

St. Anne's-Belfield School

Arts Department Philosophy Statement

The Upper School Fine Arts Department includes both performing and visual arts, offering instrumental and choral music, drama, drawing and painting, photography, digital arts, and ceramics. The department's goal is to introduce and/or guide the development of skills while nurturing creative exploration and the discovery of an individual artistic voice. With its one-year graduation requirement and advanced offerings in each discipline, this department offers the possibility for each student to explore a broad array of options or to pursue a single form of expression in depth. The process of creating art in any form provides unique opportunities to learn perseverance, creative problem-solving, communication, and collaboration. As students reflect deeply through artistic endeavors, they come to understand the lives and feelings of others and themselves. By creating art with their voices, hands, eyes, and imaginations, students work toward a true balance of body, mind, heart, and soul.

Computer Science Department Philosophy Statement

The Computer Science (CS) Department is a safe space for risk-taking; making mistakes, thinking outside the box, and solving problems with no evident solution are all integral parts of the process that teach students how to learn from both setbacks and successes. CS is a discipline and a way of thinking that incorporates design thinking, logical reasoning, creativity, and problem-solving skills. CS encourages students to take initiative by proactively searching for questions, problems, and creative solutions without waiting for direct instruction. By extension, the department is committed to offering courses that are accessible and affirming to students at all levels and academic backgrounds, beginning with our introductory offering of Computer Science Principles. Students are at the core of the CS Program from choices they make in interdisciplinary CS integration projects across the curriculum to leadership and peer mentoring opportunities like co-teaching courses and organizing our community-wide Spark outreach events.

Humanities Department Philosophy Statement

To prepare students for the demands of an increasingly global and complex world, the Humanities Department embraces interdisciplinary study, emphasizing the fundamental skills of reading, writing, analysis, interpretation, problem solving, collaboration, and persuasive communication as students interact with foundational "texts" in the broadest sense, works that include literature, history, art, architecture, philosophy, and the wisdom traditions. The department encourages students to become more informed, engaged, and empathetic citizens. Such cultural empathy is increasingly needed in a world whose boundaries are shrinking. By fostering habits of self-reflection, we hope to instill in students an appreciation for introspection—to allow them time to make sense of and synthesize their experiences. Students are asked to recognize the importance of cultivating their minds and nurturing their souls. As students explore a rich cultural canon of words and images, they should develop an appreciation for how the Humanities can deepen their sense of themselves, their community, and their world.

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Mathematics Department Philosophy Statement

The Mathematics Department believes that *all* students can learn mathematics to high levels and appreciate the beauty and connectedness inherent in this subject. To that end, the department guides students in their development as mathematical thinkers by teaching necessary skills and concepts, instilling a growth mindset, demonstrating and practicing sound processes, and imparting habits of metacognition. Students will be equipped with the habits and attitudes needed to continue their investigation of mathematics and connect mathematics to the world around them.

Science Department Philosophy Statement

The Science Department endeavors to leverage the innate curiosity and pattern-seeking in students to foster a lifelong interest in the material world in all its aspects, natural and made, living and inanimate, known and still-mysterious. Students engage in the process of scientific exploration by applying critical-thinking and evidence-based approaches to understanding. While recognizing essential content is necessary, we emphasize depth of understanding over breadth of topics to develop a scaffold of core concepts and the skills to acquire factual knowledge independently. To foster our goal of a scientifically informed and engaged citizenry, experiences extend beyond the boundaries of science to examine ethical questions and the impact of the application of technologies made possible by science on people and on the world. To prepare graduates for potential careers in science, opportunities are provided for students to pursue studies equivalent to those at the undergraduate level, including student-directed work and independent studies.

World Languages Department Philosophy Statement

The World Language Department believes that communication is at the heart of global citizenship. Languages are the bedrock of cultures, and the department strives to equip students with tools to experience, appreciate, and reflect on various cultures, including their own. The department works to promote linguistic and cultural literacy and proficiency, while cultivating a life-long appreciation for, and curiosity about, languages and the cultures that they reflect. The interdisciplinary skills of reflection, empathy, curiosity, risk-taking, and intercultural competence are at the core of language learning and serve students in all areas of their lives. These are qualities that will be increasingly important as our students leave the School and become change-makers in our increasingly connected world.