

Women Learning. Women Leading.

ADMINISTRATION

Nanci Z. Kauffman
Head of School

Erik Carlson
Interim Head of Upper School

Anne Cameron
Head of Middle School

COLLEGE COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

Gabrielle McColgan
*Director of College Counseling
and Upper School Academic Policy*
(650) 470-7761
gmccolgan@castilleja.org

Alyson Tom
Associate Director of College Counseling
(650) 470-7739
atom@castilleja.org

Heidi Gallegos
*Registrar and Administrative Assistant
to College Counseling*
(650) 470-7706
hgallegos@castilleja.org





CEEB/ACT CODE

052-330

SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

Castilleja School
1310 Bryant Street
Palo Alto, CA 94301
(650) 328-3160
www.castilleja.org

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Our Learning Community

OUR PROGRAM

Castilleja was founded in 1907 to equalize educational opportunities for women, and that work continues today as we seek to amplify women's voices and inspire our middle and high school students to become leaders who will effect meaningful and necessary change. To pursue our motto—*Women Learning. Women Leading*—we rely on the most current research regarding the critical advantages of deep-dive, interdisciplinary learning within the all-girls setting. While Castilleja's program emphasizes intellectual curiosity and growth, we are equally committed to fostering innovative problem-solvers, empathetic community members, and engaged global citizens. As the only non-sectarian all-girls middle and high school in the San Francisco Bay Area, Castilleja is located in the heart of Silicon Valley, 35 miles south of San Francisco and 15 miles north of San Jose.

OUR STUDENTS

Castilleja's student body reflects the region's ethnic and economic diversity, with **54% of students identifying as students of color and 21% of students receiving tuition assistance**. Our students embrace a mindset based in curiosity and compassion, and they work to empower themselves and each other to make bold choices and define success on their own terms. They understand that each individual brings experience that enriches our collective whole, so they lead with empathy inside and outside the classroom. **In the past three years, our student-athletes have been recruited to play at the following NCAA college programs: Brown, Bucknell, Cornell, Duke, Grinnell, Pomona College, Princeton, UCLA, University of Pennsylvania, Wellesley, and Williams**. Our students have been recognized locally, regionally, and nationally, as individuals and as ensembles and teams in creative writing, performing and visual arts, robotics, and research science. Our student leaders are engaged with issues of diversity, antiracism, human rights, environmental awareness, the world economy, and developing economies. Through this work, they have been nominated for and awarded distinctions for their accomplishments and service.

OUR FACULTY

Relationships are at the heart of Castilleja. Our talented faculty members build meaningful and lasting connections with their students while also challenging them to develop their own voices and pursue their true passions. Our teachers steadily work to strengthen interdisciplinary connections to deepen learning and empower independent exploration. **Some 80% of our faculty hold advanced degrees from colleges and universities throughout the world** and have been recognized by local, state, and national organizations for their contributions to student learning and thought.

Our Mission, Values, and Affiliations

MISSION

Castilleja School educates motivated young women to become confident thinkers and compassionate leaders with a sense of purpose to effect change in the world.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Each member of the Castilleja community is responsible for fostering an equitable, respectful, and just community. Together, we commit to learning from diverse voices and experiences, and we aspire to engage our differences with courage, honesty, intellectual curiosity and respect. We believe this commitment to diversity and inclusion is essential to developing compassionate leaders.

AFFILIATIONS

Castilleja is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and is a member of One Schoolhouse, the National Association of Independent Schools, the National Association for College Admission Counseling, the Western Association for College Admission Counseling, and the Association of College Counselors in Independent Schools, and is a partner and summer site for the Peninsula Bridge Program.

Facts and Figures

Castilleja by the Numbers

Upper School enrollment (9–12):	243
Middle School enrollment (6–8):	183
Student-to-faculty ratio:	7:1
Average class size in the Upper School:	14
Students in the Class of 2021:	64
Median unweighted GPA after 6 semesters:	3.85
Median weighted GPA after 6 semesters:	4.03
% of students enrolling in 4-year colleges:	99%
% of students on a gap year:	30%
	(15% pre-COVID-19)
In May and June 2020, 120 students took 266 AP exams:	
Scores of 4 or 5:	76%
Scores of 3 and above:	95%

Advanced Curriculum

As of Fall 2020, Castilleja has completed the transition from an Advanced Placement (AP) to an Advanced Topics (AT) curriculum. First taught in the 2012-13 academic year, AT courses are designed by Castilleja faculty and grounded in research into how adolescent girls learn best, what college faculty expect entering students to know, and what skills are essential for success in upper-level college courses. AT courses are the most rigorous courses available in each academic discipline and are thoughtfully designed to replace the AP curriculum, exploring topics in greater depth and emphasizing experiential learning.

