



THE SCHOOL AND MISSION

Davidson Academy Online is a fully online school for profoundly gifted middle and high school students in the United States and Canada, with options for full-time or single-course enrollment. Profoundly gifted students are at least three standard deviations above the norm on the bell curve of the IQ continuum. The school opened in the 2017–2018 school year as an online campus of the Davidson Academy, a Nevada public school with CEEB code 290207. As of the 2022–2023 school year, Davidson Academy Online is now an independent (private) school separate from Davidson Academy.

To attend Davidson Academy Online, students must score in the 99.9th percentile on accepted intelligence and/or achievement tests; perform at a required academic level; exhibit intellectual and academic achievement; and demonstrate motivation, social and emotional maturity, and overall readiness for a fast-paced educational environment.

Unlike traditional school settings, Davidson Academy Online classes group students by ability rather than age. With an overall enrollment of 95 students and a faculty and staff of 25 members, class sizes are small, and students receive personalized attention. Students, faculty, and staff at Davidson Academy Online leverage the flexibility of online learning and communication platforms to engage in synchronous and asynchronous activities with their intellectual peers to create vibrant online communities.

CURRICULUM

High school students engage in a blend of gifted, advanced high school, and undergraduate-level courses. We emphasize breadth and depth rather than teaching to any particular standardized test or curriculum. Our coursework stresses higher-order thinking skills, critical and creative engagement, seminar-style classroom discussion, and experiential learning opportunities. Each core course requires approximately 8–10 hours of work per week.

Full-time DAO students must take at least five graded courses each semester. Students wishing to take more than seven courses must receive permission for an overload schedule from the Director. During senior year, full-time students are required to take at least four graded courses each semester; the class of 2023 is enrolled in an average of seven classes.

Grading Scale

GPA's are calculated on an unweighted 4.0 scale for all courses.

Davidson Academy Online does not rank students.

Grade	Percent	Weight
A	93 – 100	4.0
A–	90 – 92	3.67
B+	87 – 89	3.33
B	83 – 86	3.0
B–	80 – 82	2.67
C+	77 – 79	2.33
C	73 – 76	2.0
C–	70 – 72	1.67
D+	67 – 69	1.33
D	63 – 66	1.0
D–	60 – 62	0.67
F	00 – 59	0.0

COVID-19 Response

Spring 2020 and the 2020–2021 School Year While student attendance, performance, and expectations remained unchanged, the school recognized individual students affected by the pandemic. These students were offered options that could lighten their academic burden as needed, provided that they remained in at least five graded courses. Students were given a choice to continue with regular letter grades or utilize one of these options:

- Switch from letter to pass/fail grades for all high school classes. A pass is 70% or higher.
- Switch from taking a course for credit to audit status with an "AU" recorded on their transcript.
- Withdraw from one or more courses without a "W" on their transcript.

SCHOOL PROFILE

2022 – 2023

Director
Ashley Zahn

Counseling Team
Lauren Bowman, Erin McKenna, Raenell Rafferty

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Accreditation

Fully Accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Between the 2017–2018 and 2021–2022 school years, Davidson Academy Online was accredited by Cognia as a campus of Davidson Academy, and all courses were approved for A–G credit from the UC High School Articulation System under The Davidson Academy of Nevada. These UC-approved courses will be resubmitted for A–G credit under Davidson Academy Online when the primary submission phase opens.



RESPONSIBILITY • INTEGRITY • BALANCE
LEADERSHIP • PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE • RESPECT

BY THE NUMBERS

Total enrollment grades 6–12: **95**



2023 National Merit Semifinalists

7

Different States / Countries

24 / 2

Full-Time / Single-Course Enrollment

84 / 11

Students of Color

63%

Students Receiving Financial Aid

13%

NV Students Receiving Tuition Waiver

13%

Students Receiving Merit Scholarships

22%

STUDENT LIFE

With the rigor and demands of our curriculum, we encourage our students to participate in a balanced and meaningful amount of extracurricular activities both inside and outside the school community. As a result, we have 15 student-run clubs ranging from scholastic to interest-focused clubs.

A sampling of extra-curricular activities:

Athletics (club and high school)	Poetry Club
Chess Club	Robotics competitions
Competitive Business Club	Science Bowl
Computer Science Team	Sexuality & Gender Alliance (SAGA)
Cooking Club	Speech and Debate
Math competitions	Star Wars Fan Club
Music ensembles	Students of Color Alliance (SoCA)
Neurodiversity Alliance	Theatre

Testing

Students are not required to take the SAT or ACT exams as a graduation requirement.

Advanced Placement

Davidson Academy Online neither offers Advanced Placement (AP) courses nor encourages students to take exams, but many students choose to take AP exams after self-study. Below is a summary of testing in 2022:

- 22 tests taken
- 77% students received a score of a 5
- 23% students received a score of a 4

Faculty and Staff

Davidson Academy Online instructors and staff have years of experience working with profoundly gifted students and are experts in their content areas.

