

School Leadership

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School Information

CEEB School Code: 240647

K-12 Enrollment: 1385

73% Students of Color

47% Qualify for Free or Reduced
Lunch

Authorizer: Friends of Education

School of Rhetoric Faculty Information

Student/Teacher Ratio: 8:1

Average Class Size: 17

Number of Faculty: 27

62% with Master's Degree

18% with Ph.D. or J.D.

Highlights, Awards, & Recognition

U.S. News & World Report: 2023

Best High School - #9 in Minnesota

Best High School for STEM - #1 in

Minnesota; #15 Nationwide



<https://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/minnesota/districts/parnassus-preparatory-charter-school/parnassus-prep-school-rhetoric-200034>

ABOUT PARNASSUS & OUR SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

Parnassus Preparatory School is a public, tuition-free, K-12, classical charter school serving a diverse body of students in the northwest suburbs of the Twin Cities. Our School of Rhetoric serves students in grades 9-12 and prepares them to pursue their intellectual passions at the university level.

The mission of Parnassus Preparatory School is to provide students with a classical education, grounded in the classical Trivium, that demands their best in intellectual achievement and character development.

Parnassus' School of Rhetoric offers a rigorous, liberal arts education, grounded in the tools of rhetoric and inquiry. Our program focuses on:

- Socratic Method and questioning techniques across all subjects
- Harkness model of discussion-based learning in the humanities
- Emphasis on public speaking, including five years of required oratorical competition
- Liberal arts program encompassing the fundamentals of the arts, sciences, and humanities

HALLMARKS OF A PARNASSUS GRADUATE

We agree with Plato's assertion that the highest goal of education is to become good, both intellectually and morally, and to have high standards and expectations for our students. At Parnassus:

- All graduates write, edit, present, and defend a 20-25 page academic paper as part of the senior thesis.
- Over 90% of the class of 2024 has completed at least one course at the Advanced Placement or University of Minnesota College in the Schools level.
- Students develop a high level of personal and academic discipline to prepare for the rigor and workload of college and adult life.

Students engage with challenging, influential texts. Parnassus students:

- Read from original sources in history, dating back to Herodotus
- Read and discuss at least 40 unabridged books, including the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, *Don Quixote*, *The Brothers Karamazov*, *The Republic*, and *Pride and Prejudice* over their four years of study
- In mathematics and science courses, read and analyze a wide body of empirical studies, journal articles, and commentary to spark discussion and debate
- Study at least eight of Shakespeare's complete plays in depth and in the original language, including *Hamlet*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, and *Twelfth Night*

Students are challenged in a language-focused program. In our world and classical language courses:

- Attention is devoted to mastery of the underlying structure of the language, including grammar, syntax, and vocabulary, as well as reading from primary sources in the original language
- A minimum of 7 years of daily instruction in Latin is required, beginning in third grade
- At least one year of college-level Classical Greek is required in the upper school
- A minimum of 11 years of daily instruction in Spanish is required, beginning in kindergarten

Note: At many other schools, Latin has become a course for students who are "not good" at the study of foreign languages – ignoring the systematic study of grammar in favor of parties, food, movies, and cultural activities. This is *not* the case at Parnassus.

Diploma Requirements

Classical Diploma:

The Parnassus Classical Diploma requires additional coursework in the classical languages (Latin and/or Greek), sciences, and mathematics and reflects the school's most challenging and rigorous course of study. The Classical Diploma requires 29 credit units:

Latin & Greek: 4 Credits

English Literature: 4 Credits

History: 4 Credits

Science: 4 Credits

Math: 4 Credits

Spanish: 2 Credits

Fine Arts: 1 Credit

PE/Health: 1 Credit

Electives: 3 Credits

Rhetoric: 1 ½ Credits

Fourth Level Rhetoric/4R (12th Grade) Thesis: ½ Credit; Awarded after successful defense of thesis

Standard Diploma:

The standard Parnassus diploma requires 25 credit units:

Latin & Greek: 2 Credits

English Literature: 4 Credits

History: 4 Credits

Science: 3 Credits

Math: 3 Credits

Spanish: 2 Credits

Fine Arts: 1 Credit

PE/Health: 1 Credit

Electives: 3 Credits

Rhetoric: 1 ½ Credits

Fourth Level Rhetoric/4R Thesis: ½ Credit; Awarded after successful defense of thesis

These requirements represent the minimum number of credits required to graduate from Parnassus. To build the strongest academic foundation in preparation for applying to selective colleges, it is strongly recommended that scholars go beyond the graduation requirements in core academic disciplines through their Fourth Level Rhetoric (senior) year.

Thesis Requirement

All 4R (senior) students are required to participate in the thesis program, which includes the writing, presentation, and defense of an original argument. The thesis is a year-long paper of 20 - 25 pages, completed in addition to the normal course load. Scholars must complete a thesis defense, a public presentation, and an oral examination with a faculty panel. In addition to receiving credit towards graduation, students who excel in the presentation and defense are awarded Latin honors in the thesis.

COLLEGE-PREPARATORY CURRICULUM

School of Rhetoric students have the opportunity to take many honors-level courses, college courses through the University of Minnesota (CIS), and Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

Reading Period

As a rigorous, college preparatory school, Parnassus students are expected to keep up with a substantial workload for their courses. To support students in their academic endeavors, all Parnassus School of Rhetoric scholars have a Reading Period on Wednesday afternoons, a time designated for quiet study, reading, and meeting with faculty. This is not a study hall and is not taken in place of a credit-bearing course.

