



CRIMSON
GLOBAL ACADEMY

Crimson Global Academy US Pathway Handbook 2023-24

#3 online school
in America



CGA.SCHOOL

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Introduction

Mission

Crimson Global Academy (CGA) is a world-class online school designed for ambitious and highly motivated students. CGA's **US Pathway** is intended for students who would like to work towards earning a US high school diploma in an innovative and individualized learning environment.

CGA uses leading technology to provide a rich online experience for our students. Our promise is to deliver an outstanding level of education to talented students around the world and to equip young people to be successful on a global stage.

We strive to cultivate our students' curiosity, intellectual vitality, open-mindedness, creativity, and perseverance.

How to use this handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to keep students and families informed of school policies, procedures, and expectations. Please review this handbook before classes begin.

The school reserves the right to revise rules and policies as necessary. Please make sure to read all communications from school administrators, faculty, and staff to ensure that your knowledge is up to date.

A note on high school and junior high

The **US Pathway** encompasses both the **US Diploma Program (high school, grades 9-12, including all AP and ESOL courses)** and the **junior high school (grades 6-8)**. Most of the content in this handbook applies to the entire US Pathway. Policies and procedures that apply only to junior high or only to high school are noted as such.

Important contacts

CGA Support	MyCGA	mycga@cga.school
Head of School, US	Brittanie Bates	b.bates@cga.school
Academic Dean	Stephanie Todaro	s.todaro@cga.school
Academic Operations Manager	Angela Hui	a.hui@cga.school
Director of Admissions	Bob Fan	b.fan@cga.school

Welcome!

Getting started

STUDENT INDUCTION COURSE

New students will be added to the student induction course on Canvas. The induction course contains important information about term dates, the technology students and families will need to use, and everyday student life.

Students are required to complete the induction course before joining classes.

Please note that there are separate induction courses for junior high and high school, and students will be added automatically to the course corresponding to their grade level.

ORIENTATION

Before starting classes, new students must attend an orientation session to ensure that they are prepared for online learning.

Students can book an orientation session by going to [CGA Home](#).

ENROLLING IN COURSES

Please see our [junior high school course catalog](#) and [high school course catalog](#) for a list of course offerings. Course availability is subject to change based on student interest.

New students will meet with their academic advisors to draft course plans for their time at CGA and select courses for the upcoming term. If desired, students and families may also meet with the academic dean and/or academic operations manager to discuss course selections.

Returning students will work with the academic dean or academic operations manager to select courses for the upcoming term.

School calendar

The school calendar for the 2023-2024 school year can be found [here](#).

Term 1 begins on September 8, 2023 and ends on December 21, 2023. Term 2 begins on January 19, 2024 and ends on May 16, 2024.

June term, which takes place over the summer (in the Northern Hemisphere), is optional. Students may choose to take June term courses to catch up or get ahead academically.

Parent Portal

Parents and guardians can use Parent Portal to access information about their children, including:

- CGA Timetable
- Class attendance and punctuality
- Homework completion
- Comments and feedback from teachers

Parent Portal should also be used to **report or excuse student absences**; please see the handbook section on [attendance](#).

The student induction course has a page explaining how to use Parent Portal. Please contact CGA Support (mycga@cga.school) if you experience any difficulties with the platform.

Clubs and extracurriculars

CGA offers a variety of clubs and extracurriculars for students to join.

Extracurricular clubs, such as math club and Model UN, connect students from all over the world to pursue their passions and interests with an **experienced faculty mentor**.

Student-led clubs, such as the CGA student newspaper, are interest groups organized by students themselves.

Students interested in joining a club can visit the CGA [website](#) for more information.

To sign up for a faculty-led extracurricular, please fill out this [form](#). To sign up for a student-led club, please consult this [spreadsheet](#) for instructions.

Please note that many clubs and extracurriculars have been designed primarily for high school students. **Junior high students** may need permission from faculty mentors or student club leaders to join.

School policies

Transfer policies

CGA welcomes transfer students.

Please see our **high school transfer credit policy** [here](#) and our **high school graduation requirements** [here](#). Please note that students must enroll full-time in our high school program for a minimum of two terms and take a minimum of 4.5 credits to earn a diploma from CGA US.

