MISS PORTER'S SCHOOL

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SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

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November 2024

Miss Porter's School educates young women to become informed, bold, resourceful and ethical global citizens. We expect our graduates to shape a changing world.

Inspired by Sarah Porter's legacy as a trailblazer in girls' education, Miss Porter's School carries out her vision today by continuing to offer a rigorous and innovative education for young women. Miss Porter's School is different — historically, intentionally and successfully. We've been different, are different and will be different from any school, coed or single-gender, that most people have ever experienced. Our proven ability to develop strong female leaders has been replicated decade after decade with unquestionable outcomes.

As our curriculum continues to evolve in response to the changing world and the needs of our students, we are focused on establishing courses and programs that are engaging, relevant, interdisciplinary and experiential in nature. Our academic program is global in scope and highly personalized. It continues to emphasize the liberal arts, exposing girls to timeless questions while preparing them to address the pressing problems of our world. Additionally, our curriculum ensures that girls:

- Learn to innovate and create.
- Understand what it means to be an entrepreneur.
- Conduct original research.
- Complete projects within science, technology, entrepreneurship, arts and mathematics fields.
- Develop a deep understanding of the humanities and social sciences to address complex social issues.

Though Sarah Porter would not immediately recognize the Miss Porter's School of today as the same school she founded over 175 years ago, upon reflection, she would find that our goal today remains the same as hers in 1843: to provide the skills essential for young women. Rather than readying young women for domestic life, today's Miss Porter's School is preparing students to excel in college and beyond, to seek challenges and break gender barriers, to learn to innovate and create, and to understand what it means to be a leader. Our graduates are expected to shape a changing world, and Miss Porter's School provides the tools for them to do so.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

TIME	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
8:00-8:40	X Block	X Block	X Block	X Block	X Block
8:45-10:15	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3 8:45-9:55	Block 1	Block 2
10:20-11:00	Community Time	Community Time	Block 1 10:05-11:15	Community Time	Community Time
11:00-1:00	Early Lunch 11:00-11:25 / Block 2 11:05-12:35 / Block 2 11:30-1:00 / Late Lunch 12:35-1:00	Early Lunch 11:00-11:25 / Block 3 11:05-12:35 / Block 3 11:30-1:00 / Late Lunch 12:35-1:00	Block 2 11:25-12:35	Early Lunch 11:00-11:25 / Block 2 11:05-12:35 / Block 2 11:30-1:00 / Late Lunch 12:35-1:00	Early Lunch 11:00-11:25 / Block 3 11:05-12:35 / Block 3 11:30-1:00 / Late Lunch 12:35-1:00
1:05-1:45	Y Block / Office Hours	Y Block / Office Hours		Y Block / Office Hours	Y Block / Office Hours
1:50-3:20	Block 3	Block 1		Block 3	Block 1

Weekly Schedule Highlights

- Time for faculty collaboration or individual meetings with students during X Block.
- More sleep and a later start to each day, consistent with research about teenage sleep patterns.
- A significant break between each class to help students properly process what they learned and prepare for the next class that day.
- Community Time four times per week for assembly, advising and community life programming.
- Yearlong Y Block four times per week for music ensembles.
- Regular office hours for students to meet with teachers.
- Rotating blocks. Students do not have the same class at the same time five days per week.

Modular Block Trimester Schedule

Miss Porter's School operates on a modular block schedule. Rather than taking six yearlong classes, students take different classes each trimester, and classes meet in an extended block every day for the course of the 10-week trimester.

A traditional set of classes on a modular block schedule would look like the following.

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
English	History	Science
Free Period	Math	Elective
Art	Language	Free Period

Benefits of a Modular Block Schedule

- More active and engaging teaching.
- More focus on fewer things at one time.
- More impactful and lasting learning.
- Slower pace of the day (promotes greater health and wellness).
- Fewer homework assignments per night (allows students to engage more deeply with their studies).
- More sleep.

