



Dear Taos Academy Students and Families -

Happy New Year! We are so happy to start our spring semester together with you all! As we begin, please be sure to reach out to TA staff and teachers for extra help if needed. We are here to support the success of each and every student to the very best of our ability. Thank you all for being part of our school. Thanks to everyone's hard work, we had a very successful fall semester.



Families are invited to attend TA Community Council meetings to learn about our Community School, Parent Advisory, and Equity Council. You may attend in person or with the google meet. Training for parents is offered at the beginning of the meeting starting at 4:15 from TA teachers. Your children are welcome to attend with you. If they are students, they may participate in the meeting, work on Edgenuity, or use a computer for an educational game. *** Starting in our March meeting we will offer STEAM-based education in collaboration with TWIRL for children ages 3-10 to participate in during the meeting. Contact Deborah E. Branchal, Community School Coordinator at dbranchal@taoschools.org to have your child participate in this exciting program. Look for the January meeting agenda to be distributed before the meeting. Review the minutes from the last meeting at the end of this newsletter.



New Special Education Families: Please contact Sarah Bradley to ensure we have a current IEP & Evaluation paperwork for your child. As these materials are received, we will be developing a Transfer IEP and contacting you to schedule the meeting. Thank you for your support & welcome to Taos Academy!

Returning Special Education Families: If you did not meet this fall please look out for an email as we get in touch to schedule your annual IEP for this spring. The Special Education team looks forward to continuing to work with you and your child!

Please make sure you can access your Taos Academy parent email as we use the TA parent email to schedule IEPs and keep in contact with you.

Thank you from your Taos Academy Special Education Team: Sarah Bradley, Special Education Director, Jeanette Henshaw, Special Education Coordinator and Special Education Teachers Letricia Ortega, Corey Shropshire, Special Education Educational Assistant Andrea Olonia, and Gifted Education Teacher Patricia Meagher.



Welcome back! Attached at the bottom of this newsletter are the course descriptions for the upcoming STEM classes. Registration begins January 13th and classes will begin January 20th. Class fees are due upon registration. No registrations will be accepted prior to the registration date. Please review course listings for more information. For questions please contact [Jamie Lucero-Martinez](mailto:jlucero-martinez@taosacademy.org) jlucero-martinez@taosacademy.org



Attention Seniors and Senior Families: The deadline to order graduation ceremony regalia is fast approaching. Please place your order no later than Monday, January 30th, 2025. Only the Cap and gown unit is required. The approximate cost is \$50. This includes a mortar board cap, tassel with year, black matte gown, and school medallion. You may place your order online at www.jostens.com. If you have any questions please contact Mrs. [Jamie Lucero-Martinez](mailto:jlucero-martinez@taosacademy.org) .

School Counseling Office Updates

Welcome to Spring semester! We were happy to meet so many students and parents last semester and invite you to reach out and let us know how we can help your student on their academic journey. January is a great time for all students to think about their goals for the semester: academic, social-emotional and future college/career focused. You can visit the School Counseling page on the TA website under “Contact Us”. We will share a lot of useful information for all students but especially our seniors with updated graduation, college/career and scholarship information. Reach out to Angelina with any questions or concerns you have related to Academic, Social-Emotional and College/Career Planning.

Senior Checklist

- ☐ **Graduation Requirements**—Review your Semester 1 transcript and grades from Fall 2024. Confirm with your advisory teacher and/or School Counselor that you will have all the credits you need to graduate in May.
- ☐ **Apply for Scholarships! Scholarship Information**
- ☐ **Complete your FAFSA**—Go to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, FAFSA, and fill out the application for the upcoming Fall 2025-26 college year. This is required for all 2025-2026 college students, and it is a free application. Please fill it out whether you have decided to attend college next Fall or not. Priority for financial aid is given on a first come basis. Please do not delay. If you need help filling out this application please reach out to the school counselors at TA
<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>
- ☐ **College Admissions**
 - ☐ Check the application deadlines for college admissions applications and scholarships, add them to your calendar, and plan a timeline for completing the applications.
 - ☐ Ask teachers and other school staff for letters of recommendation. Make sure to ask 2-3 weeks before any deadlines.
 - ☐ Hunt for scholarship opportunities on the web. Check the TA school counseling page for local scholarship opportunities.
 - ☐ Draft essays needed for scholarship and college applications. Ask for help improving/editing these essays.
 - ☐ Complete applications a couple days before any deadlines so that you give yourself plenty of time to fix any issues that could come up with your application.
- ☐ **Career Planning**—If you do not plan on attending college and have another plan such as joining the Military, Peace Corps or taking a gap year, please check in with your school counselor as well, so that you will have everything you need for that next step.
- ☐ **Visit with the school counseling office**— For any college/career planning help stop by our office or send us an email. We are here to help make your next steps after graduation as easy as possible.
- ☐ **Soak it up:** Make sure you find time to enjoy your last semester of High School. Join a club or volunteer for something you've always wanted to try. Take time to savor the memories you have had and make new ones.



