

**MINNEHAHA ACADEMY
UPPER SCHOOL**

JUNE TERM

**STUDENT & PARENT
HANDBOOK**

JUNE TERM DEFINITION:

June Term is a week-long, authentic learning experience for Upper School students. The program will occur at the conclusion of the academic school year, allowing students an opportunity to build bridges within our school, neighborhood, and global communities between people from diverse socioeconomic, generational, religious, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds. Learning experiences during this week will be designed to meet the goals of the real-life learning vision statement, as developed by the 2003-2008 Long-Range Planning Task Force.

VISION STATEMENT for REAL-LIFE LEARNING:

This type of learning instills wisdom, compassion, respect, and understanding in order to prepare students for interactions in an increasingly global society.

The intentions of real-life learning are:

- to promote an understanding of another's life and point of view
- to provide opportunities for students to discover their God-given gifts
- to develop compassionate and globally-minded citizens
- to equip students with a willingness to give of themselves in service to God and others

COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

What is the format for June Term?

June Term will occur during the final week of the academic school year. (Typically, this week coincides with the first week of June). Students and team leaders will visit community sites on Monday – Thursday of this week, and participate in a half-day, reflection retreat on Friday. On-site hours will vary. Most teams will be on-site during a typical school day. Some teams may stay on-site beyond the normal school day and designated week (including possible evenings or weekends), pending the site location/activities. Students choosing to participate in sister-school visits, short-term missions trips, language study trips, and similar cultural immersion trips involving extensive travel during June Term typically remain on-site during several days/weeks of summer break.

How does June Term fit the mission of the school?

How can we justify this in our academic setting?

In our mission statement to “provide a high quality education integrating Christian faith & learning”, the mission of June Term reflects the mission of the school in these particular areas:

- “challenge ourselves and our students toward excellence, a deepening Christian faith, and a commitment to service”.

Furthermore, in our school-supported statement of what we believe, the following statements make a significant connection to June Term:

- “We believe in the development of the whole child. We seek to involve the students individually and corporately in meaningful activities which will allow them to deal dynamically and creatively with their development – intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual.”
- “We believe that the avenues to understanding and knowledge are diverse.”
- “We see our role as a Christian school not to shelter youth from the world in which we live but to ‘companion’ them as they examine other ideologies.”
- “We believe learning is a lifelong process. Minnehaha endeavors to provide the tools and excitement for learning throughout life.”
- “We believe in the importance of building genuine, Christian maturity. We hope that our graduates will display this mature Christian character and thus permeate society with Christian influence and practice.”

How many students will be in each group?

Will vary, typically between 8 – 12

Who are the supervisors?

Mrs. Amy Swanson is the Program Director for the June Term.

Mrs. Julie Johnson is the National & International Trips Coordinator for June Term.

Faculty and staff members will lead student June Term teams.

What are the benefits of this program to my education?

- Makes learning more useful and relevant
- Promotes active learning
- Extends the boundaries of the classroom
- Promotes the value of diversity/ helps dispel myths and stereotypes
- Serves as a catalyst for increased maturity
- Promotes the development of compassion for others
- Strengthens analytical and critical thinking skills
- Fosters a sense of civic responsibility
- Strengthens interpersonal and communication skills
- Allows for integrations and synthesis of knowledge with experience
- Improves the overall school climate
- Allows students to serve as involved citizens in the community

Is June Term optional or required?

This program is a required part of the Upper School curriculum for all students in grades 9-11. Students will receive a pass/fail mark for this requirement. One-third credit will be earned toward Minnehaha graduation requirements for each year of participation.

How will I earn a passing grade?

Faculty team leaders will assess each student on their team based on the following:

- Attendance (present throughout entire June Term program)
- Attitude (positive, respectful, cooperative)
- Behavior (responsible, follows school policy)
- Participation (contributes)
- Reflection (daily journal entries with reflective content and participation in organized group reflection during orientation sessions and post-June Term retreat activities)

Students that meet all of these criteria will earn a passing mark.

