Ethical Culture Fieldston School

2026–2027 Profile for Colleges

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Ethical Culture Fieldston School is accredited by the New York State Association of Independent Schools (NYSAIS). It is a member of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) and complies with NACAC's Code of Ethics and Professional Practices.



About our School

Founded by Felix Adler in 1878, the Ethical Culture Fieldston School (ECFS) offers a world-class progressive education in Pre-K–12th Grade at two historic campuses, one in Manhattan and one in the Bronx. Our upper school is Fieldston Upper, colloquially known as **Fieldston.** Most of our students come from the five New York City boroughs and Westchester County, and a small number commute from northern New Jersey and Connecticut.

The core of our educational program is the study and practice of ethics, which prepares and compels us to take care of our world, ourselves, and each other.

Curriculum

The academic year is divided into two semesters. While most courses are designed for year-long study, most electives in English and history — and some in ethics and science — are offered on a semester basis. To graduate, students must complete a minimum of 17 majors (a year-long course taken six times per week), of which 16 must be in core academic subjects.

Adler Requirement: Beginning with the Class of 2023, 11th and 12th Grade students must earn two major credits, one in English and one in history, in semester-long elective courses that focus on the histories and writings of people of marginalized identities and that are designated as approved Adler Requirement courses. The purpose of the Adler Requirement is to advance a progressive ethic, center pluralistic narratives versus solely majoritarian ones, and examine multiple discourses, including issues of social identity, inclusion, and marginalization. This requirement gives students opportunities to appreciate cultural pluralism at large while also thinking critically about differences and social inequalities.

Ethics is a core academic subject. To graduate, students must complete at least three ethics courses and a service learning requirement. Service learning can be fulfilled through a classroom-based course or through an independent, project-based activity completed within the broader community.

Fieldston eliminated AP courses from the curriculum beginning in September 2001. Foreign language, Mathematics, and Science placements are determined by a student's prior achievement; courses designated as intensive or advanced are the most demanding courses in their subject. With the exception of Advanced Senior Seminar and Senior Research Seminar, we do not designate English, Ethics, or History courses as **intensive or advanced**. English and History electives offered in the 11th and 12th Grade are taught at a college level.

Grades and class rank

Letter grades ranging from A to F are given at the end of each marking period and a small number of courses use a Credit/No Credit (CR/NCR) grading system.

We do not compute class rank or GPA. In alignment with our mission, we do not confer official honors or awards to our students; the only exception is for varsity letters in athletics.

Special programs

We offer two robust interdisciplinary programs: Humanities and City Semester. **Humanities** is a year-long course for 10th Graders that satisfies requirements and credits for English, Ethics, and History. **City Semester** is a selective, interdisciplinary, experiential semester program focused on fostering a sense of civic leadership through the immersive study of New York City. Students apply for admission into City Semester, and the program is offered during both fall and spring semesters of 11th Grade. Students in City Semester fulfill all their semester courses while participating in the program; the work is project-based and organized around individual and group assignments, drawing from multiple subjects and from the world beyond the classroom.

Given the program's interdisciplinary nature, the City Semester faculty has opted to provide skill- based assessment rather than traditional letter grades. All participants receive an additional narrative-transcript that reflects the program's interdisciplinary, skills-based approach.

Facts at a glance:

640
students in Fieldston Upper

22%
receive tuition assistance

39%
of faculty identify as people of color

40%
identify as students of color

73%
of faculty hold advanced degrees

10:1
student/faculty ratio

Minimum graduation requirements

English*	4 years
Ethics*	2.5 years + project/portfolio-based service learning requirement
World Language*	3 years
History*	2 years
Mathematics*	3 years
Science*	2 years
Arts	2 years
Physical Education	4 years

** denotes core academic subject*

Standardized testing

	SAT	ACT
Middle 50%	1330–1510	31–33
# of students tested	54	87

We also offer **Independent Study Courses** (by permission of the instructor and administration) in all disciplines and **Senior Projects** in the second semester of 12th Grade. Students are approved after presenting an appropriate proposal for acceptance by a committee of administrators. The scope and time commitment of Independent Studies and Senior Projects are equivalent to those of a traditional academic course. All participating students send detailed descriptions of their proposals to colleges, and both appear as courses on the transcript with a CR designation if completed satisfactorily.