1/13 - Governing Council Meeting
1/20 - In School MLK Day Observance/ STEM+ Art Begins
1/24 - Staff Inservice
1/29 - Parent Advisory



At a Glance

2/10 - Governing Council Meeting
2/14 - Teacher Inservice
2/17 - In School President's Day Observance
2/26 - Parent Advisory



- **Fall Outdoor Edventures** - taught by Field Institute of Taos - **Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:15-3:50**. If you like field trips, this is the class for you! This program is a unique blend of environmental education and outdoor adventure that is fun, educational, and physically challenging. We will thoughtfully engage students while exploring connections to the natural world through active, hands-on activities. Topics include: Ecology, natural systems, teamwork and leadership, outdoor recreation, natural and cultural history, energy systems, survival skills and more. Activities may include (weather permitting): hiking, biking, fort-building.

Permission Slips required (\$20 fee)

- **Culinary Arts**—taught by Claudia Abeyta— **Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30-2:15**
Class is an experiential class where students learn how to combine flavors and ingredients in order to fully express their creativity. We will focus on technical skills and foundational techniques throughout the class to help you become a truly great chef.
- **Electronics and Programming** - Taught by Bill Hood - **Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30-2:15** Students will become familiar with constructing their own circuits! We introduce programming to the very circuits the students have created. This is a preparatory course and prerequisite for Unity.
- **Music** - taught by Billy Archuleta - **Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30-2:15** If you enjoy music and want to learn more about it and how to play it on your own, this is a great opportunity for you to do so. We will have fun working together to learn the different aspects of music from the basics of music theory, how to read a music staff, what time signatures are, and what is a “whole” note and a “half” note. We’ll learn about some of the different instruments used to make music, and how to play them. This class will give you the basic skills you need to play the instrument of your choice. Who knows, you may find that you’ll want to learn more than one instrument. So, I want us to have fun learning and discovering as much as we can about music. Are you ready?

January 21 - March 6, 2025



- **Science Explorations** - taught by Laura Tenorio - **Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:15-4:00.** Can a drinking straw save the world? Learn skills and ways to apply Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) to real-life situations. Make your own solutions to community problems, and learn about STEM careers using drones, straws, and anything we can get our hands on to make STEM come alive!
- **Art** - taught by Izumi Yokoyama - **Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:15 - 4:00.** This class invites students to explore elements of art. Students will develop an understanding of how to express ideas through artistic creation. Communicating and learning meaning through visual arts can be exciting and empowering. Students will develop technical skills in drawing, painting, sculpture, and other art mediums. No previous art experience required.
- **Native American Studies** - taught by Tarynce Hise - Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:15 - 4:00. Taos Pueblo/Yakama/Nez Perce Native American history through the Indigenous Peoples perspective. This class is open to all MS students. Come learn about the land and its history in a unique way.
- **Theatre** - taught by John Biscello - **Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:15 - 4:00.** Enter the marvelous multi-verse of acting and drama, and bring to life the characters that live inside you. Through a variety of dramatic games, exercises, improv and movement, develop your performing skills while working with an ensemble in staging skits, scenes and short plays. A range of styles and genres, from comedy, tragedy, mystery, sci-fi, satire, and more, will be the mash-up ingredients in our creation of live theater....all you need to bring is a sense of play and the spirit of imagination.