Honors Courses

Parnassus honors-level courses are similar in rigor to college-level courses. Students must have a minimum of a 3.5 GPA and be recommended by the instructor. Throughout their four-year plan of study, students have the option of taking the following required courses with honors distinction:

ENG 209	Ancient Literature	SCI 809-I	Honors Physics
ENG 210	Medieval – Modern Literature	SCI 813	Honors Chemistry *
ENG 211	American Literature	SCI 814	Honors Advanced Biology *
ENG 212	Great Works of English Literature	SCI 819	Honors Introduction to Botany
HIST 309	Ancient History & The Classical World	SCI 818	Honors Introduction to Astronomy
HIST 310	Medieval – Modern History		
HIST 311	Advanced Topics in U.S. History *		
HIST 312	American Civics & Economics		

Courses marked with an asterisk () prepare students for an Advanced Placement exam but cover more in-depth study of content than required by the College Board's Advanced Placement program.*

Advanced Placement/AP Courses

The following AP courses are currently offered:

HIST 313	AP Human Geography	MATH 651	AP Calculus BC
HIST 314	AP World History	MATH 641	AP Statistics
SCI 812	AP Environmental Science	MATH 690	AP Computer Science Principles
SCI 815	AP Physics I	HUM 1206	AP Psychology
MATH 650	AP Calculus AB		

University of Minnesota College in the Schools (CIS) Courses

The following courses may be taken for college credit, offered in partnership with the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities:

GRK 710	Beginning Classical Geek I	ENG 213	Introduction to Literature: Poetry, Drama, & Narrative
GRK 711	Beginning Classical Greek II	ENG 214	Writing Studio
LAT 404	Latin Prose		
LAT 405	Latin Poetry		

Post-Advanced Placement/College in the Schools Courses

The following courses are offered at a level of rigor equivalent to that of a 200- or 300- level university course and require either an honors, AP, or CIS course as a prerequisite:

GRK 712	Intermediate Classical Greek	LAT 407	Advanced Latin Poetry
LAT 406	Advanced Latin Prose – Epistles	SPAN 914	Spanish Literature

Humanities & Electives

SCI 820	Reading Across the Sciences	HUM 1209	Introduction to Philosophy
SCI 821	The History of Science	HUM 1210	Mock Trial
HUM 1201	Foundations of Art History	HUM 1211	Language, Proof, & Logic
HUM 1201	Foundations of Music History	HUM 1212	Topics in Art History: Classical Mythology in Western Art
HUM 1203	Music Appreciation: Great Works of Opera		
HUM 1204	Declamation & Historical Oration		

GRADING SYSTEM

To better meet the needs of scholars, Parnassus offers courses at different levels, although all levels are rigorous and challenging. Grades are weighted according to the level of study.

College Preparatory Level (4.0 scale)

Parnassus' standard courses move at a challenging pace with the level of difficulty and depth that will prepare students for study at the university level.

Honors, University of Minnesota College in Schools (CIS), and AP Level (4.5 scale)

Courses that are offered at this level include content and workload expectations at an even higher level of difficulty than our standard course of study. These courses receive the honors designation on the transcript and are graded on a weighted scale.

CLASS RANK

Parnassus does not rank students; however, at graduation, scholars may be awarded Latin honors in course or thesis, which provides a better measurement of the students' academic standing.

COLLEGE ACCEPTANCE AND MATRICULATION

Graduates from the classes of 2018-2023 were accepted at the following colleges and universities. Colleges and universities where Parnassus students have matriculated are indicated in bold.

American University

Anoka Technical College

Auburn University

Arizona State University-Tempe

Augsburg University

Barry University

Bethany Lutheran College

Bethel University (MN)

Brigham Young University- Provo

Bryn Mawr College

University of Calgary

Calvin University

Carleton College

Carroll College

Carroll University

Carthage College

University of Chicago

Claremont McKenna College

Coe College

Colorado Christian College

Concordia College-Moorhead

Concordia University-St. Paul

Cornell College

Creighton University

DePaul University

Dillard University

Drake University

Dunwoody College of Technology

Duquesne University

Gonzaga University

Gustavus Adolphus College

Hamline University

Hennepin Technical College

Howard University

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Illinois Institute of Technology

Indiana Bible College

Iowa State University

Lawrence University

Liberty University

Luther College

Macalester College

University of Manitoba

University of Maryland-College Park

Miami University-Ohio

University of Michigan

Michigan Technological University

Milwaukee School of Engineering

Minnesota North College

Minnesota State University-Mankato

Minnesota State University-Moorhead

University of Minnesota-Duluth

University of Minnesota-Twin Cities

University of Minnesota-Morris

Monmouth College

Mount Holyoke College

University of Nebraska -Lincoln

North Central University

North Dakota State University

North Hennepin Community College

North Park University

University of North Texas

Northern Michigan University

University of Northwestern-St. Paul

Northwestern University

Pomona College

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

College of St. Benedict (with Saint John's University)

Salve Regina University

Santa Clara University

Scripps College

Seton Hall University

Smith College

St. Catherine University

Saint Cloud State University

St. Olaf College

College of Saint Scholastica

University of St. Thomas (MN)

Southern Adventist University

University of Texas at Dallas

United States Air Force Academy

United States Naval Academy

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Wartburg College

Wellesley College

Winona State University

University of Wisconsin- Madison

University of Wisconsin -River Falls

University of Wisconsin - Stout

Worcester Polytechnic Institut