
- **Zoom webinar / QR code** will be posted on the ACS bulletin board and in campus communications, including the Maroon Update, PTSA Facebook, and Classical Academy Blend announcements.
- Classical Academy students will receive **2 civic engagement points** for each speaker event added to x2vol.

ACS Travel

Class of 2023 Italy Trip

The Italy trip is booked for ACS Seniors to Florence & Rome - April 2023!

Class of 2024 Italy Trip

Current ACS Juniors, reserve your spot for April 2024! Starting payments now is a great way to make this more financially feasible. Follow this link to sign up today! www.eftours.com/2556770vb

Find more pictures of our last trip on the ACS Website
<http://www.austinhighclassical.org/italy.html>



9th Grade Signature Experience



In October, our Classical freshmen got to travel to various places around Austin to look at traditional and non-traditional types of art and how they relate to truth, beauty and goodness! We had lots of fun and got to see some awesome works of art!

Check out more pictures on the ACS Facebook page [here](#)



10th Grade Signature Experience

In November, our Classical Academy sophomores took their annual world religions field trip. This gave them a



chance to visit several religious institutions around the Austin area and learn about their beliefs. This

is part of our cross curriculum unit in their English and World History classes looking at the stories that we tell, the hero's journey tradition in literature, and how those stories influence the world's religions and therefore world history. It was a beautiful day for the kids to see truth and beauty around their town and to learn about the many beliefs of Austin citizens.



In the spring, Sophomores will visit **Marfa** (April 19-22) & American Studies Juniors will travel to **New Mexico**.

General questions about ACS travel may be directed to ACS Assistant Principal, **Elizabeth Jenkins** at elizabeth.jenkins@austinisd.org , 512-414-7207.

9th Grade News

Geometry

Coordinate Geometry where we are learning to combine Geometry and Algebra.

English

ELA I students are continuing work with argumentation skills which will culminate in an essay analyzing rhetorical strategies used in an article about mindset and have just begun to study The Five Love Languages of Teenagers. Students have taken the quiz and know their language and will teach their peers about it after the Thanksgiving break.

World Geography

We are wrapping up our Culture of Me Projects this week. The kids have done an amazing job and have hopefully had a lot of fun learning about not only the countries and cultures that they chose but also those of their classmates. We are starting Unit 3 (The Americas) this week and the kids will have a little work to complete over the break. Once we return from break, it will be a whirlwind as we go through the rest of Unit 3 and start prepping for our final exam!

****Are your students ready for finals?*****

The **Winter Wonderbrains** event, a study session for freshmen hosted by Link Crew is **Tuesday, December 13 @ 4:30 - 6:15 pm** for Classical Studies! If a student plays a sport that has a game Tuesday night, they may attend Wednesday, December 14 instead. ***Students can earn 3 points of extra credit on 3 finals for attending the event.*** Link Crew students and teachers of all subjects will be there to help your student prepare better for their final exams. It's a great event and highly recommended by all teachers! Please help encourage your students to come!!

10th Grade News

We are constantly engaging our Classical Academy sophomores to expand on their discoveries of Truth, Beauty and Goodness as they learn to think logically, write persuasively, speak eloquently, and live ethically.

English

Advanced Students are wrapping up the first semester unit looking at the relationship between the Hero's Journey myths we've told for generations and the World Religions they've been studying in Ms. Caspers' class. They have just finished two different novels (The Ramayana and Siddhartha) and are writing an essay analyzing the Hero's Journey archetypes present in both novels.

Grade Level students are finishing the novel Dances With Wolves and writing their Personal Narrative essay. They have just finished two different novels and are writing an essay analyzing the Hero's Journey archetypes present in both novels. All the English II students are Writing Persuasively and Speaking Eloquently to present their World Religions projects that count for a major grade in both their English and History classes.

World History

Students will be ***Thinking Logically*** about the origins of revolutions around the world (American, French, Latin American, and Industrial Revolutions). They will be ***Writing Persuasively*** and ***Speaking Eloquently*** when they present their World Religions major project after the Thanksgiving break.

Algebra II

Students are ***Speaking Eloquently*** and ***Thinking Logically*** in their Linear Programming Essays and Thinking Logically to prepare for the final exam.

Chemistry

"Hello! My name is **Preston Smalley** and it is my pleasure to introduce myself as I will be taking over in Mr. Soto's absence for Chemistry and Advanced Chemistry. I wanted to let you know a bit about myself as I know your students have been in an unstable situation with these classes, so my hope is to restore a sense of stability for them. I am currently obtaining certification through the UTeach program at UT Austin. I graduated from UT in 2020 with a bachelor's degree in Physics



but I decided to go back to school to seek certification for teaching. Over the past year, I have spent a lot of time in classrooms across Austin, learning and honing my skills as a teacher. Though my background is in physics, I am well versed in chemistry and feel equipped to teach the subject. The students have spent the last week getting to know me and reviewing the content that they have covered so far. After the Thanksgiving break, we will continue covering atomic theory and begin talking about the different types of atomic bonds. It is my honor to be a part of your students' education. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to my email at preston.smalley@austinisd.org. Thank you!"