CURRICULUM: SAMPLE PROGRESSION BY GRADE

9th Grade

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
World Language	Humanities 9 (History and English)	
STEM 9: Environmental Lab Science & Conceptual Physics		Math
Intro to Inquiry / Health & Wellness	Art	Intro to TIE

- Introduction to Inquiry helps students develop habits and skills needed for academic success at Miss Porter's.
- Two-term integrated science course.
- Two-term integrated humanities course.
- Required Health and Wellness course.
- Required Introduction to Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (TIE) course.
- Trimester-intensive course in a world language (Chinese, French, Latin or Spanish) and in the appropriate level of math.
- Opportunity for a course in the arts. If a student wishes to save Art for later in their Porter's career, they may be able to double in a different discipline or have a free period.

10th Grade

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
United States History and Literature		World Language
Math	STEM 10: Biology and Chemistry	
Elective (Art, TIE, other)	Free Period	Elective (Art, TIE, other)

- Two-term integrated science course.
- Two-term integrated humanities course.
- Continued courses in math and a world language.
- Multiple opportunities for Art and TIE courses or other electives.
- Ability to double in a discipline.
- Students must take six blocks worth of courses, which allows them to have between one and three free periods over the course of the year.
- The 10th grade year will end with a mini-capstone project that will be the culmination of a student's first one to two years of study at Miss Porter's.

CURRICULUM: SAMPLE PROGRESSION BY GRADE

11th Grade

FALL	WINTER	SPRING	
The Heroic Female Voice	AIS Global Studies (GS) Intensive (includes an international travel component)	Programming & Robotics	Digital Photography
Precalculus		Physics	
Acting for Stage & Film	Business & Accounting for Entrepreneurs	Free Period	Chinese 3

- Double block, Advanced Interdisciplinary Seminar (AIS) Global Studies (GS) Intensive course with international travel embedded. Students will have the GS course in one of three trimesters, and that will be the only course they take during that trimester.
- Six additional blocks that students may fill by selecting from a myriad of disciplinary or interdisciplinary course offerings.

12th Grade

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
AIS Professional Experience in Economics: Money, Consumerism & Human Behavior	American Drama & Social Justice	AIS Capstone
	AIS Chemistry: Materials Science Lab	AIS Statistics
Free Period	Spanish 4: Sustainability in the Hispanic World	Civics & Comparative Government

- AIS Professional Experience courses with internships embedded.
- Students who do not take a professional experience course will have opportunities for internships outside class.
- Six additional blocks that students may fill by selecting from a myriad of disciplinary or interdisciplinary course offerings, including numerous advanced courses and the opportunity to complete a capstone project.

Through our 11th grade program, students are inspired to be curious about the world, to think critically about how to solve some of the pressing issues we are facing globally, and to understand the role they play in our global community as they learn to become informed, bold, resourceful and ethical global citizens.

11th Grade Global Citizenship Program

The 11th Grade Global Citizenship Program embeds our student international travel experiences and global citizenship curriculum in double-block, trimester-long AIS GS Intensive courses. This mission-driven program is designed to deepen student learning and enrich students' experience while immersing them in place-based learning as they travel abroad. Each course explores a pressing global issue through an interdisciplinary approach, focusing on the issue in the region to which students travel during the course. The course of study continues through experiential, hands-on learning while students are immersed in a local community.

Global Seminar Series

Launched in May 2020 and offered twice annually, our virtual Global Seminar Series provides 11th graders with the opportunity to connect with other high school girls globally to learn and collaborate as they address pressing global issues relevant to their own lives. Students are given the opportunity to become informed and empowered to take action by exploring one global issue through an interdisciplinary lens, interacting with experts in various professions and participating in collaborative group projects. Each Global Seminar Series has three virtual seminars, which meet once per week for three weeks. Each seminar is interactive and includes at least one expert in the field. The final seminar provides students with an opportunity to work in groups to generate ideas and find solutions to some of the problems they have identified. Students learn how to express their curiosity about others and how the world works, how to demonstrate empathy for others, how to communicate effectively across differences, and how to understand how their knowledge, skills and identities impact their place in the global community.