- Master's Degrees – 64%
- Doctorate Degrees – 24%

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND COURSE OFFERINGS

The Davidson Academy Online diploma is awarded based on the following requirements:

- Cumulative unweighted GPA of 3.0 or higher
- 28 total credits

Department	Diploma Req.	Courses Offered	
English	4 credits	Composition & Analysis Intro to Research & Communication Rhetoric & Literary Analysis American Literature	British Literature Advanced Rhetoric Value Theory
Mathematics	4 credits	Geometry Algebra II Algebra II/ Pre-Calculus+ Pre-Calculus Statistics Calculus I	Calculus I/II+ Calculus II Calculus III Linear Algebra* Intro to Proofs* Intro to Real Analysis+
Science <i>Advanced science courses have a 0.5 credit co-requisite lab section.</i>	4 credits: 1 Bio 1 Chem 1 Phys 1 Elective	Biology Chemistry Physics	Advanced Biology Advanced Chemistry Advanced Physics
History	3 credits: 1 World 1 US 1 Gov	Patterns in Modern History Cyber Society History of the US	Principles of American Gov Asian Studies Imperialism & Post-Colonialism
World Language	3 credits	Chinese I Chinese II Chinese III* Chinese IV* Chinese V* Chinese VI*	Spanish Fundamentals I/II Intermediate Spanish I/II Advanced Spanish I* Advanced Spanish II* Hispanophone Lit & History* Spanish Practicum*
Physical Education	2 credits	DAO Fitness Independent Study PE	
Health	0.5 credit	Health	
Financial Literacy	0.5 credit	Financial Literacy	
Arts & Humanities Electives <i>Elective courses change yearly based on student interest and faculty expertise.</i>	2 credits	<i>Sampling of A & H Electives:</i> 3D Modeling Knowledge and Reality Music Theory I/II	Science Fiction Speech and Debate Women's Studies
General Electives <i>Beginning Fall 2022, all juniors are required to take College Seminar.</i>	5 credits	<i>Sampling of General Electives:</i> College Seminar Introduction to Aviation	Technology I/II Yearbook

*semester-long 1.0 credit courses, +year-long 2.0 credit courses

SPECIAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

These are credit-bearing academic programs beyond our traditional core and elective offerings.

- **Academic Independent Study:** Designed to mirror a college-level independent study course, students select a project mentor and develop a course curriculum and assignment structure of their design before submitting it for approval. Past approved independent studies include Amharic Language and Ethiopian Culture, Bulgarian Solitaire and Open Problems, and Analytical Number Theory & Real Analysis.
- **Dual Enrollment:** While students may earn credit toward high school graduation by completing coursework at any approved post-secondary academic institution, Davidson Academy Online maintains an enrollment and articulation agreement with the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). Students who receive approval (based on academic and personal/social readiness) are embedded into traditional UNR courses with undergraduate students.
- **English Student Aides:** Designed as a student-facilitated peer-review and mentoring program, selected students offer peer feedback on written work, explore grammar and literary concepts, and complete a mini-project on a writing topic of their choice.
- **STEM Mentors:** Designed as a student-facilitated tutoring and mentoring program, STEM Mentors are student leaders who offer weekly office hours to assist students with concepts, homework, and preparation for assessments.
- **World Language Center:** Designed as a student-facilitated tutoring and mentoring program, World Language Center aides offer feedback on written world language assignments, clarify grammar or vocabulary concepts, and allow students additional opportunities to practice their expressive language skills.

All special academic programs require an application process and/or teacher recommendation, and continued participation requires that students remain in good academic standing.

COLLEGE MATRICULATION:

Beginning with the class of 2020, Davidson Academy Online has graduated 11 students under Davidson Academy. Students were accepted at the following institutions:

**Indicates where a student enrolled*

Arizona State University, Baylor University, Beloit College, Boston College, Boston University, Brandeis University, CalTech*, Carnegie Mellon*, Lewis & Clark College, Miami University (OH), Northwestern University, Oregon Institute of Technology, Oregon State University, Penn State University, Purdue University, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Temple University, Texas A&M (Commerce), The College of Wooster*, The University of Texas at Dallas, University of Arizona, UC Berkeley*, University of Nevada (Reno)*, University of Oklahoma*, University of Pittsburgh*, University of Virginia, University of Wisconsin, Washington University in St. Louis

Notable Achievements

CollegeBoard National African American Recognition Award and National Hispanic Recognition Award; National Merit Finalist; John Weinzweig Centenary Scholarship Senior Award; 4 Caroline D. Bradley Scholarships; Congressional Award Gold Medal winner; MATHCOUNTS National Champion; Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Young Scholars Semi-Finalist; SET Scholar; numerous AIME/AMC participants with top honors; Canadian Open Mathematics Challenge bronze; USAMO bronze; USAJMO winner; BAMO 12 winner; Kentucky MATHCOUNTS winner; multiple Scholastic Art and Writing Awards recipients; Senior Editor for Polyphony; George H. W. Bush Essay Contest 3rd place; Naval Horizons STEM Essay Contest winner with highest honors; National Online Scholastic Quick Championships 2nd and 9th places; Spring Public Forum Awakening 1st and 3rd places; U Invitational Public Forum tournament 1st place; Mid-Atlantic Invitation Public Forum Debate Tournament 1st place; Multiple National Latin Exam medal winners; XIII Chopin International Piano Competition 1st place; Eastern Division MTNA Junior Composition Competition 1st place; member of US Youth Futsal National Championship team; North Texas Junior Competitive Climbing Association Championship 1st place multiple disciplines; CruzHacks 2022 1st place multiple categories; Reserve Section National ChessKid Championship 1st place

School Recognitions

Awarded when Davidson Academy Online was a campus of the public school, Davidson Academy.

- Named one of the "15 Best Online High Schools" in the nation by College Transitions
- Recipient of Resilient Districts Prize from Future of School
- Named to the "Public Elites List" by the Washington Post's Jay Mathews College Transitions
- Ranked #1 as the "Best Public High School" in Nevada and "Best Public High School" in America by Niche.com's 2022 Best Schools in America Rankings and Grades
- Ranked #6 in "2022 Best Public High Schools" and #1 in STEM High Schools listing by US News and World
- Online Campus - 4x winner of the Blackboard Catalyst Award and 2x winner of the Blackboard Exemplary Course Award