



UNITED LEARNING ACADEMY

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

SPRING 2017

Mission Statement

United Learning Academy strives to provide innovative and engaging courses for homeschoolers which allow students to explore and appreciate the world around them. We seek to foster academic, social, and emotional growth that fuels a lifelong passion for knowledge, learning, and understanding.

Class Days/Times/Location

ULA meets on Thursdays at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1500 Scio Church Rd. Ann Arbor, MI 48103. Classes are 55 minutes in length and run from 10:00am- 3:30pm with a 30min lunch period from 12:00-12:30pm.

Semester Length

2 semesters per year- 14 weeks each running after Labor day through December and February through May with an Exhibition/Open House day on the 15th week of Winter semester (in May) which is open to the public. Exact dates can be found on the website.

Website

<http://unitedlearningacademy.com/>

Director Contact

Communication is very important to us. Should you ever have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Directors. Email is best:

unitedlearningacademyoffice@gmail.com

For time-sensitive inquiries, you may call or text

Cortney Labbe (248) 464-9014 or

Ztaise (Stacy) Bradley (734) 709-1787.

Instructors

United Learning Academy strives to provide exceptional and innovative classes for homeschoolers in the Ann Arbor Area. Our on-site courses, taught by professional instructors and experts in their respective fields, include science and engineering, theater,

physical education, music, history and culture, foreign language, and literature. All of our instructors, paid staff, and Directors have had full background checks done through the school district.

Diversity at ULA

ULA is unique in that we offer a secular program welcoming all homeschoolers.

At ULA we greatly value diversity. We are always seeking ways to better promote inclusion of all students, and encourage open-mindedness and understanding of others. One immediate way we can begin of course is by you, the parents, having conversations with your own students about this subject. As Vivian Paley said in her book *The Kindness of Children*, "Children are deeply curious about odd behaviors and seldom offended or worried by them. What a remarkable gift to bestow on another person, it occurs to me, and so difficult for adults to accomplish."

Campus Guidelines

We have the great privilege of sharing space with Westminster Church. It is essential that all ULA students and families respect the rules and guidelines outlined below to ensure our continued use of this space.

- 1) ULA is located on the Lower Level of the church. Unless students have a class specifically scheduled in a room upstairs (such as Gymnastics), it is ULA policy that all students and families remain **in the building, on the lower level** during ULA hours. The main level is not for our use. There is a separate program running in the upstairs classrooms and nursery. If you or your student must go upstairs for class, please walk quietly in the hallways. Be aware that there are people working in the church offices in the hallway nearest the front entrance.
- 2) Students may not leave the building or go outside without direct supervision from an adult. If a student is at ULA and is not in class then they must remain in the Family Lounge (Room 41). Alternatively, parents may have another responsible adult agree to take responsibility for that particular child. The responsible adult must directly supervise the student and must inform the site directors at the sign in table that they are doing so.
- 3) Be respectful. Please pick up after yourselves and leave things the way you found them. Play areas, bookshelves, couches and tables, restrooms, and the lounge all need to be left tidy and neat at the end of each day. Please do your part to help keep our campus neat.

- 4) ULA and Westminster Church are both **NUT-FREE. We do have real ULA students and church youth who have medical nut allergies so please refrain from bringing any snacks with peanut butter or tree nuts.**
- 5) Parents are welcome to remain on-site while their children are in class. We have a Family Lounge downstairs in Room 41 with couches and tables which is open all day for families to enjoy.

Sign In and Drop Off Policies

Upon arrival, each ULA student must sign in at the Director's desk downstairs.

Grade K-3: Parents must accompany the student downstairs and sign in before their first class and must pick up downstairs promptly at the end of their classes.

Grade 3-12 students: Parents may drop students at the door and wait for their child after class if they choose. Students must sign themselves in at the desk before their first class and must remain downstairs until they finish classes. Students waiting to be picked up may do so at the front entrance but please be aware that there are people working in the church offices directly down the hall. Students must remain inside and may not wait outside for pickup. Students who cannot wait quietly for pickup will have to be picked up downstairs by the parent. It is the parent's responsibility to work out details for drop off/pick up with their child. Any students with parental permission to come and go from ULA on their own must have a **signed permission slip** on file. These students are not to leave the building until they are leaving for the day. Students are NOT permitted to go outside without a supervising adult, unless they have a signed permission slip on file for self-transportation.

