



University of Chicago Laboratory Schools High School

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Laboratory Schools are home to the youngest members of the University of Chicago's academic community. We ignite and nurture an enduring spirit of scholarship, curiosity, creativity, and confidence. We value learning experientially, exhibiting kindness, and honoring diversity.

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

In 1896, shortly after the University of Chicago was founded, Professor John Dewey established the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools to explore and implement his progressive theories on childhood education. Our 2,107 students in nursery through high school continue to benefit from his vision and principles.

U-High students have access to unmatched resources because of the Schools' connection with the University of Chicago. They also have full access to and are taught to use the University's vast library resources. University faculty—scientists, physicians, public policy experts, economists, historians—routinely visit U-High classes.

More than half of our families are affiliated with the University of Chicago. The remaining families come from all over the city of Chicago, the suburbs, and northern Indiana. Families who choose to send their children to U-High care deeply about curiosity, inquiry, and creativity.

GRADING AND ACADEMIC CALENDAR

U-High uses a 4.0 unweighted grading scale with no class rank calculated. The school year is divided into two semesters. Evaluations are given at the end of each term. All credit-bearing courses are included in the cumulative GPA, including PE, art, drama, music, computer science, and journalism. U-High does not track students academically; any student may take any class if prerequisites are met.

Students receive a letter grade (A, B, C, D, or F). A grade of D- is a passing grade. Plusses and minuses (+ and -) appear on the U-High transcript with grades in courses and are used in calculating the GPA. The GPA scale is noted on the transcript. U-High does not use a block schedule. Grades for the fall and spring semesters are available in mid-February, and mid-June.

Only courses taken at U-High are listed on the transcript and included in the GPA. Other relevant transcripts are sent as attachments to the student's U-High transcript, including courses taken at the University of Chicago. A note is added to the U-High transcript if external credits are used toward U-High graduation requirements for transfer students.

Please see addendum for details on Lab's COVID-19 response and adoption of remote learning program.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

As of the end of their junior year, the GPA range for the Class of 2021 is 4.0 to 2.7.

The median GPA is 3.8 and the average GPA is 3.7.

Table with 8 columns: Test Name, Class of 2020, Class of 2019, Class of 2018, and Middle 50% ranges for 2020, 2019, and 2018. Rows include SAT EBRW/CR, Math, ACT English, Math, Reading, Science Reasoning, and Composite.

RIGOR AT U-HIGH

All academic courses at U-High are college preparatory and should be considered equivalent to honors-level courses. Most rigorous courses are noted by AP® or AT (Advanced Topics) on the transcript, but are not weighted in the GPA calculation. Students taking the courses in our English, History and Science Departments are well prepared for AP® exams. There is no limit set for the number of AP®/AT courses a student may take. Departments determine prerequisites for enrollment into any particular AP® or AT course. Students who take AP® courses are not required to sit for the AP® exam. Our AP® Statistics class is a full-year course and is a rigorous experience.

AP® COURSES

Calculus AB
Calculus BC
Chinese
Computer Science
French
German
Spanish
Statistics
Drawing
2D Art & Design

AT COURSES

African American History
Biology
Chemistry
Comparative Politics & Global Relations
Economics
Modern European History
Physics I
Physics II
US History
Modern World History

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

4 years

English

3 years

History

Early World United States
Modern World or European

Science

Biology Chemistry
Third year of any science

Mathematics

Physical Education

2 years

World Language

Two consecutive years of the same language

1 year

Computer Science

One year for a half credit

Music

Fine Arts

Service Learning

40 hours & reflection papers

CO-CURRICULARS

U-High offers a wide variety of activities, clubs, special interest groups, and service organizations. Students are encouraged to become involved, explore their interests, and develop social and leadership skills while being selective; a genuine commitment to one activity is more rewarding than passive membership in several.

Learn more about Lab's [co-curriculars](#) and [athletics](#).

DEMOGRAPHICS

The Laboratory Schools' student body reflects differences in race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, and socioeconomic status.

