



*develop character*  
*seek knowledge*  
*build community*

## Vail Mountain School Philosophy

Founded in 1962, Vail Mountain School (VMS) is a K-12, coeducational, college preparatory, independent school in Vail, Colorado. Our philosophy is to provide a demanding liberal arts education in an atmosphere of mutual trust between faculty and students, where nurturing a healthy self-concept and stimulating academic inquiry are parallel objectives. To that end, students begin each day in their “Homebase” engaging in conversations designed to strengthen community, instill character, and teach ethics.

Our upper school program ensures that students have the skills and confidence to thrive in the college environment, leveraging the breadth and depth of interests represented by our faculty. As a result of our rapport-driven environment, students are excited to show up early, happy to stay late, and eager to learn more. Abundant opportunities for interaction between students of all ages promote role modeling, responsibility, self confidence, and a sense of community. Students feel safe--socially, emotionally and physically--and consequently, take the measured risks necessary to support high academic achievement, succeed in athletics, develop passion, and build character.

VMS takes advantage of its breathtaking location in the Rocky Mountains by integrating the outdoors into the academic and cultural fabric of the school. As an example, upper school students participate in three-day, outdoor leadership, orientation trips at the beginning of each year where students create bonds, accept responsibilities, demonstrate good citizenship, and develop respect for the environment.

The result: a quiet confidence that serves our graduates well in college--confidence to assert themselves in their first college level essays; to raise their hand in a class of hundreds; to live on their own for the first time, to meet with and engage their professors; and to lead among their peers.

## Accreditation

The school is accredited by the Colorado State Department of Education and maintains membership in the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), the Association of Colorado Independent Schools (ACIS), the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), Rocky Mountain Association for College Admission Counseling, and the Association of College Counselors in Independent Schools (ACCIS). Vail Mountain School complies with the NACAC Statement of Principles of Good Practice.

## Course Load

- All courses are college preparatory and require a substantial commitment of time both in and out of the classroom.
- Students take five core academic courses for four years.
- Students receive instruction for 250 minutes per academic course on a rotating, 6-day schedule with an average of 3-4 hours of homework each evening.
- Electives are offered one to four times per week, each quarter, to provide students with additional enrichment.
- Community service is a central component of the curriculum and nearly 100% of our students volunteer their time.
- Students may take up to three Advanced Placement courses in grade eleven and three in grade twelve. Enrolling in two or three Advanced Placement courses in one year is considered a “most demanding” program. In addition to gaining AP course registration approval, students are encouraged to consider interests and strengths over sheer number of APs alone.
- Students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses are required to take the corresponding AP exam(s) in May.

## The Upper School

Enrollment .....	163	Class of 2016 .....	43	Girls/Boys .....	84/79
Student/Faculty Ratio .....	8:1	Upper School Faculty .....	20	Faculty with Advanced Degrees.....	9

## Academic Calendar

- Semester system. Grades are issued at the conclusion of each term (late December, late May). A mid-semester progress/grade report for all seniors will be available for college admission purposes
- Evaluative statements by course instructors accompany student quarterly progress/grade reports

## Graduation Requirements

- Acceptance to a four-year college
- Four years of English, history, world languages, science, and mathematics
- Completion of any additional departmental requirements
- Participation in interscholastic sports and fitness, and/or an extracurricular performing arts program in each season of every year.

## Standardized Testing

- ACT (Class of 2016; 29 students): middle 50%; composite 24-29; mean 27; median 26
- Advanced Placement: 28 students among the Class of 2016 took 111 exams while in grades 11 and 12 at VMS. Among 13 different AP exams, 79% of scores are a 3 or better; 50% of scores are 4 and 5s.
- 62 upper school students in grades 10, 11 and 12 took 133 exams in May 2016. Among 13 different AP exams, 77% of scores are a 3 or better; 51% of scores are 4 and 5s.

