# Diploma Program <br> Overview 

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## MEMORIA PRESS

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diploma program overview
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## A Letter from the Head Master

Since 2006, the Academy has intended to be a support for families in their educational endeavors at home. The Diploma Program is one more tool in the classical homeschooler's oolbox to prepare for graduation and adulthood.

Education is about preparing student for adulthood, and as such, at MA we insist on order, structure, discipline, and hard work. These habits in a child's life will serve them well their entire lives. Our first priority in forming young people is the development of good character

These human virtues are demanded at MA in the context of a rigorous education No student is able to float through the Diploma Program without effort. Four years of Latin, extensive study of classical history and culture, devotion to advanced math and sci nce, dedication to logic and rhetoric--these are just a few of the required elements to graduate from MA.

All of this is a challenge. It is meant to be so. Victory is achieved only after a hard battle. Summitting a mountain comes after a long struggle uphill. People are only proud o what they have accomplished if they worked and toiled for it. And graduating from MA well definitely be something to be proud of

And yet in the midst of demanding classes and expected character, you will find faculty and staff that truly care for with other and for each student. As we are all devotes of classical education--a principle endeavor of which is to understand what it means to be human--we spend a lot of time discerning in each situation what the best way it is to honor each other's human dignity. Here you will find honor, respect, and kindness. In the endeavor of learning there is no better group I would want to be a part of.

Let us begin.
Paul foharfer

## 2| Administration

## Institutional Administration

Paul Schaeffer I Head Master
Mr. Schaeffer is a veteran teacher, having taught Latin, classical studies, and philosophy at Highlands Latin School, the Memoria Press Online Academy, and other institutions. He spent nine years consulting with school teachers and administrators on how to transition to classical education and hone the formation they impart to their students. He holds a B.A. in Liberal Studies from Bellarmine University.

> Mitchell L. Holley I Principal

Mr. Holley holds a B.A. in Cultural Anthropology, a M.Div. and a Th.M. from Southern Seminary, and a forthcoming Ph.D from the University of Aberdeen (UK). Along with his formal education, Mr. Holley has a good deal of teaching experience and has taught most recently at Boyce College and Highlands Latin School in Louisville, KY. He has a passion for teaching the Classical languages, Greco-Roman philosophy, and Christian history.
essica Gardner I Administrative Assistant
Ms. Gardner joined the academy's staff in 2020. With a background in communications and enrollment management, she provides skilled support to MPOA families and administrators. She counts it a privilege to serve students and families, and in her spare time she enjoys being an active member of the Memoria Press staff book club. Ms. Gardner holds a B.A. in Organizational Communication from Cedarville University.


## Academic Administration

## Meredith Cutrer I Head of Latin Program

Mrs. Cutrer comes to Memoria Press with a great deal of teaching experience, having taught all levels of Latin, literature, history, world religions, and art history in the United States, Canada, Ireland, Iceland, Australia, Mongolia, and Colombia. She is currently working on her doctorate at the University of Oxford in Medieval History, specializing in early medieval Ireland and Britain She obtained her master's degree from the University of Wales in Celtic Studies and her B.A. from Georgetown in History and Classics.

Dr. Kevin Dray I Head of Classical and Christian Studies
Dr. Kevin Dray was born and raised in Bartlesville, Oklahoma before moving to Kansas City and then to New Orleans to complete his education. He holds a B.A. in English from Oklahoma Baptist University as well as two masters degrees and a Ph.D. from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Kevin loves teaching and has a wealth of experience, both in brick-and-mortar classical schools and online schools. For a number of years he was the head of school for Coram Deo Classical Academy, an interdenominational classical and Christian school. At MPOA, he has taught in the areas of Latin, Classical Composition, and Christian Studies. Kevin is a true Renaissance man and has experience with students of all ages. He lives in Oklahoma with his wife and two children.
Abigail Johnson I Head of Composition
Abigail Johnson is a longtime lover of classical education, being in 8th grade when her city's classical K-12 school started. She went on in the classical disciplines to graduate from New St Andrews with a B.A in Liberal Arts and Culture. She has loved teaching at MPOA since joining in 2012, in subjects ranging from Classical Composition to Homer, Dante, L. M. Montgomery and Tolkein. Teaching the same subjects each year, she says, is far from boring, but instead gives her the opportunity to delve further into the genius of what makes great literature, allowing us to appreciate its beauty more deeply. She also travels with the Schools Division at Memoria Press to train educators in classical instruction.
Susan Dewberry I Head of Literature
Susie has a B.A. in English Teaching from George Fox College and a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Oregon. She has over 25 years of teaching experience in a variety of settings from high school English to writing and literature at Gutenberg College, a four-year liberal arts Great Books college, as well as online teaching. Susie enjoys engaging students in discussions about the most important issues of life centered around the Great Books. Susie and her husband homeschooled their two sons, now grown. Susie enjoys gardening, reading, calligraphy, quilting, and drinking tea.