Our visual and performing arts program is extensive and rigorous. While arts courses are usually graded CR/NCR, students may choose to "major" in one of the arts and receive letter grades for their coursework. ECFS created a special "Arts Major" for students who concentrate in fine or performing arts and take multiple major subjects in these disciplines. Students who pursue an arts major are advised to take only four core academic subjects per semester, and their major designation appears on their transcripts.

Disciplinary policy

The School expects students to honestly answer any college application questions related to disciplinary infractions. Likewise, if the School receives an inquiry from a college or university regarding a specific student's disciplinary record, the School will answer honestly. This may include violations of ECFS rules, regulations, and policies, whether or not such violations resulted in a suspension.

College Destinations: ECFS Classes of 2022–2026

Amherst College 7
Babson College 2
Bard College 2
Barnard College 6
Berklee College of Music 3
Binghamton Univ. 2
Boston College 24
Boston Univ. 5
Bowdoin College 6
Brown Univ. 27
Bryn Mawr College 1
Bucknell Univ. 13
Carleton College 4
Carnegie Mellon University 5
Case Western Reserve Univ. 3
City College of New York 1
Claremont McKenna College 1
Colby College 8
Colgate Univ. 12
Colorado College 5
Columbia Univ. 17
Connecticut College 2
Cornell Univ. 33
Dartmouth College 7
Davidson College 1
Deep Springs College 2
Denison Univ. 1
Duke Univ. 15
Elon Univ. 1
Emerson College 2
Emory University 33
Emory Univ. (Oxford) 8
Fashion Institute of Technology 1
Fordham Univ. 3
Franklin & Marshall College 1
George Washington Univ. 4
Georgetown Univ. 12
Grinnell College 1
Hamilton College 3
Harvard Univ. 6
Haverford College 4
Hobart & William Smith College 1
Howard Univ. 6
Indiana Univ. 6
Ithaca College 1
Johns Hopkins Univ. 2
Kean College 1
Kenyon College 7
Lafayette College 4
Lehigh Univ. 16
Macalester Univ. 1
Marquette Univ. 1
Massachusetts Institute of Technology 3
McGill Univ. 8
Middlebury College 11
Morehouse College 1
Mount Holyoke College 3
New York Univ. 17
Northeastern Univ. 14
Northwestern Univ. 25
Oberlin College 7
Occidental College 4
Ohio State Univ. 1
Pace Univ. 1
Pennsylvania State Univ. 4
Pitzer College 6
Pomona College 6
Princeton Univ. 13
Purdue Univ. 3
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute 1
Rice Univ. 4
Rhode Island School of Design 1
Rochester Institute of Technology 4
Sacred Heart Univ. 1
Santa Clara Univ. 1
Sarah Lawrence College 5
School of the Art Institute of Chicago 1
Sciences Po – College of Spain 1
Skidmore College 10
Smith College 5
Southern Methodist Univ. 1
Spelman College 2
Stanford Univ. 6
State Univ. of New York–Albany 2
Stony Brook Univ. 1
Suffolk Univ. 1
State University of New York–Purchase 1
State University of New York–Cortland 1
Swarthmore College 3
Syracuse Univ. 31
Temple Univ. 5
The College of Wooster 1
Trinity College 1
Trinity Univ. 1
Tufts Univ. 27
Tulane Univ. 18
Union College 3
University of California, Irvine 1
Univ. of California,. Santa Barbara 3
University of California, Santa Cruz 1
University of Chicago 18
Univ. of Colorado 1
Univ. of Maryland 4
Univ. of Massachusetts, Amherst 1
Univ. of Miami 8
Univ. of Michigan 40
Univ. of North Carolina 5
Univ. of Oregon 2
Univ. of Ottawa 1
University of Pennsylvania 19
Univ. of Pittsburgh 2
University of Rhode Island 1
Univ. of Richmond 4
Univ. of Rochester 1
Univ. of Southern California 21
University of St. Andrews 4
University of Texas–Austin 4
University of Toronto 1
Univ. of Vermont 7
Univ. of Virginia 7
University of Wisconsin 13
Vanderbilt Univ. 15
Vassar College 1
Villanova Univ. 3
Wake Forest Univ. 21
Washington & Lee Univ. 1
Washington Univ. in St. Louis 20
Wellesley College 3
Wesleyan Univ. 14
Whitman College 1
Williams College 11
Worcester Polytechnic Institute 1
Yale Univ. 16