# Vail Mountain School Curriculum

	GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12
ENGLISH	Foundations in Grammar and Literature	British, American, World Literature, and Grammar and Writing	Upper Level British, American, World Literature, & Advanced Grammar & Writing; AP English Literature; AP English Language	Senior Seminars: Fiction to Film; In the Wake of War; Humanities (4th quarter)
WORLD LANGUAGES	Spanish II (Spanish I is taken in 8th Grade)	Mandarin I; Mandarin II; Mandarin III; Spanish III; Spanish IV; Spanish IV Advanced; Cultural Spanish; AP Spanish Language		
HISTORY	World History I	World History II; AP World History	US History; AP US History	Senior Seminars: Globalization; Intro to Ethics; Gov't & Economics; Humanities (4th quarter)
SCIENCE	Foundations in Chemistry & Physics	<b>Semester Courses:</b> Human Anatomy; Chemistry; Biochemistry; Evolution, Ecology & Behavior	Comparative Anatomy & Physiology; Chemistry; Advanced Chemistry; AP Biology; AP Environmental Science; AP Chemistry; AP Physics C	
MATHEMATICS	Geometry	Algebra II; Algebra II/Trigonometry; Trig/Intro to Pre-Calculus; Advanced Pre-Calculus; Statistics; AP Statistics; Calculus; AP Calculus AB; AP Calculus BC		
ART OR MUSIC MAJOR (Years 9-12) 4x per week	Foundation Studio (full year, all students)	AP Studio Art (added 2016-17); Painting; Senior Portfolio; 2D Design; Mixed Media; Instrumental Ensemble; Vocal Studio; Theatre; Theatre Dance; Drawing; Painting; Photography; Music Performance; Music Theory (not all majors are offered each year)		
ART ELECTIVES (term courses) 2x per week	Visual Arts: Ceramics; Collage; Digital Studio; Drawing; Functional Art; Mixed Media; Painting; Photography; Printmaking; Sculpture; Silkscreen; Yearbook. Music: Band; Choir; Independent Music Study; Music Composition; Music Theory; Vocal Ensemble; Wind Ensemble. Theatre: Musical Theatre; Theatre Production. (not all courses in each area are offered each year)			
ACADEMIC ELECTIVES (term courses) 1x per week	Chess; Civil War; CodeHS; Introduction to Computer Programming; Creative Writing; Current Events; Decades 50s & 60s; Disney and the Canon; Drones; Emotional Intelligence; Ethics; Financial Literacy; French; Greenhouse; Hands-On Art History; Introduction to Healthcare; Life Skills 101; Literary Magazine; Manufactured Landscapes; Nature Writing; Problem Solving; Public Speaking; Rock Band; Scientific Research; Social Psychology; Sports, Culture, and Society; The Power of Nonviolence; Wilderness First Aid. Additional electives not listed here are added throughout the year in response to student interest.			
ATHLETICS	VMS offers: competitive alpine skiing, basketball; cross country; golf; lacrosse; Nordic skiing; soccer; telemark skiing; tennis; and volleyball (girls)			
SERVICE LEARNING	Service Learning is integrated into the VMS curriculum in all grades and ties directly to the three core values in our mission develop character, seek knowledge, build community. Students and faculty regularly volunteer at Denver's Grant Street Reach soup kitchen and Habitat for Humanity, along with other various and timely initiatives. In addition, students lead a philanthropy and service group designed to encourage leadership through service to others.			
INTRATERM	Interterm is a week-long program led by faculty and staff during which students choose a course of study designed to enrich the traditional curriculum and the student's intellectual curiosity. In 2016, VMS offered 12 courses including two international travel opportunities to provide cultural immersion. Course titles from previous years include: <i>China Immersion Trip</i> ; <i>Snow Science and Safety</i> ; <i>Psychology and Film</i> ; <i>Navajo Culture</i> ; <i>Ethics and Photography</i> ; <i>Business, Leadership &amp; Social Entrepreneurship</i> ; <i>Exploration of Architecture</i> ; <i>Dog Sledding</i> ; <i>Harvard Leadership Institute</i> ; <i>Digital Photography in The Grand Canyon</i> ; <i>Southern California College Tour</i> ; <i>Discovering Engineering</i> ; <i>Costa Rica Immersion Trip</i> .			
SENIOR PROJECT	Seniors may elect to complete an independent project with a significant research component during the fourth quarter. Projects require a scholarly paper or portfolio, an oral defense, and a presentation to the senior's advisory board, community experts, peers, and the general public. Senior Project takes the place of two fourth quarter classes to accommodate the demands of the project. Advanced Placement courses cannot be dropped for project work. Please see the secondary school and mid-year reports to view the second semester schedule. Final transcripts will denote successful completion of a senior project and credit will be awarded. Past projects have included: <i>The Incidence of Post Mastectomy Reconstruction Complications after Radiation Therapy at High Altitude</i> authored by a female student who later studied pre-med in college; <i>The War on Drugs in Mexico</i> - a research project by an international student from Mexico that culminated in a proposed solution to the ongoing crisis; <i>Holography</i> , which involved building a laboratory and creating a portfolio of holograms; and <i>The Day I Converted</i> . A Case Study on Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam was a comparative study of the different religions where the student spent two weeks each practicing the traditions, rituals, and lifestyle of each religion.			

## Grade Point Average

- Vail Mountain School uses a 4.0 grading scale; students are not ranked.
- Advanced Placement classes are weighted 1.1% and the weight is only reflected in the grade point average.
- Courses in the Art Major, Music Major, and Theatre Major (semester-long) are graded and included in the grade point average. Students may earn a mark of High Pass, Pass, Marginal Pass, or Fail for elective courses, except for intraterm and fitness as they are graded either Pass or Fail.
- The class of 2017's unweighted/weighted mean GPA after completing grade eleven is 3.37/3.41 and the unweighted/weighted median GPA is 3.52/3.54. It is rare to have a cumulative GPA of 4.0 due to the rigorous nature of the coursework at VMS.