## 3| About the Academy

## An Historical Sketch

Memoria Press is a family-run publishing company that exists to promote and impart the classical heritage of the Christian West. We do this through an emphasis on the liberal arts and the great works of the Western tradition. In order to achieve this goal, we have produced a comprehensive and accessible classical Christian curriculum that encourages the development of wisdom and virtue through a pursuit of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful. Our motto is Saving Western Civilization One Student at a Time" and expresses our passion for defending and transferring the culture of the Christian West through classical education.
Cheryl Lowe founded Memoria Press and authored many of its popular Latin programs like Latina Christiana, Lingua Angelica, and the Latin Forms Series. She had wide teaching experience, in both content and venue, teaching everything from phonics, reading, math, Bible, and chemistry to Shakespeare and Latin, and teaching in public and private schools, as well as homeschooling. Cheryl and her son Brian founded Memoria Press in 1994, and in 2000, they founded the highly successful Highlands Latin School, where the award-winning Memoria Press programs are taught


Cheryl Lowe 1945-2017 nd field-tested. Cheryl spent many years overseeing the development of schools, and her memory and example continue to daily inform the mission and vision of Memoria Press.

Memoria Press is part of a collection of institutions that promote classical education and the cultural heritage of the Christian West. We regard each of these enterprises as members of our classical education family.
highlands Latin Cottage School

## What is a Classical Education?

 produce wise and virtuous students who know both how to think well and how to live well in the world. Historically, a classical Christian education accomplished this goal through the inculcation of skills and the cultivation of knowledge. While students acquire skills through the liberal arts, they gain knowledge through the sciences. The liberal arts and the sciences represent two distinc but inseparable domains of human experience, and both are necessary for a classical Christian education. However, these two domains have taken on a life of the own in recent years, so they require further definition.
## The Liberal Arts

First, the word "art" is unclear. Today the word refers to the products of artists (i.e., artwork) or the activities that artists perform with brush or chisel. However, "art" can have another less common meaning, as in the phrase "the art of conversation." In this phrase, the word refers to a skill or a technique acquired through practice, and it recalls the original Latin term ars, which means "skill" or "craft." The liberal arts, therefore, refers to two sets of practiced skills: language skills (grammar, logic, rhetoric) and mathematical skills (arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy). These skills are commonly known as the "trivium" and the "quadrivium."

## The Sciences

Second, while the word "science" is typically used in reference to the hard sciences like biology or chemistry, the word comes from the Latin scientia, which refers to knowledge more broadly. And historically a classical education focused on three bodies of knowledge: the human sciences (literature, history, philosophy), the natural sciences (biology, chemistry, physics), and the theological sciences (dogmatic and apologetics).

## A Synthesis

These two domains of human experience, one practical and the other theoretical, advance the other. While the liberal arts constitute the practical skills required to grow in knowledge, a greater understanding of the sciences allows students to perform the liberal arts with greater proficiency. However, both the arts and the sciences exist to cultivate wisdom and virtue in the lives of students. They are included in a classical education so that students will understand how to think well and how to live well in the world.