Middle School STEM + Art Institute: First quarter STEM offerings will be available for registration beginning January 13, 2025. All classes are 0.25 elective credit and grades are posted on transcripts. All classes follow Taos Academy policies. Last Day to drop a class is February 3, 2025 and must be done in writing to Ms. Jamie Lucero-Martinez -no exceptions. jlucero-martinez@taosacademy.org
ALL registration must be done in the STEM Office with Cruz Duran. Materials fees will be \$10 for all courses. Fee payment is required for registration. This will assist in covering some materials cost for classes or help repair borrowed equipment. Space is limited. ***If a course is dropped by the student a fee credit will be given towards another course. No Refunds.***

REMINDER: MS Students may not take the same course consecutively. Students wanting to repeat a course will be placed on the waitlist until after the first day of classes. If there is room in the class after the first day then students on the waitlist will be added based on the order they signed up. No changes will be made after the drop date.

*STEM Instructors may drop students for low participation with two written notices to parents/students. No instructor initiated student drops will be made after February 10th, 2025. **No fee credit toward future courses.**

January 21 - March 6, 2025



High School STEM+Arts Institute Classes Spring 2025



- **Culinary Arts** - taught by Claudia Abeyta– **Mondays 12:30 - 4:00**. Class is an experiential class where students learn how to combine flavors and ingredients in order to fully express their creativity. We will focus on technical skills and foundational techniques throughout the class to help you become a truly great chef.
- **Computer Science** - taught by Bill Hood – **Mondays 12:30 - 4:00**. A rigorous intro to the elements of coding, Block coding, algorithms, conditional statements, local and global variables, iterations and loops, APIs, lists, 2d lists, 3d lists, Python, C, and cloud. Using Python & C create applications that visualize large data sets. AI, Cybersecurity and Capstone project.
- **Music** - taught by Billy Archuleta - **Mondays 12:30 - 4:00**. If you enjoy music and want to learn more about it and how to play it on your own, this is a great opportunity for you to do so. We will have fun working together to learn the different aspects of music from the basics of music theory, how to read a music staff, what time signatures are, and what is a “whole” note and a “half” note. We’ll learn about some of the different instruments used to make music, and how to play them. This class will give you the basic skills you need to play the instrument of your choice. Who knows, you may find that you’ll want to learn more than one instrument. So, I want us to have fun learning and discovering as much as we can about music. Are you ready?
- **Mixed Media Art** - taught by Izumi Yokoyama - **Wednesday 12:30 - 4:00**. Students will develop an understanding of how to express ideas through artistic creation. Communicating and learning meaning through visual arts can be exciting and empowering. Students will develop technical skills in drawing, painting, sculpture, and other art mediums. (simple, complex, experienced, new -all students welcome) Art types to be explored: Shodo-Japanese, Calligraphy, Drawing, Watercolor, Acrylic, Comic Strips, Figure Drawing, Ceramics, Pastel, Origami, Zine, Sculpture, and more.
- **Native Studies** - taught by Tarynce Hise - **Wednesday 12:30 - 4:00**. Taos Pueblo/Yakama/Nez Perce Native American history through the Indigenous Peoples perspective. This class is open to all HS students. Come learn about the land and its history in a unique way.
- **STEM Research and Development** - taught by Laura Tenorio - **Wednesdays 12:30-4:00**. Can a drinking straw save the world? Learn skills and ways to apply Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) to real-life situations. Make your own solutions to community problems, and learn about STEM careers using drones, straws, and anything we can get our hands on to make STEM come alive! This class provides the opportunity for project competition.
- **Theater** - taught by John Biscello - **Wednesdays 12:30-4:00**. Enter the marvelous multi-verse of acting and drama, and bring to life the characters that live inside you. Through a variety of dramatic games, exercises, improv and movement, develop your performing skills while working with an ensemble in staging skits, scenes and short plays. A range of styles and genres, from comedy, tragedy, mystery, sci-fi, satire, and more, will be the mash-up ingredients in our creation of live theater....all you need to bring is a sense of play and the spirit of imagination.

High School Spring Semester STEM + Art Institute: STEM offerings will be available for registration beginning Monday, January 13, 2025. All classes are 0.5 elective credit and grades are posted on transcripts. All classes follow Taos Academy policies. Last Day to drop a class is February 3rd, 2025 and must be done in writing to Ms. Jamie Lucero-Martinez -no exceptions. jlucero-martinez@taosacademy.org **Please register in the STEM Office with Cruz Duran, cduran@taosacademy.org . Materials fees will be \$20 for all courses. Fee payment is required for registration.** This will assist in covering some materials cost for classes or help repair borrowed equipment. Space is limited. ***If a course is dropped by the student a fee credit will be given towards another course. No Refunds.***

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January 20 - May 1, 2025