AP® Exams

Beginning Fall 2020: While Castilleja does not teach an AP curriculum, we recognize that in certain cases strong AP exam scores can provide value to students once they get to college. When a Castilleja AT course prepares students for a specific AP exam, any student enrolled in that AT course will have the option to sit for that AP exam at Castilleja. **Castilleja offers only the following AP exams on campus:**

Art: 2-D Art & Design or Drawing, Computer Science A (new in 20-21), English Language, English Literature, French Language & Culture, Calculus: AB or BC, Statistics, Music Theory, Spanish Language & Culture

COVID-19 Updates

Castilleja began distance learning on March 16, 2020 and continues into Fall 2020. We have not made significant changes to our calendar, grading system, course offerings, or academic requirements during this period. As of August 2020, over 40% of the Class of 2021 has had no opportunity to sit for an SAT or ACT exam and are unlikely to have the opportunity this fall due to continued school closures in California. We expected SAT and ACT scores for the Class of 2021 to be similar to previous years.

Test Scores for the Classes of 2018–2020

(ACT takers = 119; SAT takers = 115; best test results used)

TEST	MIDDLE 50%	MEAN
ACT Composite	31-34	33
SAT EBRW	690-760	720
SAT Math	680-780	720

Course Load Balance

Given the rigorous demands of the Castilleja curriculum, **we strongly encourage students to take no more than five core academic courses each semester.** Students may be limited in their selection of courses due to scheduling conflicts and the enrollment limitations of a small school. **AT (and until Fall 2020, AP) courses in any academic discipline are our most rigorous courses and are generally only available to juniors and seniors.** We strongly recommend that students limit themselves to no more than four AT courses per semester. All Castilleja students enroll in AT US History, AT English: American Voices, and two AT English Senior Seminars (respectively AP US History, AP English Language, and AP English Literature prior to Fall 2020).

Class Rank and Grading System

In the Upper School, GPAs include grades 9-12; plus and minus grades are weighted (e.g. B+=3.33, A-+3.67); AT (and until Fall 2020, AP) courses are given an extra point in the weighted GPA. We do not give academic credit or grades for cocurricular pursuits or courses taken outside of Castilleja. Students with an unweighted GPA of less than 2.5 are placed on academic probation. Castilleja is on a semester system; quarter grades are not given. **Students are not ranked.**

Students may enroll in a limited number of courses through *One Schoolhouse* (formerly *Online School for Girls*). *One Schoolhouse* courses are noted on the Castilleja transcript and included in the GPA.

Honor Code & Reporting Policy

The Castilleja Honor Code and Acceptable Use Policies, developed and written primarily by our students, speak to the promotion of trust and respect by and for all members of our community, both in terms of academics and personal conduct. Violations of either code may be reviewed by the Student Advisory Board or a select administrative committee. The Head of School has final authority in all disciplinary matters. It is Castilleja's policy to be forthcoming when asked by a college about major disciplinary action. **When requested, Castilleja will report to colleges any incidents in grades 9-12 that result in probation, suspension, or expulsion.**