Our **junior high** completion requirements can be found [here](#). There is no junior high diploma; students are considered to have completed junior high school once they have passed or otherwise shown proficiency in core subjects at the eighth grade level, at which point they can progress to our high school diploma program.

Attendance

EXPECTATIONS FOR JUNIOR HIGH

The live online class experience is vital to student success at the junior high school level. Although classes are **recorded**, these recordings are intended for additional review while studying or for catching up after **unavoidable absences**.

Junior high school students are **expected and required** to attend all of their classes, office hours, and homeroom meetings. Each junior high course meets for **one ninety-minute lesson** and **one sixty-minute office hour** each week.

EXPECTATIONS FOR HIGH SCHOOL

High school students—with the exception of those taking **Flex classes**—are **expected and required** to attend all of their classes and homeroom meetings. Although classes are recorded, these recordings are intended for additional review while studying or for catching up after **unavoidable absences**.

Each high school class meets for **one two-hour lesson** and **one sixty-minute office hour** each week. Office hours for high school classes are **optional but highly recommended**.

Students taking Flex classes do not attend those classes live. Instead, they are required to watch recordings of the lessons after they are uploaded each week. Please see the handbook section on **CGA Flex** for more information.

ONLINE CLASSROOM NORMS

Students should have a dedicated study space for attending online classes: somewhere quiet, with fast internet, at a desk or table where learning will not be interrupted.

During class, students must always:

1. Have their video turned on
2. Refrain from using other devices, social media, or instant messaging
3. Dress appropriately (e.g. no attire with offensive language or imagery)
4. Be in their own space without background noise, other people, or pets
5. Sit at a workspace (e.g. no lying in bed during class)
6. Be ready to answer questions
7. Give the class their full attention

OFFICE HOURS AND HOMEROOM

Attendance at **office hours** is **mandatory for junior high classes** and **recommended for high school-level classes**. Office hours are an opportunity to ask questions, get help on assignments, receive feedback on work, and build connections with classmates.

Homeroom attendance is **mandatory for all full-time CGA students**. Homeroom meets for one hour each week, during which students will hear important announcements, learn about school procedures, get to know their classmates, and develop the skills needed to thrive as young people and future leaders.

ABSENCES

If a student must miss class, office hours (for junior high), or homeroom, **a parent or legal guardian must excuse the absence using Parent Portal.**

Whenever possible, parents and guardians should notify the school of absences **ahead of time.**

Students should also communicate with their teachers regarding absences to ensure that they can catch up on missed class content and assignments.

Parents and guardians can use Parent Portal to track their children's attendance. Families will be notified of any **unexcused absences** via Parent Portal and email.

Unexcused absences and missed work that is not made up will have a negative impact on students' grades.

If **truancy** is identified, the school will endeavor to resolve the issue through meetings with the truant student, parents/guardians, and the Head of School.

TARDINESS

Punctuality is very important. Students should ensure that their technology is working in advance so that they can join class on time.

Students will be marked tardy if they are **more than five minutes late** to class. Tardiness will be noted on Parent Portal. In cases of **persistent tardiness**, students will be required to discuss their behavior with the Head of School, academic dean, or academic operations manager.

EARLY DEPARTURES

Students are expected to be **present for the duration of their classes** and may depart early only in cases of **illness, emergency, and other exceptional circumstances.**

Parents/guardians must notify the school ahead of time via Parent Portal if they anticipate that students will need to leave class early.

In cases of **unanticipated early departures**, parents/guardians must provide an explanation via Parent Portal as soon as possible. Students who repeatedly leave class early without a good excuse may be required to discuss their behavior with the Head of School, academic dean, or academic operations manager.

CGA Flex

CGA Flex enables highly motivated students to take full-year US Diploma and AP courses **without joining live (synchronous) classes**. Instead, they will have access to **class recordings and other course materials**.

Students taking Flex classes will have access to course materials on Canvas and will receive grades and feedback on their assignments. Each week, after live classes take place, class recordings will be uploaded to CGA Home for Flex students to watch.

Each Flex student will be paired with a **Personalized Education Coach (PEC)** for regular one-on-one check-ins to monitor progress, discuss educational needs, and plan and organize weekly tasks.

Flex students are **still required** to keep up with lessons and assignments. If a student's PEC notices a lack of progress, like **two missed assignments** or more than two consecutive **unwatched class recordings within a 30-day period** (without prior approval or notification), the student will not be permitted to continue taking the class via Flex. Instead, the student will be asked to join live (synchronous) classes.

