

*What's the key to more students attaining
a college degree?*

**A rigorous college experience before
they finish high school.**



**Bard
Early College**

About *Bard Early College Hudson Valley*

What is a Bard early college program?

Bard’s early college programs—now located in Baltimore, Cleveland, Hudson, Newark, New Orleans, New York City, and Washington, D.C.—are based on the fact that many students in their upper years of high school are capable and ready to take on the challenges of college-level work. More than just a preview of what classes would be like at a challenging liberal arts college like Bard, Bard’s early college classes are *real* Bard classes. They are taught by Bard professors to the same academic standards, and students earn Bard College credits, which are transferable upon admission to Bard, most programs within the SUNY and CUNY systems, and many other private and public colleges around the country.

What would the schedule be like?

Bard Early College Hudson Valley will bring together highly motivated students from various area schools for a half-day of challenging college courses during their junior and senior years of high school. They will work in small, seminar-style settings (18 students or fewer) with other students interested in the challenge that a Bard education offers.

Students who attend Bard Early College would continue to spend half the day at their local schools, thus enabling them to take courses, participate in athletics and/or extracurricular activities, and ultimately graduate with their classes. They also would spend roughly 2 hours per day at Bard Early College. There, they would take eight college-level courses (two per semester). These courses bear college credit and, pending approval by their school administrations, also count toward their high school graduation requirements.

A typical week for a student who attends Bard Early College would look like this (times subject to adjustment based on participating schools' schedules):

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00-11:15 AM	Courses at local high school	Courses at local high school	Courses at local high school	Courses at local high school	Courses at local high school
11:15 AM-12 PM	Lunch/travel to Bard Early College	Lunch/travel to Bard Early College	Lunch/travel to Bard Early College	Lunch/travel to Bard Early College	Lunch/travel to Bard Early College
12 PM – 1:30 PM	U.S. History for juniors; Bard elective in STEM, arts, social sciences for seniors	Humanities Seminar/Literature	U.S. History for juniors; Bard elective in STEM, arts, social sciences for seniors	Humanities Seminar/Literature	The College Experience (college planning and preparation/tutoring to support college courses)
1:30 - 2:15 PM	Return to local high schools	Return to local high schools	Return to local high schools	Return to local high schools	Return to local high schools

What classes would students take?

Bard Seminar (3 credits per semester)

The first year students are enrolled at Bard Early College, one of their courses would be Seminar, the signature humanities experience of Bard's early college programs. The interdisciplinary Seminar sequence exposes students to seminal texts from antiquity to modernity, which students engage with through critical reading and interpretation. Readings are drawn from sources such as Plato's *The Last Days of Socrates*, Dante's *Inferno*, Machiavelli's *The Prince*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Goethe's *Faust*, and Darwin's *The Origin of Species*. Read alongside more contemporary pieces related to issues such as race and gender, each semester in seminar students explore an essential question such as "What does it mean to be human?" The course is both reading- and writing-intensive and is often used to meet first-year requirements in Western civilization, humanities, English composition, and related areas upon transfer to four-year institutions. *The emphasis is on students developing college-level reading and writing skills.*

A Survey of U.S. History (required for all juniors, 3 credits)

This year-long history sequence provides students with the breadth of knowledge they need for the U.S. History Regents while maintaining the rigor, standards, and seminar format of a Bard College history course. Students are taught how to think like historians about our nation's past, engaging with history through formal and informal debate, the close interpretation of primary documents, and other activities that make them active participants in constructing historical understanding.

Additional courses expected to be offered (subject to change):

The Art and Craft of Fiction (seniors, 3 credits): This course is taught by short story writer and novelist Rachel Ephraim. It engages students in an understanding of fiction through reading and writing. Students study short stories and at least one novel, and they write their own fiction as well as a college-level expository paper on a theme or writer of their own choice.

The Art and Craft of Memoir (seniors, 3 credits): In this course, students study the genre of memoir as both readers and writers. They read texts such as Jeannette Walls' *The Glass Castle* and Kiese Laymon's *Heavy*, examining craft in these works while they also write their own pieces. Students also have master classes with published memoirists. (*New York Times* bestselling author Domenica Ruta and Bard professor and *New Yorker*/*New York Times* critic and essayist Daniel Mendelsohn have participated in past sections of the course.) A major assessment of the class is the Common Application essay, which students write and revise multiple times using principles of memoir to tell a vivid and engaging personal story.