A .....	93-100 .....	(4.00)	B- .....	80-82 .....	(2.67)	D+ .....	67-69 .....	(1.33)
A- .....	90-92 .....	(3.67)	C+ .....	77-79 .....	(2.33)	D .....	65-66 .....	(1.00)
B+ .....	87-89 .....	(3.33)	C .....	73-76 .....	(2.00)	F .....	below .....	65
B .....	83-86 .....	(3.00)	C- .....	70-72 .....	(1.67)			



# College Enrollment (bolded colleges denote matriculation in the last four years)

Allegheny College	Evergreen State College	<b>Regis University (2)</b>	<b>University of Denver (7)</b>
<b>American University</b>	Fort Lewis College	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	University of Findlay
Arizona State University	<b>Full Sail University</b>	<b>Rhode Island School of Design</b>	University of Iowa
Auburn University	George Mason University	Roanoke College	University of Kansas
<b>Babson College</b>	George Washington University	<b>Rochester Institute of Technology</b>	<b>University of Massachusetts - Amherst</b>
Bard College	Georgetown University	Rocky Mountain College	<b>University of Miami (2)</b>
<b>Bates College</b>	<b>Georgia Institute of Technology</b>	Roger Williams University	University of Michigan
<b>Belmont University</b>	Gettysburg College	<b>Rollins College</b>	University of Minnesota
Bennington College	<b>Grinnell College</b>	<b>Santa Clara University (2)</b>	University of Missouri
Boston College	Gustavus Adolphus College	<b>Sarah Lawrence College</b>	<b>University of Nebraska - Omaha</b>
<b>Boston University</b>	Hamilton College	<b>Savannah College of Art and Design</b>	University of Nevada - Las Vegas
Bowdoin College	<b>Harvard University</b>	<b>Scripps College</b>	University of New Hampshire
Brown University	Haverford College	Seattle University	University of New Mexico
Bryn Mawr College	Hobart and William Smith Colleges	<b>Sierra Nevada College</b>	University of Northern Colorado
Bucknell University	<b>ITESO</b>	Skidmore College	University of Notre Dame
<b>California Lutheran University</b>	Ithaca College	Smith College	University of the Pacific
<b>California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo</b>	Jacksonville University	Sorbonne University	University of Pennsylvania
<b>California State University/Bakersfield</b>	Johns Hopkins University	<b>Southern Methodist University (3)</b>	University of Pittsburgh
Carleton College	Kansas State University	St. Cloud State University	University of Puget Sound
<b>Chapman University (3)</b>	<b>Lake Forest College</b>	St. John's College	University of Redlands
Claremont McKenna College	LIM College	St. Lawrence University	<b>University of Rochester</b>
<b>Clark University</b>	Lehigh University	St. Michael's College	University of San Diego
<b>Colby College</b>	Lewis and Clark College	<b>St. Olaf College (2)</b>	<b>University of San Francisco (2)</b>
<b>Colgate University</b>	Linfield College	<b>Stanford University</b>	<b>University of Southern California (4)</b>
<b>College of Charleston</b>	Loyola Marymount University	Stephens College	University of St. Andrews- Scotland
College of the Holy Cross	Macalester College	Stetson University	University of Tampa
College of Idaho	<b>Maryland Institute College of Art</b>	<b>Suffolk University</b>	University of Texas-El Paso
College of William and Mary	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	<b>Syracuse University</b>	University of Utah
Colorado College	<b>McGill University - Canada</b>	<b>Texas Christian University (2)</b>	University of Vermont - Burlington
<b>Colorado Mesa University</b>	Miami University	<b>Texas Tech University</b>	<b>University of Virginia - Charlottesville</b>
<b>Colorado School of Mines</b>	Middlebury College	Transylvania University	<b>University of Washington - Seattle</b>
<b>Colorado State University (2)</b>	Mills College	Trinity College	University of Wisconsin - Madison
Columbia University	Montana State University	Tufts University	University of Wyoming
<b>Connecticut College</b>	Mount Holyoke College	Tulane University	Ursinus College
<b>Cornell College</b>	Naropa University	U.S. Merchant Marine Academy	Vanderbilt University
<b>Cornell University</b>	New England College	U. S. Naval Academy	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Creighton University	<b>New York University</b>	<b>Union College</b>	Wake Forest University
Curry College	<b>Northeastern University</b>	Universidad Iberoamericana	Washington University at St. Louis
<b>Dartmouth College</b>	Northern Arizona University	Universidad Tecnológico Monterrey	Wellesley College
Davidson College	Northwestern University	<b>University of Alabama/Tuscaloosa</b>	<b>Wesleyan University</b>
Denison University	Oberlin College	University of Arizona	<b>Western State Colorado University</b>
DePauw University	Occidental College	University of British Columbia	Western Washington University
<b>Dickinson College (2)</b>	Ohio University	<b>University of California/Berkeley</b>	Wheaton College
Duke University	<b>Pacific University</b>	University of California/Los Angeles	Whitman College
Eckerd College	<b>Parsons, The New School of Design</b>	University of California/San Diego	Whittier College
<b>Elon University (3)</b>	Pennsylvania State University	<b>University of California/Santa Barbara</b>	Willamette University
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University- Prescott	Pepperdine University	University of Chicago	<b>Williams College (2)</b>
Emerson College	Pomona College	<b>University of Colorado - Boulder (15)</b>	<b>Yale University</b>
Emory University	Princeton University	University of Colorado - Denver	
	Purdue University	University of Dayton	



## Vail Mountain School

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