As part of the 12th grade program, students consider their role in fulfilling our school's mission: to shape a changing world. Students explore their ideas regarding college and careers as they gain exposure and experiences through this program.

Internships

Through practical experience, students gain understanding of an issue that interests them within a field where they aspire to make an impact on the world. They engage in work that will support their understanding of the different roles people perform; ultimately, they gain an appreciation for what it takes to shape a changing world. Students begin to navigate the professional world by building a network, writing a resume, creating a LinkedIn account, composing professional emails and practicing their interview skills.

Students have the opportunity to complete virtual, in-person and hybrid internships. Past students have worked with Fortune 500 companies, nonprofits, doctors and small-business owners across all industries. They have been successful in database work, digital marketing, assessing and updating social media platforms, general research, phone work, and special projects such as helping plan annual conferences and designing campaigns. Many of our seniors continued to work with employers beyond the scope of the original internship, with some employers hiring seniors for paid summer work.

Early-career Scholar Dinner Speaker Series

Over dinner, graduates from a variety of fields share an overview of their particular area of research, and students have the opportunity to talk with them about their work and their academic paths. Through this program, seniors make connections and gain an inside view of fields of study that may be of interest in college and beyond.

The Obidimma Olga Ibimina Okobi '94 (Obi) Imagining Life Event

Through this program hosted by the Alumnae Board, students enjoy informal discussions with Ancients of various class years and backgrounds to learn about their experiences after Porter's. This event encourages seniors to reflect on how their skills and interests can guide both their educational and career paths.

In order to support independent learning of math during trimesters when students are not enrolled in a math class, we offer Math REPS: Review, Extend, Practice, Sustain.

Math REPS

At Miss Porter's School, our modular block trimester schedule allows students to deeply and intensely explore complex mathematical concepts. In addition to their trimester classes and the exposure to math that students receive in other STEM courses, students can continue their mathematical studies throughout the year. A student's math education at Porter's is augmented by opportunities for independent review, extension and practice that help them maintain and sharpen their math skills during trimesters in which they are not enrolled in a math course.

This year-round math support provided by the Math REPS program allows students to:

- Brush up on skills for an upcoming math class.
- Practice skills from a recent math class.
- Practice math skills that are tested in standardized tests.
- Explore new and challenging math concepts outside the math classroom.
- Collaborate and engage with the community through problem-solving challenges.

In addition to helping students maintain and sharpen their math skills, the Math REPS program supports students who wish to challenge themselves with fun, engaging and relevant math problems for the innate joy of problem-solving. Finally, the Math REPS program offers the additional benefits of helping students develop independent study skills and encouraging students to exhibit agency with regard to their studies.

In order to support independent learning of language during trimesters when students are not enrolled in a language class, we offer LIFT OFF: Language Interaction Following Through in Off trimesters.

LIFT OFF

The LIFT OFF Program for Classical and Modern Languages allows students to engage with the target language through a series of asynchronous modules and synchronous community activities. The goal of this program is to provide students with fun and flexible choices so they can practice and maintain their language skills during trimesters when they are not taking a language course.

During each trimester when students are not taking a language course, they are required to engage with their language of study in the following ways:

- Students must complete a minimum of one activity per week.
- Students will have a choice board of activities to choose from each week.
- Students will work with a variety of synchronous and asynchronous activities.
- Students should choose tasks that are appropriate for their language learning experience.
- Students will complete community-building activities in the target language.

Teachers and peer tutors will be available to assist students in their independent learning.

COMPETENCY-BASED MASTERY LEARNING

Miss Porter's practices competency-based mastery learning, which focuses on helping all students develop mastery of cross-disciplinary skills demonstrated through the successful transfer of their knowledge and skills to an authentic and relevant context.