Upper School Course Offerings

LEGEND:		* not offered in 2019-20 new courses	# not offered in 2020-21 (course titles prior to AT curriculum transition)	+ single semester course
SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS	COURSE OFFERINGS			
Computer Science and Engineering 1 semester required (Class of 2023 & beyond)	Artificial Intelligence * + Introduction to Computer Science in Java +	Engineering I: The Design and Science of Everyday Things + Engineering II: Electro-Mechanical Systems Design +	Advanced Topics Courses: Object-Oriented Problem Solving & Design in Java + Software Product Development #	
English 4 years required English I (gr. 9) English II (gr. 10) AP English Language (gr. 11) Two semesters of AT English Senior Seminars (gr. 12)	English I English II	Advanced Topics Courses: English: American Voices * (AP English Language)	Advanced Topics Courses: English Senior Seminars: * (AP English Literature Seminars) <i>21st Century Literature</i> + African American Women Writers + <i>British Literature since 1900</i> + Poetry + Short Fiction +	
Fitness and Wellness 2 years required (gr. 9-10)	Fitness and Wellness I	Fitness and Wellness II		
History-Social Science 3 years required Cultures and Civilizations (gr. 9) The Individual and Society (gr. 10) The American Political System (gr. 10) US History (gr. 11)	Cultures and Civilizations The Individual and Society + The American Political System +	Junior and Senior Electives Asian American Studies # + International Relations System + (International Relations) Introduction to Psychology # + Latin American History Honors + (Latin American History) Macroeconomics Honors + (Macroeconomics) Modern World Religions Honors + (Modern World Religions)	Advanced Topics Courses: <i>Asian American Studies</i> * + Art History + <i>Psychology</i> * + Research and Writing + United States History * (AP US History)	
Mathematics 3 years required Algebra II (gr. 9) Geometry (gr. 10) One additional year	Algebra II and Trigonometry Algebra II and Trigonometry Honors Euclidean and Analytic Geometry Euclidean and Analytic Geometry Honors	Introductory Calculus (Introductory Calculus AB) Introductory Calculus Honors (Introductory Calculus BC Honors)	Advanced Topics Courses: Calculus (AP Calculus AB) Calculus with Infinite Series (AP Calculus BC) <i>Multivariable Calculus</i> + <i>Probability</i> + Statistics I + & II + (AP Statistics)	
Science 3 years required Physics (gr. 9) Chemistry (gr. 10) Biology (gr. 11)	Physics Chemistry Chemistry Honors Biology Biology Honors	Junior and Senior Electives: Astronomy * + <i>Biology & Economics of Cancer</i> * + Biotechnology & Bioethics + Global Climate Change # +	Advanced Topics Courses: Biology: Genes, Development and Evolution Chemistry: Equilibrium, Kinetics, and Thermodynamics Physics: Modern Mechanics	
Visual and Performing Arts 2 years required, including Core Arts (gr. 9) and two semesters in a single arts discipline	Core Arts Dance: Dance Production Workshop I + and II + Advanced Dance Production Workshop Music: Vocal Music Workshop I + and II + Advanced Vocal Music Workshop + Songwriting & Music Production Workshop # +	Theatre Arts: Theatre I + and II + The Actor and The Director + Visual Arts: Ceramic Design I + and II + Drawing & Painting I + and II + Photography I + and II + Advanced Visual Art +	Advanced Topics Courses: Art History + Art: Studio Art (AP Studio Art) <i>Theater: Production</i> + Music: Theory and Musicianship	
World Languages Through level III (Classes taken in grades 7 and 8 may help meet the requirement)	Chinese II Chinese III Chinese IV French IB French II French III French IV	Spanish I Spanish II Spanish III Spanish IV	Advanced Topics Courses: Chinese: Language and Culture (Chinese Language and Literature) Chinese: Seminar French: Language & Culture (AP French Language & Culture) French: Seminar Spanish: Language & Culture (AP Spanish Language & Culture) Spanish: Seminar	
Additional Requirements	Presentation of Senior Talk (12)	Global Leadership Program (9-12)	Community Leadership Program (9-12)	

Enhanced Learning Opportunities

ANTIRACIST LEADERSHIP PROGRAMMING is a key component of fostering student leaders' initiative, agility, and purpose. Woven throughout the curricular and co-curricular experiences, students internalize key habits of mind that help them understand their positionality, value competing narratives, and sit with dissonance. Through affinity group experiences, Castilleja students find strength in their personal identifiers. All students actively interrogate their respective marginalization or dominance relative to specific contexts whether they are in class, on the sports field, on a stage, or leading a community engagement program.

COMMUNITY-BASED LEADERSHIP PROGRAMMING connects Castilleja students with local organizations to support the guiding principle of reciprocal learning and partnership; the goal is community action that is authentic, sustainable, and develops a life-long commitment to community building. Local partners include *Ada's Cafe*, *LifeMoves*, *Rosener House*, *Peninsula Bridge*, and *Girls Learn International*.

