



Arkansas Governor's School

Hendrix College Campus • Conway, Arkansas • June 14 - July 25, 2015

Administered by the Office of Gifted and Talented and Advanced Placement • Arkansas Department of Education



Who Should Apply?

Consider applying to the Arkansas Governor's School if you are:

- a high school junior within the state of Arkansas
- exceptionally talented and creative
- highly motivated
- mature enough to handle intellectual freedom, academic and creative challenges, and strict rules of conduct
- willing and able to attend, without interruption, for the full six weeks

AGS is designed for students who eagerly desire to stretch their intellectual capacity, develop their abilities, and to learn about the world around them.

Application Procedure

The application form will be online at both the Department of Education's website and the AGS website October 1. Students must be nominated by their schools to apply, so students should check with their counselors about nomination criteria. Completed applications are due from schools by January 20. They are reviewed by state-appointed AGS selection committees and selections are announced in March 31.

Cost

The AGS is funded by the state of Arkansas. Participants are provided with room, board, and instructional materials at no cost.

Curriculum

The Arkansas Governor's School is a non-credit program that seeks to create a unique experience for a select group of Arkansas' best students—the potential leaders of the 21st century. Both inside and outside the classrooms, AGS provides highly motivated, creative students with an intellectual atmosphere impossible to sustain in ordinary academic settings. The excitement of intellectual and artistic pursuits and the expectation of significant conceptual gains permeate all aspects of the participants' lives for the full six weeks.

The School is neither defined by, nor committed to, any particular doctrine about giftedness, theory, or teaching. Its processes are as varied as the training and expertise of its faculty, and as unified as that faculty's common, intense concern for the pursuit of understanding. Since successful learning and teaching depend on the individual characteristics of teachers and students, there is no single, prescribed pedagogical approach.

Neither an acceleration of high school nor an anticipation of college, the program exposes students to some of the most influential developments in contemporary art, music, literature, film, and thought in the sciences, social sciences and humanities.

Students are selected to attend the Governor's School on the basis of their abilities and interests in a particular intellectual discipline or artistic field. About two-thirds of each student's class time is devoted to his or her selected discipline or field, known as Special Aptitude Development (Area I).

The eight fields include math, social science, natural science, language arts, choral music, instrumental music, drama, and visual arts.

Each student also pursues classroom work and reading in two other areas: General Conceptual Development (Area II) and Personal and Social Development (Area III). The curricula in Area II and Area III are identical for all students. This combination of unity and diversity is designed to foster dialogue among students interested in different topics and to encourage the development of greater conceptual facility within the Area I fields.

Area II focuses on thinking—on the ways we think, on the assumptions that underlie our own thinking and the thinking that takes place within the various disciplines, on the 21st century developments that have influenced our thinking about truth and knowledge, and on means of thinking more effectively. Since Area II brings together students from all eight Area I disciplines, instructors can help students explore connections and differences between the disciplines and help them understand various approaches to truth and reality.

Students are introduced to thinking about thinking, teaching them to be more conscious of their assumptions, the soundness of their logic, and different points of view based on different assumptions. Students express their opinions but also learn about the importance of evidence, logical thinking, and clarity of definition and expression.

Area III is designed to foster the personal and social development necessary for the students to benefit fully from their Area I and Area II classes and the comprehensive cultural and social events of the AGS program. The concept of Area III emerged from the need of students to process and discuss information and experiences. This makes learning more active and meaningful and enables students to develop accountability for their own educational, social, and cultural environment. By integrating all the academic classes and events, the curriculum of Area III strives to provide an opportunity for the students to see the importance of taking personal responsibility for one's own ideas and for one's participation in a democratic society. The students learn that ideas do have consequences and that "good thinking" means looking at the implications of ideas as well as the assumptions behind them.



Co-Curricular Activities

The educational experience of the Governor's School is enriched by three components beyond the classroom curriculum: a series of guest speakers, a series of films of intellectual significance, and the program's own series of student performances and presentations.

Twice weekly students and faculty gather to hear a presentation by a leading figure in the arts or sciences. These speakers contribute to the educational process of AGS in three ways: first, students hear the original views of outstanding thinkers and well-known public figures; second, students are able to engage these visitors in conversation; and, third, the topics dealt with by the speakers are integrated into classroom discussions.

Weekly films of intellectual importance provide material for classroom discussions and demonstrate that film can be an important cultural and artistic medium. The films selected for this series are intended primarily to be instructional tools and include a discussion led by one or more faculty members.

There are also field trips, supervised by faculty with special expertise in some scientific, historical, or artistic area. Additionally, an optional afternoon and evening speaker series is maintained throughout the duration of the program, in which local artists, teachers, community leaders, and AGS faculty and staff present seminars on various topics of interest.





AGS is a six-week residential, educational summer program designed for upcoming high school seniors with exceptional abilities, creativity, and maturity. Participants attend classes and many special events, including concerts, theatrical productions, lectures, and films. They participate in service projects, recreational activities, and social gatherings. The atmosphere of AGS is charged with intellectual, cultural, and social excitement. Participants take away with them a heightened appreciation of their own talents, a deeper sense of their relationship to their communities, and a more intense intellectual curiosity.

The Governor's School concept emerged in response to widespread concern over the level of support in American society for educational excellence necessary to maintain international leadership in science and technology, as well as in the arts and letters. In 1963, the State of North Carolina established a Governor's School that has served as a model for those that have followed. In 1980, Arkansas became the fifth state to institute such a program. Currently twenty-three states have Governor's School programs.



AGS Student Quotes

"I loved AGS so much. AGS let me love learning again and allowed me to interact with others who love learning, too. AGS opened my eyes and let me better understand people and the world around me. This was an incredible experience that I will keep in my heart forever. Thank you so much for this summer and this opportunity."

"Legendary. Enlightening. Invaluable. Necessary. Wonderful. You changed my life by providing me with this opportunity."

"My experience at AGS has been completely life changing and extremely positive. It has opened my eyes to a greater sense of the world and a greater sense of self. It has allowed me to develop socially, academically, and physically. I would return to AGS if I could."

AGS Important Dates

- October 1 - Applications available on AGS and Department of Education websites.
- January 20 - Student applications due from schools.
- March 31 - Acceptance emails sent.
- June 14 - July 25 - 2015 Session.



For More Information

- Talk to AGS alumni at your school.
- Talk to a GT coordinator, counselor, teacher, or principal at your school.
- Visit the AGS website at: www.hendrix.edu/ags
- Email questions to: ags@hendrix.edu
- Contact: Office of Gifted and Talented and Advanced Placement
Arkansas Department of Education
Four Capitol Mall, Slot 28
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201 • (501) 682-4224
www.arkansased.org/divisions/learning-services/gifted-and-talented-and-advanced-placement