OVA Students Sign In: This year each OVA student is only required to sign in and have a brief conversation with our on-site Mentor Teacher each week during Count Months (October and February). This is a requirement for OVA funding eligibility.

Medical Issues: If your student has severe medical issues that may require emergency treatment an adult with proper training must remain on site as we do not have a medical staff person.

Food Allergies: Food items are sometimes used in classrooms at ULA. If your student has severe food allergies, please inform the directors. If a student has dietary restrictions it is the parent's responsibility be sure the student is informed of what they may or may not consume.

Volunteer Opportunities

ULA is not a co-op and therefore does not *require* any work hours from parents, but we are growing and we need your help! Tasks like setting up in the morning, assisting at lunch time, monitoring the hallways/main level as needed, being a “floater” to pitch in on-site, and/or assisting with end-of-day clean up are all small essential tasks that help keep ULA running smoothly. We greatly appreciate you taking a more active role by contacting us directly for ways in which you can assist!

Behavioral Standards

Each student will need to bring a signed copy the **ULA Code of Conduct** on the first day of class. Please review these expectations with your student to help us maintain a safe learning environment for everyone.

Discipline

ULA strives to ensure each student’s success in all areas of learning, including social and emotional growth. Each student is welcome in each class in which they are enrolled unless their behavior is taking away from the ability of the other students to learn and benefit from the class. If a student’s behavior is found to be hindering to the entirety of the class, instructors will have a conversation with the student. If a student is not responding to a teacher’s request for improved behavior and/or effort, the teacher will contact the parent directly to try to determine next steps. We believe that learning appropriate behavior and conduct starts at home and want to ensure that families have an opportunity to address any issues that may arise without director intervention.

Out of respect for our teacher’s personal time, if the initial effort by the teacher and parent to address the issue does not succeed, the Directors will step in to assist on behalf of the teacher.

If no improvement is made, or if it is determined that the disruption continues to affect the other students’ in class, the Director may remove the student from that class for the remainder of the term. No refunds will be issued and OVA students may no longer be eligible for funding.

Academic/Class expectations

ULA offers a variety of classes with differing levels of commitment. On the first day of the semester, each student will receive a syllabus outlining the expectations and homework to be expected for each class. This information is also posted on Haiku which all students need to log into on a weekly basis. Students who choose courses in which homework is assigned will find their assignments on Haiku and be expected to complete their assignments in a timely manner. If a student comes to class unprepared they may not be

able to participate as some of these classes are dependent on out of class work. Please keep this in mind as you are registering.

We recommend each student bring a folder and pencil to ULA each week to collect any materials or teacher notes which may be handed out in class. Some classes require students to bring additional materials to class each week. Please be sure your student comes prepared.

Haiku Learning Platform

Every ULA class provides an additional component on our Online Learning Platform, Haiku. Each student will need to login once per week to view content for each class and complete any tasks assigned. (OVA students are *required* to log in once per week.) Important class information your student will need is found in this one location. The 14 week syllabus for each class, teacher bios, any assigned homework, and weekly customized content such as articles, videos, polls, forum questions, and more are accessed here. You may also use this platform to message teachers directly via the class page. Please let us know if you need help logging in or if you have any questions.

Attendance

Full attendance is expected in order for classes to progress throughout the semester. If a student is absent for more than three classes in a row, the student will be dropped from the class without refund.

OVA students are required to be present and accounted for on ALL Count Days as well as required to sign in throughout the count month which occur in October and February each year. In addition, OVA students are only allowed two absences per semester. If an OVA student misses count day or has more than two absences they may become ineligible for OVA funding. Exact count day dates and details can be found on the OVA website or by contacting your mentor teacher.

Illness/Absence

Please keep students home if they have had fever or vomited in the last 24 hours, or if they have a serious cough or cold. If a student appears too ill to be in class we will have the student wait in the lobby and call the parent to come pick them up.

If your student cannot make it to class, please inform the directors via email unitedlearningacademyoffice@gmail.com. OVA students must also contact their mentor teacher.

Weather Cancellations

If the Ann Arbor Public Schools are cancelled for any reason, there will be no United Learning Academy classes. All school closings will be announced on many of the local TV and radio stations and every effort will be made to send a notice to the ULA Group List ASAP.

If classes must be canceled due to inclement weather, ULA will offer up to two make up dates after the end of the scheduled semester: January for Fall semester and May for Spring semester. Please keep this in mind when considering your plans.