The table below outlines our "Portrait of a Porter's Graduate" and the corresponding competencies of which a student will develop mastery during their time at Porter's.

Portrait of a Porter's Graduate	Core Competencies	Description
Critical and Analytical Thinker	Critical thinking and reasoning	Student comprehends and interprets information, analyzes and synthesizes multiple perspectives, navigates complexity, and develops informed arguments.
Creator and Problem-Solver	Problem-solving and creativity	Student observes and interprets problems, experiments with complex concepts, and creatively applies strategies and designs processes. Student proposes and/or finalizes solutions and uses their imagination to construct new ideas and content.
Globally and Civically Engaged Citizen	Global and civic engagement	Student recognizes their own and others' perspectives, investigates the world beyond their immediate environment, interacts effectively with diverse audiences, and translates their ideas into appropriate action to improve the world.
Ethical and Collaborative Leader	Leadership and collaboration	Student leads and supports others with empathy, enthusiasm and purpose; demonstrates initiative and responsibility; and works effectively to reach collective goals.
Bold and Expressive Communicator	Communication and expression	Student communicates and expresses themself through a variety of methods/mediums/modalities in order to demonstrate their understanding, encourage dialogue and reflection, and engage diverse audiences.

Mastery Transcript Consortium®

Miss Porter's School is a member of the Mastery Transcript Consortium (MTC). Working with member schools, the MTC has codesigned and built a software platform that schools use to publish mastery transcripts for their high school students and deliver these transcripts securely to college admissions readers and/or employers. A mastery-based transcript will better represent the outcomes of our competency-based curriculum and help students distinguish themselves in ways that a traditional transcript, which simply lists classes and grades, cannot.

In the coming years, the Mastery Transcript will be available to our students both to better support their learning and to help them more clearly communicate their unique attributes and accomplishments to colleges. For more information, please visit www.mastery.org.

Capstone

AIS Capstone is open to all interested seniors and is required for students pursuing certificates in Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (TIE) and Global Studies (GS). AIS Capstone challenges students in their final year at Porter's to complete an independent project in response to a timeless question or pressing problem that they see in the world. Students research, innovate, develop, create, build and ultimately present their work to the entire school.

The Institute for Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship

The Institute for Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship provides both depth and breadth of learning in the interconnected fields of programming, digital literacy, global business, digital innovation, design, entrepreneurship, science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics.

The TIE Certificate Program

Students who commit to earning the TIE Certificate become social entrepreneurs, utilizing technology to address social issues and make positive contributions to our changing world. To earn the TIE Certificate, a student must complete a series of curricular and cocurricular requirements.

The Institute for Global Education

We recognize the role an individual plays in the global community and in the understanding of shared responsibilities and risks on a global scale. In our Institute for Global Education, students challenge their assumptions, develop empathy and expand their understanding of how their identities influence their perspectives. Students consider three questions: Who am I? Where do I come from? How does this shape the world we live in?

The GS Certificate Program

The Certificate in Global Studies is a path through which students develop cross-cultural knowledge and communication skills as well as the ability to think critically about global change with a deeper understanding of the interconnected and interdependent nature of our world. They focus on and address real-world issues that are relevant to them, culminating in a 12th grade capstone project.

INTERDISCIPLINARY THEMES

At Miss Porter's School, we prepare our students for global change with a dynamic, interdisciplinary approach to learning. As balanced, thoughtful women, our graduates set out to shape the world. Our students use their awareness, determination and intellect to solve some of the world's urgent problems and address humanity's timeless questions.

