

WHAT THE ADVANCED ACADEMY CAN DO FOR YOU



**Academic Excellence,
Service to Others
Eternal Values**

By participating in the Advanced Academy you will learn how to:

- Think critically about the information you are presented inside and outside the classroom
- Ask tough questions—and find the answers
- Research and write college level papers
- Plan ahead and manage your time (a critical skill for success in college)
- Be a role model for the highest standards of Catholic preparatory education
- Balance academic goals with service to your peers, your community, and the world around you

ST BERNARD'S CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

45 HARVARD STREET
FITCHBURG, MA 01420

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Bernard's Central Catholic High School, the Diocesan Catholic High School in Northern Worcester County, proudly educates its students in a Christ-centered, student-focused, college preparatory environment. By providing a safe and structured academic climate, St. Bernard's recognizes and promotes each student's unique gifts and talents, in both the curricular and extra-curricular realms. A St. Bernard's education builds a bridge to the future, while maintaining ties to the school's rich past. In doing so, St. Bernard's strives to produce community leaders who embrace the school's maxim: "love one another."



ST BERNARD'S CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL ADVANCED ACADEMY



PARENT/STUDENT INFORMATIONAL BROCHURE

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

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The Very Reverend John Daly, Interim Coordinator,

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ADVANCED

ACADEMY Q&A

What is the Advanced Academy and who is eligible to take part in it?

The Advanced Academy is a program that consists of pre-AP classes in the 9th and 10th grades and of Advanced Placement classes for 11th and 12th graders. Advanced Academy students are expected to take 3 to 5 AP courses during their time at St Bernard's.

Any and all students may take an Advanced Academy class even if they do not take the entire program. In fact, our goal is to have 50% or more of our students take at least one AP course during their time at St. Bernard's

How will you provide all the courses students may want to take?

We will have our *entire* teaching staff trained in at least one AP subject by the beginning of the 2015-2016 academic year. In addition we will offer some AP courses online.

What does this mean for students who may not want to take AP courses or who may have difficulty doing well in one? Will they be left behind?

By training all our teachers in an AP subject we will raise academic rigor throughout the curriculum—even for students who are not in the Academy courses. We plan to leave no student behind in our goal of making already excellent education truly extraordinary.

Will Academy courses replace Honors courses?

Yes. The increased rigor applied to the highest level courses will raise them above what is generally considered honors level.

This seems to be a lot to expect from a small number of teachers! How can they get it done?

We will be using what it called a “blended-learning” approach which means we will be using advances in technology to broaden what we can teach both in the classroom and in assignments outside the classroom.

How do you keep track of all this?

In our digital world there are lots of great ways for students to do research, write papers, do projects and labs, and so on in ways that were not possible in the past. Progress can be tracked by teachers through a variety of sources from educational software that comes with texts to teacher monitored blogs, innovative online and in-class assessments, and traditional tests. All of these can be scored and analyzed very quickly using available technological resources.

How will you keep students from “falling through the cracks” and getting lost?

The technology available allows students much more room to excel by using approaches that they find most interesting and useful for meeting course requirements. When a student runs into difficulties, teachers will be able to quickly identify who they are and what particular areas they may need assistance in. This applies both to entire classes and individuals.

How will you decide who qualifies for Academy classes?

We will use a combination of methods. For incoming freshmen we will offer entrance level assessments to determine areas of strengths and challenges for Advanced classes. When at all possible we will offer these exams in the spring of year prior to admission to students in the eighth grade.

We will also take into account recommendations from middle school teachers and administrators.

You've told us a lot about academics, but what about Catholic identity? How is this program different from what my son or daughter could get at a public school?

We've saved the best 'til last! Catholic identity is at the center of everything we do at St. Bernard's. Its what makes us different from everyone else. All our courses, no matter what, must have enduring understandings that relate back to our primary identity. Whether its English and Social Studies, or Math and Sciences, there are certain questions that have to be answered in a particular way to meet the fundamental truths revealed by our faith. For instance, sanctity of life values must be addressed in biology, issues of justice in Social Studies and English, the deeper connection between logic and *Logos* in math and so on.

Further more, every student at St. Bernard's is required to perform some kind of service to the wider community as part of his or her “witness(ing) the message of Jesus Christ in order to foster life-long, sustaining Christian values.” (Handbook)