## Our Philosophy of Education

## Christian

Our faith statement is the Apostles' Creed, the most ancient and widely accepted expression of the essential beliefs of the Christian faith. MPOA holds to traditional Christian morality, and teaches the Holy Scriptures as the divinely inspired word of God.

MPOA warmly welcomes families of other faiths, while asking that you respect our distinctive Christian identity. In all of our instruction we are respectful of all faiths, and humbly maintain the truths of our Christian faith.

## Classical

Classical education can be distinguished from modern education in that it does not neglect the important first step of giving students the classical tools for both intellectual development and for understanding their classical Christian heritage.

The intensive study of Latin in the grammar school years develops the minds of students as no other subject can. Students who have learned how to learn with Latin become better students in all other subjects. The study of classical languages and the Greek and Roman classics provides a path to wisdom and knowledge that cannot be attained by any other method. In the tradition of Western civilization, education and classical education have always been synonymous.

## Traditional

Although many experimental innovations have been tried by schools during the last century, none have been able to duplicate the success of the traditional classroom.

Knowledgeable, caring, and enthusiastic teachers foster a rigorous academic culture by thoughtfully preparing students for each level of study. Classrooms are quiet, orderly, and disciplined, and students receive clear and concrete expectations. Lessons are incremental, content is age-appropriate, and students learn the important skill of quality written work completed in a timely manner. Homework is moderate and is for the purpose of practicing or preparing for a lesson. The traditional classroom is consistent with human nature, and the experience of many decades has demonstrated its superiority over the modern child-centered classroom.

A traditional model of education also recognizes the importance of a well-designed curriculum that emphasizes content, language and math skills, memorization, and mastery. For K-6, this model places a priority on the basic skills such as phonics, reading, spelling, and math facts. For upper school students, the traditional model balances the humanities and the sciences so that neither is neglected and each supports the other. In short, a traditional education requires the thoughtful implementation of a classical curriculum.


## Accreditation

The Memoria Press Online Academy is accredited by the Classical Latin School Association (CLSA). The CLSA is an association of elementary and secondary schools working to promote the transmission of the culture of Western civilization to the next generation. CLSA academic accreditation is a way for schools to internally document their viability as academically successful classical schools, hold themselves externally accountable to an outside body, and to verify that they are offering their students a superior classical education.

The following are the requirements for CLSA:

- Philosophical requirements: Evidence of a clear understanding among staff and board members of the nature and purpose of a classical education
- Academic/Curricular requirements: Verification that the school possesses a clearly articulated statement of the academic goals at every level and a clear process of ensuring the achievement of those goals
- Instructional requirements: Traditional, teacher-directed instruction in a classroom environment conducive to learning and a process by which those methodologies are communicated to teachers and verified by administrative staff
- Assessment requirements: Demonstration of the value-added benefit of the school's academic program through standardized test scores
- Professional development requirements: Participation in professional development programs that contribute to the understanding of classical Christian education and the ability of teachers and staff to implement it
MPOA is happy to be an accredited member of an association of schools throughout the country who are together working to pass on a classical Christian education their students.


CLASSICAL
LATIN SCHOOL
ASSOCIATION

## 4| Admissions

## The Admissions Process

Parents and students interested in the diploma program should purchase and complete the online application between November and March 15. Along with the online application, students will receive the entrance exams.
The entrance exams test each student on two primary subjects: language arts and mathematics. The language arts portion covers word definitions and a reading test. The mathematics exams cover arithmetic, Pre-Algebra and Algebra I. If a student is currently taking Pre-Algebra then he or she need not take the exam for Algebra I. The Pre-Algebra and Algebra I exams are designed knowing that applicants might only be partway through their studies.
Submission of the application and entrance tests are not a guarantee of acceptance. After submission of the application and entrance exams and a decision is made about your student's acceptance, the administration will notify you with the results.
Upon acceptance, the administration will work with both the parents and the student to create an individualized high school degree map. This consultation will ensure that each student can successfully complete the requirements for graduation.
Before general registration opens each year, diploma students are able to register for their courses. In addition to this early registration period, the administration will work with each student to secure a spot in any required course.