DaVinci 1-on-1

High school-level classes (i.e., AP or USDP classes) can be taken through our DaVinci program. DaVinci courses are taken **one-on-one with experienced teachers**, enabling students to receive more individualized instruction. DaVinci courses can begin at any time in the year and do not have to align with CGA US's term schedule.

Please note that **junior high school-level classes cannot be taken through DaVinci**.

Technology requirements

Students should review this [document](#) to make sure they are fully prepared for their online classes. (Please note that styluses and tablets are optional for US students.)

In short, students will need a working webcam, a headset or earphones, a suitable computer, and high-speed internet.

Technology issues

Students and families should contact CGA Support at mycga@cga.school if they experience any difficulties with Canvas, Parent Portal, CGA Home, or other CGA technological platforms.

Students and families have a responsibility to ensure that their technology at home (e.g., internet bandwidth, computer operating system) has the capability to support Zoom video meetings and other essential functions for online learning. If tech issues become a barrier to attendance, class participation, or assignment completion, families will be asked to upgrade their technology accordingly.

Transcript request

To request a transcript, students must complete this [form](#) and send it to Bob Fan. Please note that the form must be completed and submitted **two weeks prior** to the date by which the transcript is needed. We cannot guarantee that transcripts will be prepared and made available in less than two weeks.

Academic performance

FAILING CLASSES

The **minimum passing grade is a D-minus**, with the exception of **ESOL** (English for speakers of other languages) courses, which have a minimum passing grade of 70%.

High school students **will not receive credit** for failed classes. In junior high school, failed eighth grade-level classes will not count toward [junior high completion requirements](#).

Parents/guardians will be notified if students are at risk of failing one or more classes. The school administration will work with students and families to develop a plan in case of potential or actual class failure; please see the handbook section on [academic interventions](#).

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

In order to complete junior high school and progress to ninth grade in the CGA US diploma program, students will be required at minimum to **pass or show proficiency in the core subjects** (social studies, math, English, and science) at the **eighth grade level or higher**.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To graduate with a **standard high school diploma**, students must earn at least **18 credits**. To earn an **honors diploma (recommended for college admissions)**, students must earn at least **24 credits**.

All students must earn **at least four English credits, four math credits, three science credits, and three social studies credits** to graduate. Students must also earn two credits in World Languages in order to graduate with an honors diploma, although this requirement can be waived for students who are native speakers of languages other than English.

Please see our transfer credit policy [here](#).

MISSED OR LATE WORK

If students anticipate needing an extension on an assignment, they will need to request a later deadline from their teacher as soon as possible **before the original deadline**.

Students who miss a deadline without approval will need to communicate with their teacher about an adjusted timeline for completing the assignment. Late submission without a valid excuse may result in a lower grade. Parents/guardians will be able to view their children's homework completion rates on Parent Portal.

Students who repeatedly miss deadlines will be required to discuss their behavior with the academic dean, academic operations manager, or Head of School.

INCOMPLETES

If students require extra time to complete their assignments beyond the last day of a term, they have the option to request a grade of **incomplete**. If approved, they will receive an extension on completing any missing assignments, after which their **incomplete** will be replaced by a **letter grade**.

Students must complete this [form](#) to request an incomplete. The form must be **approved by an administrator** before the extension can be granted. This process ensures that extensions are granted appropriately.

Students who have not completed enough course work to receive an accurate grade at the end of the term may be **required to take an incomplete**.

ACADEMIC INTERVENTIONS

Poor academic performance can occur for a variety of reasons, and academic interventions will be instituted based on the cause of a student's difficulties.

- **Inconsistent attendance:** students and families will meet with the Head of School, academic dean, or academic operations manager to address the cause of any attendance issues.
- **Missing assignments:** students and teachers will come up with a plan for making up missed work; if this plan is not followed, students and families will meet with the Head of School, academic dean, or academic operations manager.
- **Social and emotional wellbeing:** please see the handbook section on [pastoral support](#).
- **Inappropriate course level:** students who are performing poorly in a course taken above grade level (e.g., a seventh grade student taking Math 8) may be required to switch to a lower-level course.
- **Study skills:** all students will learn about study skills in homeroom; students struggling in class because of challenges with study skills should discuss strategies with their teachers during office hours. If study skills continue to be an issue, students and families will meet with the administration to create an action plan.
- **Need for additional help:** students who need academic support beyond what can be provided during class and office hours may be advised to enroll in one-on-one tutoring.
- **Diagnosed learning differences:** please see the handbook section on [academic accommodations](#).