Age level/grade level placement

ULA offers courses for students grade K-12. In general, we prefer to keep students of similar ages in our classes as we value the interaction with peers as well as class content. Any requests for out-of-grade-level placement will be approved at the discretion of the directors and will be based on the student's academic and behavioral status as well as the current makeup of the class. Please contact the directors for any special requests.

Grading pass/fail

As ULA is a supplementary homeschool program we do not provide transcripts for our students.

OVA students will receive grades as follows for OVA funded ULA classes:

- Part time students may choose to use OVA report cards as they wish. Transcripts are not created for part-time students unless a special request is made.
- Drop within 5 days of the first class- class is removed from student's record.
- Drop after 5 days of the first class until 30 days before the end of the semester receives a grade of withdraw (W)- note that a withdraw can affect future enrollment. Please check with the directors before withdrawing.
- Grades 1-8 are Mastered/Not Mastered (M/NM)
- Grades 9-12 are Pass/Fail (P/F)

The vast majority of our students receive Mastered or Pass grades for all of their classes. Reasons for a student not to pass or master a class include:

- Missing a significant number of classes (see attendance guidelines)
- Not completing assignments
- Not participating appropriately in class

Registration

Registration opens November 1st and closes December 15th, 2016. Fall 2017 Registration opens April 1st, 2017.

Tuition

Each family is ultimately responsible for complete tuition payment for all courses they register for. Payments can be made in one of two ways:

- **Self-pay**, paid entirely by the family at the time of registration. PayPal checkout is available on our website <http://unitedlearningacademy.com> ULA is a subsidiary of [Brain Monkeys](#) so please make any checks out to Brain Monkeys, LLC.
- **Enrollment in Oxford Virtual Academy (OVA)**, which pays the complete tuition for eligible ULA classes. Typically, all of our classes are eligible for tuition funding by OVA *except for* private music lessons. If, for any reason, a student becomes ineligible for OVA funding they are switched to self-pay status and become immediately liable for complete tuition payment, which will be due within 10 business days of notification.

OVA Policies

Students who wish to enroll in the OVA program may do so either as a full-time virtual student or as a part-time electives-only student. Students may receive funding for up to five (5) ULA classes depending on their OVA status. For more details about the OVA program please visit their website <http://oxfordvirtualacademy.org/> or contact the OVA Operations Coordinator, Laura Farwell, laura.farwell@oxfordschools.org

Each ULA family that elects to enroll with OVA is personally responsible for meeting and maintaining all OVA requirements for registration, attendance, and participation. The family is also responsible communicating directly with OVA should there be any questions as to the student's OVA status.

Please keep in mind that the maximum number of classes you can take for Part-Time OVA status is 5 and anything over 5 classes is considered Full-Time and requires Core classes to be taken.

If you are taking classes with another public school district outside of OVA, you are limited to taking only 2 classes with OVA. If you enroll for more than 2 OVA partnership classes while enrolled in another public school district, you will be required to self-pay for those additional classes.

If you have any questions about the OVA requirements, please visit the website <http://oxfordvirtualacademy.org/>, or contact your mentor teacher.

Add Drop Policies- OVA

All intended drops must be discussed with ULA directors first.

- All drop/adds made after registration closes are subject to OVA final approval. Students may only request to drop from an OVA Partnership Course for up to 5 days from the first day that classes start (includes the first day of class in count). Dropping a course after this time frame is not permitted. If an OVA student drops a ULA class after this period they are switched to self-pay status and become immediately liable for the complete tuition.
- After the family contacts the ULA director requesting a change, ULA will communicate accordingly with the OVA Operations Coordinator that the student intends to drop/add. OVA Operations Coordinator will formally approve/deny all drops and this will be communicated with ULA, Mentor and student when the drop/add is final.
- OVA students may be assessed a \$25 per class administrative fee for add/drops per ULA policies.

Add/Drop Fees- ULA

- Courses added or dropped BEFORE registration closes: No fee
- Courses added or dropped AFTER registration closes: \$25 per class. Both self-pay and OVA students may be assessed this administrative fee.

There will be NO add/drop/changes allowed and NO refunds after February 6, 2017.

If an OVA student drops a class after this date they may become ineligible for OVA funding.

Submission of waivers and forms

Signed liability waivers, Medical Release forms, and Code of Conduct forms are due on or before the first day of classes. No student will be allowed to participate in classes until we have completed forms on file.