How much will this cost?

Costs will vary depending upon site assignments. Local learning site costs are minimal, typically ranging between \$10 - \$25 for meal expenses or an occasional bus fare. National & international trips will typically range in cost from \$200 - \$4000 (all expenses included).

Are there any financial aid opportunities or scholarships available?

Students currently on financial aid may apply for financial assistance for June Term expenses. Typically, eligible students are awarded a maximum of \$500 in financial aid.

National and international trip scholarships may also be available to qualifying SOPHOMORE & JUNIOR students. The available number and value of these scholarships vary each year.

Specific information about financial aid and scholarships for June Term will be provided to interested & eligible students. These students must apply for funds by completing the required forms and submitting them by the designated due dates.

Are there any fundraising opportunities available?

Fundraising for June Term trips is not organized or provided through the school.

However, personal fundraising for a particular June Term trip may be done on an individual basis BEYOND the school community. If a student is interested in personally fundraising for June Term, the student and a parent/guardian must sign and submit a written agreement to adhere to the guidelines outlined below. A copy of this contract is available through the June Term office.

- no fundraising may occur at any MA school campuses or at school-sponsored events
- neither the reputation of MA or the June Term program may be used as the basis for the solicitation of funds, since MA is not requiring students to participate in June Term options that involve any significant expenses
- fundraising must occur outside of the regular school day
- any student choosing to solicit funds for June Term through requesting financial donations from others must prepare a formal letter in writing by using a sample template that can be personalized; the template for this letter (*Student Letter of Request for June Term Support*) is available through the June Term office; and a copy of the completed letter must be submitted to the June Term program director for approval prior to soliciting potential supporters
- students and parents are responsible for keeping careful records of funds collected and returning all funds in excess of the amount needed

If more than one individual within a group of students that are part of the same June Term trip are personally fundraising outside of the school community, EACH student must submit the required agreement (*Individual Fundraising for June Term Contract*).

What preparation will take place prior to the week of June Term to enhance the learning experience?

Faculty team leaders will regularly meet with student teams throughout second semester to discuss, plan, organize, and identify assumptions and concerns. The program director will facilitate orientation sessions for all participating students. Planning and orientation activities will emphasize strategies for building meaningful relationships within the community in order to support existing community needs without imposing upon the learning site. An orientation meeting schedule will be provided to all students by their advisors at the beginning of each school year.

What safety precautions will be taken?

Each team will be partnered with an on-site community supervisor. Faculty team leaders and adult site supervisors will be present with students at all times. Students will become aware of personal safety considerations in orientation sessions – and will be required to remain in groups of a minimum of 2 students throughout the week.

Each team will have a first aid kit, student medical cards, and basic first aid information. The school nurse will provide instructions and medications to team leaders for specific medical needs. The school nurse will also be on-call throughout the week, beyond the regular school day. In the case of a medical emergency, parents will be contacted through the program director – and immediate medical care will be provided.

If you have any particular medical concerns or dietary needs for this week, please inform the school nurse.

What will I do if I am ill?

Please follow school policy for reporting absences to Student Services. Also, a parent should contact the student's team leader, so that the team will not be waiting on you. If you are absent due to illness, the program director will consult your team leader about whether your participation throughout the week was substantial enough to earn a passing grade. If you are absent due to an illness, you may be required to make-up June Term during the summer.

What sort of transportation will be provided?

Students **MUST** travel to and from partner sites with teams and team leaders. All students should be dropped off and picked up from the Upper School campus.

Teams may travel via passenger vans, busing, public transportation, or air travel. The program director will organize all contracted transportation. Team leaders will be responsible for coordinating team transport on public transportation.

Will this program extend beyond the regular school day?

The scope of each June Term experience will depend upon the assigned learning site. In some cases, the time of involvement will extend beyond the regular school day – including the possibility of overnight stays. Unless chosen by an individual student, the students involved in extracurricular activities that extend into the week of June Term will be assigned a site that doesn't interfere with outside-of-school activities.