Academic accommodations

CGA believes in inclusive education. Students with **diagnosed learning differences, disabilities, or other conditions** affecting their academic performance may request **reasonable accommodations**.

In order to request accommodations, students and families should meet with the Head of School, academic dean, and/or academic operations manager and provide **documentation** that adheres to the following guidelines (adapted from the College Board's [seven basic criteria](#)):

1. State the student's **specific diagnosis**.
2. Make sure the information is **current**.

3. Include the student's relevant **educational, developmental, and medical history**.
4. Describe the **testing** (e.g., psychoeducational, psychiatric, and/or neuropsychological evaluations) used to support the diagnosis. Include **test results**.
5. Describe the **functional limitation(s) to learning** caused by the diagnosis.
6. Describe and justify the **specific accommodations** being requested.
7. Establish the **professional credentials** of the person or persons who provided the diagnosis.

The administration will then work with students, families, and teachers to decide which accommodations are reasonable and appropriate.

Conduct

BULLYING, HARASSMENT, AND DISCRIMINATION

At CGA, we are committed to fostering a safe, welcoming, and inclusive learning environment for all students. **Bullying, harassment, and discrimination are strictly prohibited.**

Harassment and bullying are defined as any unwanted, aggressive, or intimidating behavior that causes discomfort, distress, or fear to another individual.

Discrimination refers to conduct that targets an individual based on race, ethnic background, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or any other characteristic protected by applicable laws.

All students are expected to treat teachers, administrators, and classmates with **respect, kindness, and consideration**. Disrespectful behavior, whether occurring within live virtual sessions, discussion boards, Slack messages, emails, or any other online interaction, are unacceptable. Students should never send vulgar, offensive, or sexually suggestive content to school community members.

Students who experience or observe bullying, harassment, or discrimination at CGA are encouraged to **report any incidents to teachers or administrators**.

All students will learn about bullying prevention, conflict resolution, and effective communication skills in homeroom.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

CGA aims to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity to ensure a fair, honest, and effective learning environment for all students. Students must **cite sources properly** and **refrain from cheating and plagiarism**.

Plagiarism is defined as using another party's words or ideas without proper attribution. Cheating is defined as using unauthorized assistance to complete assignments and assessments. When in doubt, **students are encouraged to ask teachers to clarify** what constitutes plagiarism or cheating for a particular assignment or assessment.

USE OF AI TOOLS

As generative AI tools like ChatGPT become more popular, it is vital that students understand which uses of AI are appropriate or inappropriate for academic purposes.

Unacceptable uses of AI include (but are not limited to) the following:

- **Submitting AI-generated essays, reports, or other assignments.** Students may not copy and paste AI-generated responses in place of their own, nor may they pass off AI-generated ideas as their own. Relying on AI to write assignments undermines the learning process; generative AI tools have also been known to generate responses with false information and harmful biases.
- **Using AI as a source for factual information.** While AI tools can sometimes be used as a starting point for gathering information, AI-generated responses often contain inaccuracies and incorrectly cited or fabricated sources. Students are expected to use reliable sources, such as textbooks, historical archives, and academic databases, to find and verify information.
- **Generating fake citations.** Students may not use citations or references generated by AI if they have not actually reviewed those sources. Students should be aware that generative AI tools sometimes reference sources that do not exist.

Students who commit academic integrity violations, including by misusing generative AI tools, will face disciplinary consequences. Please see the handbook section on [disciplinary procedures](#) below.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Students who violate CGA norms with regard to respectful conduct or academic integrity will be expected to **take responsibility** for their actions and **apologize** to those affected.

If students commit minor one-time infractions, such as calling out or sending disruptive messages during class, they will receive **verbal warnings** from their teachers. If they continue to behave disruptively or disrespectfully, their parents/guardians will be notified, and students and families will meet with the academic operations manager, academic dean, or Head of School to discuss the issue and potential consequences and solutions.