## Step 1:

Application and Entrance Exams

## Step 2:

Admissions and Consultation

Step 3:
Registration

## Cost and Deadlines for Admission

The application includes a $\$ 25$ application fee. Applications will open in November and close on March 15 of each year. While applications maybe accepted after this close date, there is no guarantee late applications will be reviewed.

## Entrance Examinations and Acceptance

Students demonstrate a strong academic foundation by maintaining at least a B+ average on all their entrance exams. However, the administration does weigh other factors when evaluating a student candidate. For this reason, parents and students are encouraged to included in their application a transcript of past courses and a writing sample. Achievements in past MPOA courses are also taken into account.

## Yearly Costs and Fees

Diploma students pay a yearly enrollment fee of $\$ 150$ and they receive a $15 \%$ discount on the cost of our courses. Costs are kept to a minimum and a payment plan is available.

## State Requirements

The diploma program was developed and organized to help students meet or exceed the requirements in all 50 states. For example, the program includes 6.5 free elective credits, and a student should use these electives to satisfy the specific requirements of his or her state. However, while the school has done much of the legwork in designing the diploma program, it is the responsibility of each student to ensure that he or she follows the laws and guidelines for homeschooling in each state.

When evaluating applicants, many universities use (among other things) the high school graduation requirements for each state. Therefore, each student is encouraged to identify several universities to which he may apply and to investigate each university's website for any specific expectations for homeschool applicants.

Please note that occasionally standards change from state-to-state and you must follow all applicable homeschooling laws and stay aware of this information. While the state may consider students in the diploma program a homeschooled student, each student is simultaneously in a high school diploma program with MPOA.

## College Admission

Students from MPOA have been accepted into numerous well-respected universities and colleges: Drexler University, Harvard University, Hillsdale College, Johns Hopkins University, King's College, Marquette University, Oxford University, Rutgers University, Stanford University, Thomas Aquinas College, United States Air Force Academy, University of Edinburgh, University of Notre Dame, West Point, Wheaton College and many more.


## 5| Academic Information

## Program Overview

The Online Academy offers a partnership with committed homeschool families around the world. The program offers access to knowledgeable instructors, a rigorous curriculum, and classroom training and accountability. In order to graduate, students must meet the credit and curricular requirements outlined below

## Credit Requirements

Each student must earn at least 28 credits to graduate. Below is a specific breakdown of the credits required for graduation.

| Latin | 4 |
| :--- | :---: |
| History | 4 |
| Math | 3 |
| Science | 3 |
| Literature | 3 |
| Writing | 2 |
| Logic | 2 |
| Government | .5 |
| Electives | 6.5 |
| Total | 28 |

## Credits Taken Elsewhere

Students may take some classes outside of the Academy and still receive course credit. While the average student will take 7 credits per year, only 5 of these credits each year must come from the academy. Students may complete the 2 remaining credits at home, a local co-op, a high school, a community college, or MPOA. To award credit for classes taken outside the academy, some documentation will be required: proof of work, a syllabus, and a final grade.
At the end of each academic year, parents must update their student's records by sending this documentation to the Academy.

## Credits Taken Prior to High School

Practices on accepting high school credit from grades 7 and 8 vary by state and institution. After successful completion of entrance exams the administration will evaluate the student's transcript to see if anything can be counted as high school credit. Generally, no coursework prior to 9th grade will be accepted for high school credit on a student's transcript, but curricular requirements can be achieved prior to 9th grade.

## Elective Credits

The diploma program requires each student to complete 6.5 electives credits. Students can use these credits to enrich their education by taking classes that are outside the core requirements of the diploma program. These credits can be taken inside or outside the academy

While the academy places no limitation on these elective credits, provided that they meet specific standards of academic rigor, students are strongly encouraged to use these electives in one of two ways: (1) to strengthen a high school transcript by taking additional classes in a specific academic area, or (2) to satisfy any state-specific credit/curricular requirements for graduation.