11th Grade News: American Studies

American Studies is available for the Academy for Classical Studies and the Academy for Global Studies students only. The English and US History curriculum is similar to the traditional humanities core courses at AHS as far as rigor and learning objectives, but has a more interdisciplinary pedagogy that allows for content alignment, project-based learning, and curricular connections to the ACS and AGS pillars of learning. Students will explore the American experience by analyzing literary and historical texts in order to develop a sophisticated understanding of American history and culture while growing into critical thinkers who effectively use language to communicate ideas.

12th Grade News

Seniors do not take ACS-specific courses, but many students are taking electives to help them qualify for the Graduation Distinction from the Academy for Classical Studies. To be eligible for the **Graduation Distinction**, 2023 graduates should:

- Complete 1 year of Latin and 3 Fine Arts/Humanities electives (see approved courses on [ACS website](#)), OR students may take 4 ACS-approved Fine Arts/Humanities electives if they opt out of Latin
- Document 70+ [Civic Engagement Points](#) (this number is adjusted due to Covid), and
- Complete a Senior Seminar Experience

The **Senior Seminar Experience** includes several options: the Service Learning Design Project, the Research/Thesis Track, or completion of an Internship (on-campus and off-campus internships are offered). Seniors who are hoping to earn the Graduation Distinction who are not currently enrolled in a Senior Seminar course for the fall should double check schedules and/or meet with counselors to be sure the Senior Seminar Experience is added to their schedule for the spring.

Did You Know?

Link Crew

Hello, all sophomores and juniors!! Apply to Link Crew for next school year! Link Crew is a leadership organization here on campus that helps freshmen, new students, runs Maroon Roundup and advisories, and helps students with special needs. Pick up an application in Attra's room 171 or Ault's room 321. **Applications are due to Ms. Attra Friday, December 2nd.**

Be a leader at Austin High!

Austin High Winter Formal



Austin High Theatre Productions

Come out and support our ACS cast members in Austin High's theater program! Plus, it's a great opportunity for ACS students to earn civic engagement points.

Almost, Maine

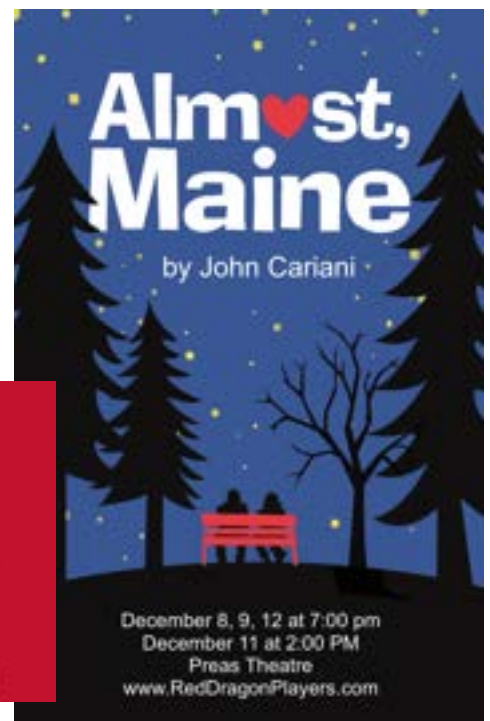
December 8, 9, 12 @ 7pm & December 11 @ 2pm

One cold, clear, winter night, as the northern lights hover in the star-filled sky above, the residents of Almost, Maine, find themselves falling in and out of love in unexpected and hilarious ways.

Musical Kickoff to the Holidays

December 16 & 17

A fun evening of holiday music, stories, and short plays. Dessert, coffee, hot tea, and hot cider are included in the price of the ticket.



Tickets On Sale December 1st!

www.reddragonplayers.com

Civic Engagement Points

[Civic Engagement Points](#) are awarded for civic engagement tasks and activities that align with the Classical Academy pillars of truth, beauty, and goodness. **Check out the list of activities that can earn you points on our Academy website:** [Truth points](#), [beauty points](#), [goodness points](#).

To earn an ACS Graduation Distinction, civic engagement points must be logged, verified, and approved by May 1 of senior year.

The goal for civic engagement points is typically 80 points, but the numbers needed for distinction eligibility have been adjusted due to Covid/pandemic issues. Here's a timeline of how we are adjusting back to that expectation:

- Class of 2023: 70 points
- Class of 2024 and beyond: 80 points*

*subject to change if we are unable to plan some of our typical experiences that lead to points

For all groups, an additional award (certificate + medal) is given to students who earn 120+ hours. In ACS, this is called the ***Classy Award***. This number did not change, even during the pandemic, because it's an "above and beyond" award.

Keep in mind that the points are only one eligibility requirement. To receive the ACS Graduation Distinction, students also need to have academy-specific **coursework** and complete the **Senior Seminar** Experience:

- Coursework = 3 Fine Arts/Humanities electives + 1 year of Latin OR 4 Fine Arts/Humanities electives, if students opt out of Latin. Those approved electives are listed on the [ACS website](#).
- Senior Seminar for ACS = Thesis, Service Learning Design Project (collaborative), or Internship

For further information, watch this loom screencast explaining Academy graduation distinctions that was recently shared in all senior advisories: [Academy Distinctions](#)

ACS Communications

Newsletters will be sent out via email to all ACS families as well as posted to the ACS website and social media. Please reach out to [Amy Beisenherz](#) with information you would like included in the next newsletter.

Check the [ACS Website](#) for the latest newsletters and information on speaker series, travel, and fundraising.

Make sure to follow [The Academy for Classical Studies at Austin High](#) on Facebook!