EXPLORING SCIENCE RESEARCH MODULES emphasize critical thinking, data analysis, collecting and processing evidence, and computer programming. Participation can provide a springboard for students who wish to do independent research or pursue research-based internships outside Castilleja. Taught by Castilleja and visiting faculty, recent topics have included: **Machine Learning**, **Astrophysics**, **Nanotechnology**, **Particle Physics**, and **Pharmaceutical Science**.

ACE CENTER promotes Awareness, Compassion, and Engagement to foster women leaders through experiential learning. Leadership programming is designed and assessed using Castilleja's signature leadership matrix which focuses on students' development of initiative, agility, and purpose. Leadership is learned and practiced through classroom experiences, grade-level programming, student-led initiatives, internships, and volunteering opportunities.

GLOBAL WEEK engages the entire school in a deep exploration of issues affecting the larger global community. The week is designed to examine a globally relevant topic through workshops, projects, and in-depth engagement with speakers. Past themes have included *Women, Peace & Security*; *Artificial Intelligence*; *Human Migration*; *Climate Change*; and *Equity in Education*.

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMMING is designed to provide unique experiential learning opportunities through a curriculum aligned with our social justice programming to explore first-hand the socio-political and economic complexities of globalization. The *Global Investigator Program*, an endowed travel opportunity, gives juniors the opportunity to collaborate with social change agents, educators, and students on the ground in either China, the Dominican Republic, or Senegal. Students collaborate in reciprocal project-based learning with partners, including *Mariposa DR Foundation* (Dominican Republic) and *ImagiNationAfrika* (Senegal).

BOURN IDEA LAB, the first *FabLab@School* established in a U.S. school and in collaboration with Stanford University, is a workshop equipped with traditional and digital fabrication tools to design and build projects that enhance individual and collaborative learning across the curriculum.

Colleges Offering Admission to the Class of 2020

(Bold type indicates matriculation by at least one student.)

American University	Elon University	San Diego State University	University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
Azusa Pacific University	Emerson College	San Francisco State University	University of La Verne
Barnard College	Emory University	San Jose State University	University of Miami
Baylor University	Fordham University	Santa Clara University	University of Michigan
Belmont University	George Washington University	Scripps College	University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Bentley University	Georgetown University	Sonoma State University	University of Oregon
Berklee College of Music	Georgia Institute of Technology	Southern Methodist University	University of Pennsylvania
Boston College	Hamilton College	St. John's College (MD)	University of Puget Sound
Boston University	Harvard University	Stanford University	University of Redlands
Brandeis University	Howard University	Syracuse University	University of Richmond
Brown University	Indiana University, Bloomington	Texas Christian University	University of Rochester
Bucknell University	Kenyon College	Tufts University	University of Southern California
Butler University	Lafayette College	Tulane University	University of St Andrews
Cal Poly San Luis Obispo	Lehigh University	United States Naval Academy	University of Texas, Austin
CSU East Bay	Lewis & Clark College	University of Auckland	University of the Pacific
CSU Los Angeles	Loyola Marymount University	University of British Columbia	University of Toronto
Carnegie Mellon University	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	University of California, Berkeley	University of Virginia
Case Western Reserve University	McGill University	University of California, Davis	University of Washington
Chapman University	New York University	University of California, Irvine	University of Wisconsin, Madison
Clark University	Northeastern University	University of California, Los Angeles	Vanderbilt University
Colby College	Northwestern University	University of California, Merced	Vassar College
College of San Mateo	Oberlin College	University of California, Riverside	Villanova University
College of the Holy Cross	Occidental College	University of California, San Diego	Washington University in St. Louis
College of Wooster	Ohio State University	University of California, Santa Barbara	Westmont College
Cornell University	Pitzer College	University of California, Santa Cruz	Whitman College
Cornish College of the Arts	Pomona College	University of Chicago	Whittier College
Dartmouth College	Purdue University	University of Colorado, Boulder	Willamette University
Davidson College	Queen's University	University of Colorado, Denver	Williams College
Denison University	Reed College	University of Connecticut	Worcester Polytechnic Institute
DePaul University	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	University of Denver	
DePauw University	Rice University	University of Hawaii, Manoa	
Duke University	Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology		