

# Curriculum Guide

*This guide has been produced to aid stake-holders in understanding the standards-aligned and authentically assessed curriculum at UCIS.*



UCIS - Curriculum Team  
2020-2021

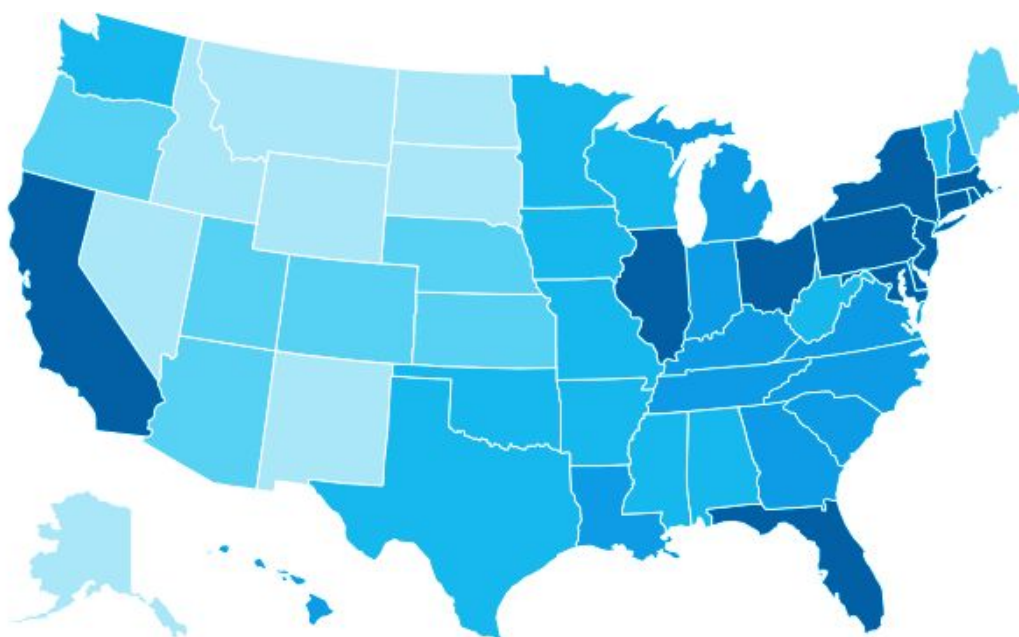
## Introduction

As an American curriculum school, UCIS teachers and staff have a relatively complex task of aligning syllabi, content, and assessment to continuously evolving and overlapping learning standards. While other International Schools may operate with a set of standards that seem more straightforward, traditional curricula such as the International Baccalaureate or the British National Curriculum can be quite restrictive and come with their own drawbacks of rigidity and increased oversight.

At UCIS, we believe the modern American learning standards developed through collaboration between federal and state agencies, along with guidance from industry leaders, subject experts, and teachers from all over the country; offer a strong balance of rigor and flexibility that is reflective of the diverse educational landscape in the US.

### Rationale for Adopted Learning Standards

The American education system is one of the most decentralized in the world, resulting in a wide variety of standards and assessment regimes across all 50 states. To provide clarity and reduce ambiguity for UCIS teachers and stake-holders, we have focused on using the learning standards adopted by the state of California for several reasons:



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Firstly, California is a very large and prosperous state with immense resources to direct towards developing educational standards and curricula. Therefore, the free resources made available to teachers are quite complete and comprehensive including content standards for art, music, PE, IT, ELD (English Language Development), and foreign languages. Secondly, the state has fully adopted the most up-to-date and evidence-based standards and practices including the [Common Core State Standards](#) (CCSS) for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, as well as the [Next Generation Science Standards](#) (NGSS), supporting phenomena-centered and inquiry-driven instruction.

Along with the CCSS, NGSS, and [CA Content Standards](#); we utilize the [AERO](#) (American Education Reaches Out) Standards for Social Studies. Our school respects the historical and sociocultural diversity of our student population and we aim to promote global citizenship along with a broad and comprehensive worldview. The AERO Standards are curated and maintained by the US State Department specifically for use by American curriculum international schools. By de-emphasizing American and Euro-centric history, civics, and government; the AERO Standards allow for a broader worldwide and culturally relevant perspective with increased flexibility for personalization and differentiation in the Social Studies curriculum.

