



GLENDALE PREPARATORY ACADEMY ACADEMIC OVERVIEW



In the Classroom

Teachers at Glendale Prep employ the Socratic method. They teach by asking questions, awakening a sense of wonder in the students and prompting them to think deeply about the subject matter. A key idea or assignment might require that the teacher present material to the class, but the forward progress of the class is driven by the questions that the teacher asks of the students, the answers that they give, and the further questions that those answers inspire.

A lecture-based classroom is more likely to produce passive, disengaged students, but a Socratic classroom demands active engagement on the part of the student. For this reason, all classes at Glendale Prep place a strong emphasis on student participation. Under the guidance of their teachers, Glendale Prep students learn how to participate with confidence, seriousness, and civility. Teachers monitor the frequency and quality of participation throughout the quarter, and day-to-day participation is a significant component in determining a student's overall grade.

At Home

At Glendale Prep we believe that the majority of class time should be spent in the *collective* pursuit of what is true, good, and beautiful about a specific subject. Homework time, then, is reserved primarily for reading and for meaningful *independent* activities that support the curricular objectives of a given course. The following chart provides general homework expectations for the average student at Glendale Prep:

6th and 7th grades:	approximately 20 minutes per subject each night
8th grade:	approximately 25 minutes per subject each night
9th -12th grades:	approximately 30 minutes per subject each night (1 hour for Humane Letters)

We ask parents to help us communicate to students the importance of establishing a silent and distraction-free environment for completing all homework. If students do not work in such an environment one should expect that: 1) It will take significantly longer to complete the assignments; 2) The student's thought will be fragmented, and his or her overall comprehension of the material will be deficient.

Communication

Glendale Prep believes that timely and effective communication between teachers, students, and parents is essential in fostering academic growth. Our first priority in this regard is to encourage student responsibility by establishing an open line of communication between students and their individual teachers. We strongly encourage students to meet with their teachers regularly for tutoring if they are having difficulty understanding specific concepts or material. If parents perceive that such one-on-one meetings are not sufficiently addressing the difficulty, we encourage them to contact the individual teacher by phone or email to set up a conference. The outline below provides a detailed explanation of the preferred process for addressing academic concerns:

- 1) Student communicates specific difficulty directly to teacher.
- 2) Teacher meets with student to create action plan.
- 3) If difficulty persists, parents contact teacher or vice versa.
- 4) Teacher, parents, and possibly student meet to discuss and address issue.
- 5) If difficulty persists, parents and/or teacher may contact the Academic Dean.
- 6) Academic Dean facilitates conference with parents and teacher.

Evaluation

A liberal arts education requires a special kind of written evaluation – one that offers a prose discussion of the student’s sense of wonder, depth of inquiry, specific areas of mastery, needs for improvement, and attitudes toward learning and towards others. The narrative treats student in a fundamentally human way, not by neglecting numerical scores, but by situating those numbers as one part of fuller, more nuanced picture of the student’s progress in a given course.

Deficiency Notices: Midway through each quarter, deficiency notices are mailed out to the parents of students who are currently receiving a D or F in a given course. These notices are intended to prompt students to make necessary changes and improve their academic standing before the end of the quarter.

Quarter Reports: At the end of each quarter, teachers write a one-paragraph narrative report for each student. These reports provide parents with specific feedback on a student’s strengths and weaknesses within a given class. In addition to narrative commentary, these reports include student grades in various categories of assessment along with an overall letter grade for the quarter.

Semester Evaluations: At the end of each semester, teachers write a full-page narrative evaluation for each student. These evaluation provide an even more detailed window into the student’s progress within a given course, highlighting both areas of strength and recommendations for improvement. In addition to narrative commentary, these evaluation include student grades in various categories, including the semester exam, along with an overall letter grade for the semester