The Environment and Disease (seniors, 3 credits): In this course, taught as a college-level science seminar, students study environmental issues such as climate change, ozone depletion, and pollution and their effects on human health. Emphasis is on students as readers and writers about scientific research. Students engage with scientific journals and other resources that expose them to authentic discourse in the field of environmental studies.

Identity and Culture in Adolescence (seniors, 1 credit): In this January intersession course, early college students learn about theories of adolescent identity development, particularly as it is affected by factors such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and perceptions of ability. Texts include Beverly Daniel Tatum's *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* and Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice*. Students produce final projects in which they envision how schools, families, and communities can support the positive identity development of people their own age and help build their resilience to the risks and pressures of society.

Introduction to Psychological Science (seniors, 3 credits): This course in the fundamentals of psychology is taught by faculty from the Psychology Program at Bard College. Students study the biological, cognitive, and social forces behind human behavior and learn about key studies in the field, learning to think critically about psychological concepts and research. This course, virtually identical to the one taught on the main Bard campus, is intended to meet introductory psychology requirements at institutions to which students might transfer their Bard early college credits.

Understanding Art: An Introductory Survey of Western Art History, Ancient through Baroque: (seniors, 3 credits): In this elective, students learn how to “read” and write about masterpieces. The class includes a full-day trip to an art museum, where students tour masterpieces at close hand and begin work on a culminating semester project centered on a piece of art of their choice.

Voices for Social Justice (June capstone course, seniors, 1 credit): This course is intended to serve as a capstone to the Bard Early College experience by encouraging students to revisit many of the questions that arose in earlier coursework. Primary texts for this course are a combination of essays and dramatic literature, highlighting the historical role of both the written and spoken word in various movements for social change. Documentary theatre, whereby playwrights base their work on interviews with real people and highlight the voices of those affected by social injustice, is central to the course.



The College Experience: All students at Bard Early College also participate in this weekly course. The fall semester is dedicated to choosing, applying to, and financing college. The spring semester examines characteristics of a successful college student, what it means to be part of an academic community as well as effective habits of mind. Here, students:

- **Receive intensive college counseling and credit transfer support** to help them:
 - **apply** successfully to the colleges of their choice;
 - **choose** the right college or university following their Bard Early College experience.

- **Visit college campuses** to learn about a wide range of options. In recent years, students from the Hudson program have visited:
 - Bard College Marist College
 - Purchase College Springfield College
 - Trinity College Union College
 - University of Albany Vassar College

- Learn about **scholarship opportunities**, including the **ECO (Early College Opportunity) scholarship** offered by Bard College. Only students from Bard's Early College programs are eligible to apply for ECO scholarships, which are based on both merit and financial need and cover *full tuition for four years at Bard*.

Who should apply to Bard Early College?

Students who like to grapple with ideas, question assumptions, discuss and debate can especially thrive in a Bard early college experience. While some level of academic motivation and proficient reading and writing are necessary for success in a Bard early college program, there is no set GPA requirement, nor is there a single academic profile of the Bard early college student. We encourage rising juniors and seniors eager for a new challenge to apply.



What's the track record of Bard's early college programs so far?

Bard's early college programs have an impressive track record of preparing students to excel in later college work. Recent data comparing graduates of New York City's Bard High School Early Colleges to those of other public schools in the city found that:

- **College attendance and completion:** Bard's early college graduates are significantly more likely to complete bachelors degrees within four years than graduates from other schools, even high achievers from the city's selective "exam schools."
- **Closing race and gender gaps:** Among graduates of other New York City high schools (including "exam schools") white students are more likely than black students and females are more likely than males to complete bachelors degrees within four years of high school graduation. For graduates of Bard High School Early Colleges, however, these race and gender gaps are virtually nonexistent.

Overall, Bard early college program graduates far exceed their peers, both locally and nationally, in terms of high school graduation rates. They also attain college degrees at rates well above national averages, with **94% of Bard high school early college graduates earning a bachelors degree within six years, compared to the national average of roughly 60%.**

For further information, contact:

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