Theme	Guiding Question	Possible Topics
The Human Experience	What does it mean to be human?	Medicine, kinesiology, personal well-being, philosophy, art appreciation, psychology, resilience, death and dying, the written word
Information & Expression	How do we communicate and interpret information, ideas and stories?	Spoken language, quantitative reasoning, performing arts, cultural expression, food, identity formation, creative writing, collective memory
Innovation & Sustainability	How can we ensure the well-being of future generations?	Climate change, the environment, ecological resilience, data collection and analysis, cultural adaptation and preservation, technological growth, entrepreneurship
Systems & Institutions	How do systems and institutions guide and affect our lives?	Government, economics, operations research, infrastructure, education, religion, nonprofit organizations, civics, law, justice, ecology, the cosmos, sociology
Global Citizenship	How do we interact with the world around us and beyond?	Language studies, ethics, empathy, activism, collaboration, anthropology, international relations, travel, equity

ADVANCED COURSES

Advanced Interdisciplinary Seminar (AIS) Courses

Our AIS courses provide rich experiences and cultivate exceptional thinkers. AIS courses are interdisciplinary, experiential and project-based, and they push students to think more deeply, ask questions, evaluate information and make connections between related topics.

Below are examples of AIS course offerings.

AIS Art and Social Change
AIS Art History and Museum Studies
AIS Behavioral Economics
AIS Biology: Evolution, Epidemics and Conquering Cancer
AIS Calculus 1
AIS Calculus 1-2
AIS Capstone: Ready to Shape a Changing World
AIS Chemistry: Materials Science Lab
AIS Chemistry: Understanding the Molecular World Through Advanced Chemistry Lab
AIS Chinese: Global Business in China and Chinese Business in the World
AIS Cognitive Psychology: The Individual and Society
AIS Comparative Government
AIS Dance Composition
AIS Data Science
AIS English 12: Art of the Argument
AIS English 12: Borders and Crossings — Literature of Exiles, Immigrants and Refugees
AIS Environmental Science
AIS French: Discoveries, Inventions and Innovations
AIS French: Women Writing Back
AIS Global Studies: Understanding Culture, Systems, Structures and Social Issues
AIS Latin: Damsels in "Distress" — Mansplaining in Roman Mythology, Poetry and Art
AIS Macroeconomics

AIS Mathematics: Linear Algebra With Applications
AIS Mathematics: Multivariable Calculus
AIS Mathematics: Post-Calculus Through Narrative
AIS Microeconomics
AIS Museum Studies: Reinvention and Revision in the Art World
AIS Music Theory: Dissecting Masterworks
AIS Philosophy: The Good Life
AIS Photography
AIS Physics
AIS Play Production
AIS Political Philosophy: Theories of Justice
AIS Psychology: Brain, Mind and Society
AIS Race and Identity
AIS Research Methods: Youth Participatory Action Research for School Improvement
AIS Research Writing
AIS Spanish: Axis of Change in Spanish-Speaking Countries
AIS Spanish: Entrepreneurship Through Community Engagement
AIS Stage Lab: As You Like It
AIS Statistics
AIS Studio Art
AIS U.S. Literature With History: Four Moments in American History Through Art, Literature and Music
AIS Web App Development

Philosophy

For most students, success in school has been defined by final grades and averages rather than by their growth and development as learners. At Miss Porter's School, we support a mastery approach to learning, which means students progress through the curriculum toward mastery of specific skills as opposed to moving through the curriculum at a predetermined pace regardless of skill level. Our students will be able to articulate and demonstrate the skills and knowledge they are mastering in each of their courses and identify the areas of challenge in which they need support. We utilize a system of standards-based ratings and feedback to support students in their growth as learners.

Goals

- To provide greater transparency so that students know what specific skills they are building and understand how they are progressing toward mastery of those skills.
- To provide clear, specific, timely and growth-oriented feedback that students can use to improve their performance and teachers can use to help inform future instruction.
- To help students develop intrinsic motivation and a growth mindset so they focus more on the learning process and their ability to improve and grow.
- To ensure that assessments of student work are consistent, fair and equitable.