2,107
students in 15 grades

630 High School students

49% male **51%** female

almost **60** languages spoken in students' homes

2% Middle Eastern, Pacific Islander, Native American

POST-GRADUATION

Between 95% and 100% of U-High grads attend four-year colleges immediately after graduation. Some graduates choose to travel, pursue a gap year, or work prior to continuing their education. [Click here](#) for a list of colleges and universities attended by Lab graduates.

VISITING U-HIGH

College representatives may make visit reservations for the fall of each school year using RepVisits at [counselorcommunity.com](#). U-High does not host spring college rep visits. During the COVID-19 crisis, all visits will be held virtually.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Discipline infractions are not noted on the transcript. Serious discipline is reported on college applications by both the student and the college counselor, per the stipulations of the application.

ACCREDITATION

Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS) and North Central Association (NCA)

MEMBERSHIPS

Association of College Counselors in Independent Schools (ACCIS), College Board, the National and Illinois Associations for College Admission Counseling (NACAC and IACAC)

43%
White

18%
Multiracial

18%
Asian/
Asian American

8% Black/
African American

7% Unspecified

4% Latinx



COVID-19: Programmatic Implications and Considerations

As colleges and universities consider the applications of students from the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools High School, it is important to understand the policy and schedule changes implemented by the schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As with every aspect of the college admissions process, we request that the college admissions officers understand and consider the context of the Laboratory Schools environment and the rigor within.

2019–2020 Move to Remote Learning

In March 2020 with only three days notice, the Laboratory Schools shifted our 2,100 students in 15 grades to a fully remote program. When our High Schoolers started remote school on March 13, no one realized that they would not step back into their classrooms for the remainder of the school year and that major milestone activities and end-of-year events, trips, sports, and performances would all be cancelled. It is significant that a large number of parents at our school work at the University of Chicago Medical center and so were under extreme pressure and increased risk at a frightening time.

Spring 2020: Temporary, Semester-long Pass/Fail Policy

With a focus on what was best for students socially and emotionally—and in consultation with UChicago Admissions staff, Lab College Counseling staff, and peer high schools—our high school adopted a Pass/Fail policy for spring semester-long courses. The academic program maintained the integrity of academic rigor and performance and students were still expected to complete classwork and assignments in order to pass a course. Year-long courses and fall semester courses were evaluated with a letter grade. **In the admissions review, academic successes of our students will become clear through their transcript, and as always, through teacher and counselor letters of recommendation.**

2020–2021 Fully Remote Program

While Lab strongly preferred to bring all students back for the in-person educational and co-curricular activities that comprise the rich Lab experience, the COVID-19 situation in Chicago made this impossible. In partnership with UChicago medical experts Lab developed contingency plans to ensure the health and safety of its students, faculty, staff, and families. Until further notice and major shifts in the health landscape, grades 3–12 are fully remote. For our High School students this means they still have their full pick of the 120+ course offerings as they each pursue a highly individualized academic program.

The High School adopted a simplified block schedule (ABCAB) which provides major benefits to consistency, clarity, and time away from screens:

- Students meet two times per week with each teacher and advisor.
- All High School class and advisory meetings are synchronous with fixed meeting times to help ensure students find their days more predictable and consistent.
- All classes use our learning management system in parallel fashion.
- Defined open time allows students to meet one-on-one with Learning & Counseling faculty and for other individualized purposes.
- Wednesdays include community time, social-emotional and DEI programming, and fixed office hours for all HS faculty during which students engage remotely with faculty for one-on-one support.

Students in the Class of 2021: Standardized Testing

As is the case nationally, standardized testing options for our students were heavily compromised. Chicago has been a particularly challenging place in which to take these tests, as many testing locations continue to cancel tests with little advance notice. Only some students had success in registering and taking college entrance exams. Many who initially took the ACT or SAT were not able to re-test. **Our seniors have been counseled to prioritize their health and the health of their family, and to focus on submitting their high school transcript as the best evidence of their readiness for college. We encourage the admissions review to focus primarily on grades of applicants.**

Please reach out to the student's college counselor for additional information or concerns in reading applications.