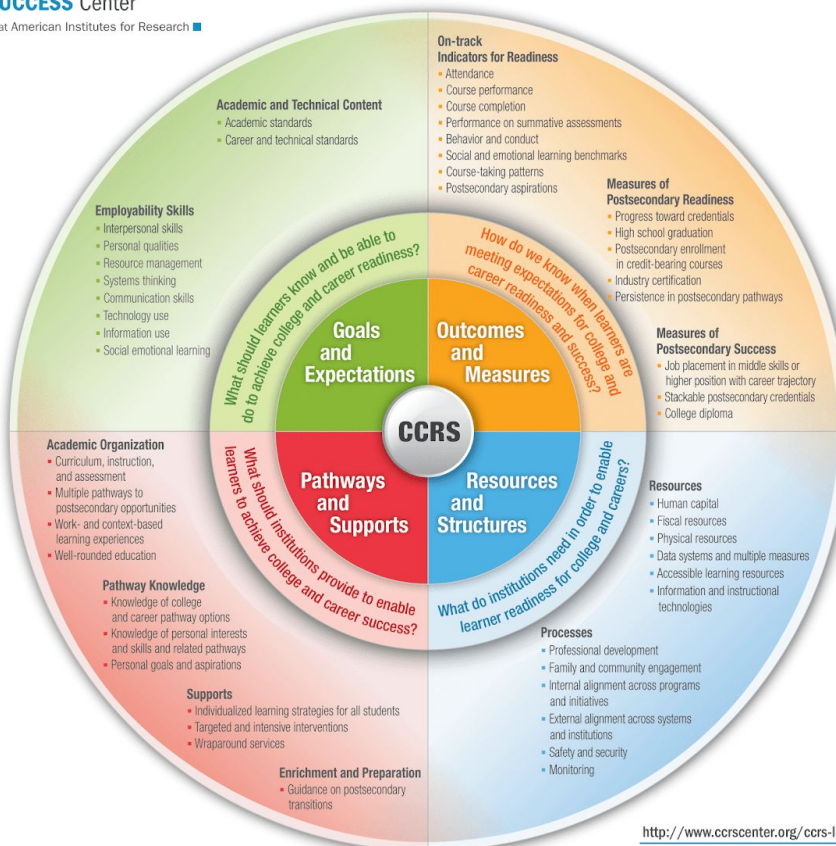
[SHAPE America](#) (Society of Health and Physical Educators) provides our Physical Education and Health and Wellness Standards, and is supplemented where necessary by the CA PE Standards and [SPARK Standards and Assessments](#). Similarly, our teachers have the option of utilizing both the CA and AERO Standards for World Languages, Visual Arts, and Music. Our Computer Science program is supported by the [CSTA Standards](#), and electives like Business or Architecture are found in the CA Standards.

Furthermore, as a [Western Association of Schools and Colleges](#) (WASC) accreditation candidate school, we are obligated to align our curriculum to evidence-based standards and maintain systems that allow for a high level of teacher collaboration, student-driven learning, and accountability. The adopted academic standards at UCIS provide the foundation on which our teachers build their courses, assessments, and units of instruction to ensure that every one of our students have the opportunity to receive a world-class education along with aspirational goals that allow them to achieve beyond their perceived limitations.

## The College and Career Readiness Standards

**COLLEGE & CAREER  
READINESS & SUCCESS Center**  
at American Institutes for Research


CCRS Organizer




<http://www.ccrscenter.org/ccrs-landscape/ccrs-organizer>

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## The UCIS Schoolwide Learner Outcomes



### SCHOOLWIDE LEARNER OUTCOMES - SOARING WITH FALCON PRIDE



**P**roficient communicators who:

- Are active and critical listeners.
- Find appropriate solutions as an individual or in collaboration with others.
- Demonstrate effective listening skills by responding to questions, participating in discussions, and following instructions.

**R**esearch and technologically proficient students who:

- Access, analyze, synthesize, and apply information to solve problems, express insights, and present ideas accurately and creatively.
- Actively pursue knowledge through a variety of resources incorporating the use of technology
- Use technology as a tool to research, organize, evaluate, and communicate information.

**I**nvestigative problem solvers who:

- Use effective questioning and reflection to advance and evaluate learning.
- Exercise sound reasoning and understanding to analyze problems and reach solutions.
- Demonstrate a commitment to learning as a life-long process.

**D**iligent scholars who:

- Think, speak, read, and write clearly in English
- Identify and solve problems by applying critical thinking skills and mathematical reasoning.
- Establish career and life-long learning goals.

**E**thical and honest students who:

- Exhibit personal and academic integrity.
- Embrace and celebrate diversity.
- Show honesty, ethics, and responsibility toward themselves and others.

## The UCIS Learning Standards

- [Common Core State Standards - ELA](#)
- [Common Core State Standards - Mathematics](#)
- [Next Generation Science Standards - DCI Arrangements](#)
- [AERO Social Studies Framework](#)
- [AERO World Language Standards and Benchmarks](#)
- [AERO Music Standards](#)
- [AERO Visual Arts Standards](#)
- [SHAPE America - Grade-Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education](#)
- [CA Department of Education Standards \(OneDrive folder\)](#)
- [Original Standards Documents Archive \(OneDrive folder\)](#)

Links to Educational Standards Organizations

[CCSS](#) 🍏 [NGSS](#) 🍏 [AERO](#) 🍏 [SHAPE](#) 🍏 [CDE](#) 🍏 [WASC](#)



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## Summary

At UCIS, we believe the modern American learning standards developed through collaboration between federal and state agencies, along with guidance from industry leaders, subject experts, and teachers from all over the country; offer a strong balance of rigor and flexibility that is reflective of the diverse educational landscape in the US, and supportive of the diverse student population at our school. Building curriculum around the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts and Mathematics, along with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and AERO Standards (Social Studies); allows for a firm and comprehensive curricular foundation rooted in developing critical thinking skills and collaborative aptitude, while enabling the adaptation of coursework and instructional delivery to the wide variety of academic and professional backgrounds of our international teaching staff. The standards aligned and assessed curriculum at UCIS provides rigor, stability, and continuity throughout the K-12 education, and guarantees that students graduating from our secondary program will have the relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities to ensure their success at universities and workplaces anywhere in the 21st century world.