If students commit more serious infractions, such as **overt bullying, harassment, or discrimination**, during a class session, they will be asked to leave for the remainder of the lesson. Their parents/guardians will be notified, and meetings will be convened with the administration to discuss **potential disciplinary measures** (e.g., probation, suspension, expulsion) and **ways of making amends** to those who have been harmed.

Allegations of **academic misconduct or dishonesty** will be investigated thoroughly by teachers and administrators. Disciplinary consequences for students who are found to have cheated or committed plagiarism will depend on several factors, such as the deliberateness of the academic misconduct and whether the misconduct falls into a pattern of repeated behavior. Potential consequences include:

- Having parents/guardians and administrators notified
- Redoing assignments or retaking assessments, potentially with grades docked
- Receiving a grade of 0 on all or part of an assignment or assessment
- Completing additional assignments on the importance of academic integrity and the harms of cheating or plagiarism
- Disciplinary probation or suspension

Tech policies

COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN STUDENTS AND CGA EMPLOYEES

CGA takes professional boundaries very seriously. Students should communicate with teachers and administrators (and, if applicable, extracurricular mentors, tutors, or other CGA employees) **solely via CGA platforms**, such as Slack, Canvas, Zoom, or CGA email.

Current students are **prohibited** from adding, following, or friending CGA employees on personal social media accounts. Students may not text or call CGA employees' personal phone numbers and vice versa.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Students must never use social media during class, office hours, or homeroom. Even outside of class time, students should be aware that their online behavior reflects on CGA, and they must present themselves respectfully and responsibly. They must also be mindful of their own and other people's privacy.

CGA encourages students to adhere to the following guidelines regarding social media:

1. **Respectful communication:** Use respectful language and tone when interacting with others online. Avoid engaging in arguments or personal attacks. Do not use offensive language.
2. **Privacy and confidentiality:** Be mindful of privacy and visibility settings. Refrain from sharing personal information with strangers. Always obtain permission before sharing photos or videos of others.
3. **Credible information:** Share accurate information from reliable sources. Avoid spreading rumors or misinformation.
4. **Appropriate content:** Refrain from sharing explicit, offensive, vulgar, or otherwise inappropriate content. Never post anything depicting or promoting unsafe or illegal behavior.

Students will be taught about internet safety and healthy online behavior in homeroom.

Withdrawal procedures

If a student wishes to withdraw from CGA, the following steps must be taken:

1. Give a full term's notice by contacting mycga@cga.school
2. Arrange and attend an exit interview with one of our Academic Representatives
3. Submit a withdrawal form signed by both the student and the parent/legal guardian.
4. Submit a copy of medical certificate, if applicable.
5. Fee refunds will be handled in accordance with the [Fee Refund Policy](#).

Support

Technical or administrative support

Please contact CGA Support (mycga@cga.school) if you experience any difficulties with CGA tech platforms (e.g., CGA email, CGA Home, Parent Portal, Canvas) or need

help accessing or making changes to student records (e.g., residential address, phone number, email address, emergency contacts).

Academic support

If students have questions about assignments or course material, they should ask their teachers during **office hours**, which are mandatory for junior high students and optional but highly recommended for high school students. Students will also learn about effective study habits and time management skills in **homeroom**.

Students are encouraged to **help each other** understand course content; explaining concepts to others is a great way to reinforce one's own knowledge and mastery. Students can ask each other questions via Slack, CGA email, or Canvas, but they must take care to avoid directly copying each other's work or committing other academic integrity violations.

If a student is having difficulty in class and needs **additional academic support**, the academic dean, academic operations manager, or Head of School can meet with the student and family to discuss options. If it is determined that a student would benefit from supplemental one-on-one instruction, the school can refer the family to a tutor. The cost of a tutor is not included in CGA tuition fees.

Pastoral support

CGA has a comprehensive and effective pastoral care network that underpins a student's entire experience at our school. Our pastoral care program provides guidance, advice and emotional support for students.

Students meet with the academic operations manager or academic dean each week for homeroom. During homeroom, students will learn skills to maximize their social and emotional wellbeing.

If teachers or administrators identify a student in need of additional pastoral support, the Pastoral Care Committee, led by the Head of School, will develop a support plan and contact the student's family.

Students and families can also contact the administration about setting up a meeting with the school counselor.