## Curricular Requirements

In addition to the credit requirements, many subjects also have specific curricular requirements. The chart below indicates the courses that students must take as part of their high school program. Also, students are required to take at least one AP course and the exam associated with that course

| Latin | One translation course: Caesar, Christian Latin, Cicero, or AP Latin |
| :--- | :---: |
| History | Classical Studies I, Classical Studies II |
| Math | Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry |
| Literature | The Divine Comedy |
| Logic | Traditional Logic I \& II, Material Logic, and Classical Rhetoric |

## Latin Specific Requirements

Not all Latin programs will equip students with the grammatical competencies necessary to translate difficult Latin texts like Cicero and Virgil. To ensure that students are sufficiently prepared for the rigors of Latin translation, students must take all of their Latin credits from the academy, using the Memoria Press Latin curriculum. The administration may grant an exception to this Latin policy on a case by case basis, but no exception is guaranteed.

## Testing Requirements

Students are required to take all of these assessments to graduate. Families must arrange to take these tests locally and have the scores reported to the academy by scanning the documents or having these directly reported to the academy.

- PSAT, or CLT 10: The PSAT is taken during the fall of the junior year, and the CLT 10 is taken in the sophmore year. Scores from this test are used to determine National Merit Scholars (only scores from the junior year). The PSAT code for MPOA is 180036.
- SAT, ACT, or CLT: Students will also take either the SAT, the ACT, or the CLT. The SAT is taken during the spring of the junior year, the ACT is taken during the fall of the senior year and the CLT is taken any time during the senior year. Students may use the MPOA school code (180036) or the homeschooling code ( 97000 for SAT; 969-999 for ACT). If registering as a homeschooler, then the scores are sent directly to the student's home and will then need to be sent to the Academy.


## Academic Standing

Every student's academic standing is reviewed at the end of each semester. Each diploma student is categorized into one of the following classifications of academic standing.

- Good Standing: A student is considered to be in good standing if he or she has a grade of at least an $83 \%$ (B), both in the semester that is the subject of academic review and in the cumulative total.
- Academic Warning: If a student's grade in the last semester is below $83 \%$ (B), the student is placed on academic warning. He or she must achieve at least an $83 \%$ (B) evaluated over the subsequent semester. Academic warning and academic probation may occur simultaneously.
- Academic Probation: A student is considered to be on academic probation when his or her cumulative grade-point average falls below $83 \%$ (B). He or she must achieve at least an $83 \%$ (B) evaluated over the subsequent year of course work.
- Academic Dismissal: Failure to satisfy requirements for removal from academic probation will result in academic dismissal. This standing requires that the student withdraw from the diploma program, though they may continue to take individual classes. If the student desires to re-enter the diploma program, he or she must apply for readmission Readmission, however, is not automatic. If readmission is granted, the student will be admitted on academic probation.


## Suggested Sequence

Freshmen Year

| Latin | Henle Latin 2** |
| :--- | :---: |
| History | Classical Studies I* |
| Math | Algebra I* |
| Science | Biology |
| Literature | 9th Grade Literature |
| Writing | High School Composition I |
| Logic | Traditional Logic I and II* |

Sophomore Year

| Latin | Christian Latin* |
| :--- | :---: |
| History | Classical Studies II* |
| Math | Algebra II* |
| Science | Chemistry |
| Literature | 10th Grade Literature |
| Writing | High School Composition II |
| Electives | Any |
|  |  |

Junior Year

| Latin | Henle $3^{*}$ |
| :--- | :---: |
| History | AP US History |
| Math | Geometry* $^{*}$ |
| Science | Anatomy or Physics |
| Literature | The Divine Comedy* |
| Writing | High School Composition III <br> Material Logic and <br> Classical Rhetoric* |
| Logic | Any |
| Electives |  |

Senior Year

| Latin | AP Latin* |
| :--- | :---: |
| History | Medieval or European History |
| Math | Calculus (or Elective) |
| Science | Advanced Physics (or Elective) |
| Literature | Senior Seminar (or Elective) |
| Writing | High School Compostition VI <br> and Senior Thesis (or Elective) |
| Government | American Government* |
| Electives | Any |

*Curricular Requirements
**Those who have not compelted the Latin grammar should start in Henle Latin 1A

## Sample Transcript