Assessment Structures

In addition to course content, our curriculum and assessments are structured around the following:

- **Cross-disciplinary Competencies:** These refer to the five competencies related to our "Portrait of a Porter's Graduate" that underpin the entirety of our curriculum.
- **Priority Standards:** These are the more specific skill categories — such as analysis, synthesis, presentation, creative thinking, etc. — that students will develop within and across disciplines.
- **Learning Objectives:** These refer to the discrete tasks and skills that a student is expected to demonstrate within a specific assignment, project or learning experience. These are usually communicated through specific "I can" statements, such as "I can analyze the effectiveness of an author's rhetorical choices" or "I can demonstrate awareness of my purpose, audience and task through the organization, substance and style of my presentation."

Assessment Practices

We practice mastery-based assessment. This means that more recent levels of performance are weighted more heavily than older ones so that ratings reflect a student's current level of achievement as opposed to an average level of achievement over time. In this system, students are given multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery.

- **Formative work** gives students a chance to practice the skills they are developing and is designed to assess learning. The goal of formative assessment is to improve learning. Formative assessments do not contribute to the grade students earn in a course.
- **Summative work** is designed to be a formal assessment of learning. Summative assessments are opportunities for students to show which skills they have mastered. The ratings a student earns on these assessments contribute to their final performance report at the end of each course.

We are guided by educator, author and assessment expert Grant Wiggins' definition of mastery as "effective transfer of learning in authentic and worthy performance." He explains that "students have mastered a subject when they are fluent, even creative, in using their knowledge, skills, and understanding in key performance challenges and contexts at the heart of that subject, as measured against valid and high standards." Whenever possible, our summative assessments will represent authentic, project-based performance tasks.

Reporting Practices

Students do not receive traditional grades — numerical or letter — on their assessments. Instead, teachers provide students with specific, detailed feedback and overall performance ratings. Teachers and students regularly conference about growth, progress and related learning goals as students work toward proficiency in or mastery of various skills.

- **Reporting for the 9th grade courses:** Ninth grade students receive mastery ratings only.
- **Reporting for the 10th through 12th grade courses:** In our 10th through 12th grade courses, we report both mastery ratings and a traditional letter grade at the end of a course for student transcripts.

Proficiency Levels and Traditional Grade Equivalents

We recognize five levels of performance on our rubrics and utilize the following terms to define each level:

1. Insufficient evidence
2. Emerging
3. Approaching
4. Proficient
5. Distinguished

The chart below outlines how proficiency ratings generally translate to traditional letter grades.

Level of Performance	Numerical Equivalent for TeacherEase	Letter Grade Equivalency
Distinguished	4	A+
Student evidence demonstrates a **sophisticated understanding** of content and highly developed skills. Performances at this level are defined by depth, originality, authenticity, creativity, and independence.		
Proficient	3	A-
Student evidence demonstrates an **effective understanding** of course content and application of skill.		
Approaching	2	B-
Student evidence demonstrates a **developing understanding** of course content and skill.		
Emerging	1	C-
Student evidence demonstrates an **initial/beginner level of understanding** of course content and/or skill.		
Insufficient Evidence	0	IE/No Credit
Students in this category have **not yet demonstrated evidence** of the required content and/or skill for the course (work is missing and/or incomplete).		

Our Teaching and Learning Center

At Porter's, we see your child for everything they are and actively support them in their academic growth while they are a part of the Porter's community from application to graduation.

The Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) has three faculty — one full-time learning specialist, one half-time learning specialist and a writing coach — as well as individualized support from the Math Department each trimester. The TLC faculty help students manage their academics, from test-taking to time management and general organization to all types of writing. Our math faculty offer guidance at all levels, from Algebra 1 through AIS Calculus. While we can guide students in the use of assistive technology, we do not offer remedial instruction in either reading or math.

All Porter's students are encouraged to utilize the supports available through the TLC, understanding that accessing and using resources are academic skills. The TLC works with approximately two-thirds of the student body over their four years at Porter's, whether on discrete assignments or for ongoing skill development.

At Miss Porter's School, we strive to provide reasonable accommodations for students with a medical or health disability, learning disability, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, or psychiatric disability under the Americans with Disability Act and the Fair Housing Act.