

## The Upper School Curriculum – 20 Questions

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A legitimate question to ask any educational institution is whether or not classroom experiences accurately reflect what is stated in the school's mission statement. If you review Holland Hall's mission statement and our list of essential qualities for a Holland Hall graduate, you will notice phrases such as:

- Critical thinking and life-long learning
- Communicate effectively
- Possess intellectual curiosity
- Appropriate skill foundation for success in college
- Foundation for decision-making that is healthy, balanced and respectful
- Health of mind, body and spirit
- Self-discipline, self-awareness and time management

I invite you to participate in a 20-question matching exercise I have created that I hope will give evidence that we provide every student in the Upper School important classroom experiences that are evident in every area of the curriculum. Following is a list of learning objectives from 20 different courses that are taught in the Upper School:

1. Communicate with clarity and precision of language.
2. Develop interpersonal relationship skills and accept increasing responsibility.
3. Draw conclusions that are substantiated by data and understand the limitations of some datasets.
4. Analyze and interpret quantitative and qualitative information in order to draw conclusions.
5. Learn to solve practical every-day problems and develop the ability to think logically and systematically.
6. This course is research-based, experiential, and cross-disciplinary by design.
7. Investigate views of the world different from your own.
8. Examine the wide variety of visual, written, and audio texts in order to reach well-supported, thoughtful conclusions.
9. A major emphasis will be placed on the student's ability to creatively think and solve problems.
10. Develop the ability to problem solve in a theoretical and practical dimension.
11. Genuine comprehension and understanding will bring you success, not rote memorization.
12. This course provides a setting for students to apply reason, creativity, intuition, logic, and more to the task of problem solving.
13. Develop technical skill and intellectual understanding in order to apply and demonstrate critical thinking skills.
14. Develop the rational powers through extensive exposure to problem solving.
15. This course is rooted in the social sciences but also seeks to establish meaningful dialogue with English, the arts, and biological sciences.
16. An interdisciplinary approach with readings in biology, philosophy, literature, and history will be taken.
17. Develop better critical thinking skills and stronger analytical essay writing skills.
18. Introduce students to the major concepts and tools for collecting, analyzing, and drawing conclusions from data.
19. A willingness to take risks with the unfamiliar and a willingness to participate productively in individual, small, and large group activities while respecting the rights of others.
20. Ultimately empower the student to read/write/think within this academic community and beyond.

Now here is the challenge. Try to match the 20 statements above with the courses listed below.

A. Problem Solving

Holmes

B. Vietnam and the American Experience

Desjardins

C. College Composition	Martin-Phillips
D. English 9	Brown
E. Honors Geometry	Bennett
F. Algebra 1	Spencer
G. Chemistry	Bergenroth
H. AP Statistics	Luitwieler
I. Modern Dance	Joyce-Dyer
J. Freshman Wellness	Lenora, Muir, Brokaw
K. Adv. Biology – Genetics	Shingleton
L. Painting	Shen
M. Latin 1	Palma
N. AP Calculus AB	Rose
O. Democracy and Dissent	Carey
P. Urban Issues Studio	Cook
Q. American Studies	Berglund, Cook
R. Physics	Bromley
S. Biology	Harris, Shingleton
T. Global Issues	Gross, Reichard

If I had not been the creator of this exercise, I know that I would have trouble making the proper matches — but that is the idea, after all. I hope you are impressed, as I am, that our entire faculty believes in a common set of learning experiences that will benefit every student in our school no matter what the subject area and no matter what the knowledge base of any given course.

And finally, if you have tried your hand at making the proper matches, just drop me an e-mail at [dcalkins@hollandhall.org](mailto:dcalkins@hollandhall.org) and I will be pleased to send you the answer key.

Happy problem solving!