How will the learning sites be assigned?

Information on learning site opportunities will be provided to students at various times throughout the year. For international site opportunities – information and registration are available to interested students in the fall. For national and local site opportunities – detailed site information is available to students at the beginning of second semester. Students interested in local and national sites will register for their top 3 preferences for site assignments prior to spring break. Students will be notified of their site assignments within a couple weeks of registering. Assignments will be based on both student interests and site needs. An effort will be made to consider student preferences; however, final assignments will be determined by the program director. Final site assignments are non-negotiable. (*Refer to registration guidelines & form on p. 12-13*)

May I propose a similar learning experience I'm planning this year as a substitution for June Term?

Students may not substitute participation in family travel excursions, church mission trips, or other meaningful outreach programs for June Term credit. Although we fully support student participation in many other similar cultural immersion experiences, the school administration has decided not to permit substitutions for June Term. This decision is based on a number of factors including the difficulty in making subjective decisions about which alternatives qualify as substitutions, the potential tensions between students who have been granted these requests and those who have not, the logistical complexity of individual accommodations, dependency upon outside sources to determine whether the learning goals have been met, and a consensus that the more opportunities of this nature that students participate in – the better. MA students are expected to engage in the June Term program initiatives through our school in order to ensure that orientation, partnership collaboration, and reflection are guided in an intentional, consistent manner.

Will I be able to call home? Will my parents be able to contact me?

As per school policy, students will not be allowed to carry cell phones at learning sites. Team leaders will carry cell phones. So, if you are in need of contacting your parents, you will arrange to do so with your team leader. If parents need to contact your child during June Term, please contact the school office to leave a message that will be passed along to your son or daughter.

What if I have a sports or personal conflict during June Term?

Please plan ahead to be free of any outside responsibilities during June Term week. Do not schedule medical appointments, family trips, private lessons, or other personal obligations during the designated times that you will be at your community partner site.

Since participation in June Term is a graduation requirement, you may not be absent during the times you are supposed to be at your learning site. If you anticipate any significant conflicts during the week of June Term, you have a couple of options:

- Select site preferences that have schedules that will not interfere with these activities. (ie: several alternative site options each year are available during Spring Break)
- Make alternative arrangements with your coaches, advisors, employers, etc.

What is my role at my learning site?

Your primary job is to use your observation skills, your listening skills, your intelligence, and your sensitivity to learn from the community of people that you visit. If there are opportunities to serve others, you should also be prepared to share your talents and skills to assist those around you. In everything that you do, you should be seeking to understand and support the people that you meet at your learning site.

What will I do at my learning site?

Site activities will vary significantly. Many sites will include interactive, small group activities with community members, varying in age from children to senior citizens. Some sites may invite you to share your skills or creativity through teaching, performing, or integrating technology. Other sites may include service projects such as construction, painting, cooking and serving meals, cleaning, etc. Still others may provide you with opportunities to participate in community-wide programs in collaboration with larger groups of people (ie: a mural or theatrical production with an entire school community).

Many learning sites will also provide avenues for interacting across language barriers, sharing cultural traditions, eating meals together, and even visiting someone's home or place of worship.

What are the behavior expectations at my site?

All Minnehaha Academy rules are in effect at your site. It is also your responsibility to become informed of and obey the rules of your site. Please respect your team leader, your team members, and those you meet at your learning site.

What should I do if I am having a problem at my learning site?

Please talk to your team leader or the program director about any problems or concerns that you may have.

Will I be able to go back to the same learning site next year?

Under most circumstances, students are expected to go to a different learning site each year that you participate in June Term. Occasionally, IF both beneficial to the site partner and space is available, particular students may have the opportunity to return to a previously visited site. (The program director will communicate to individual students any opportunities to revisit a particular site, when available).

If I have an idea for a community site for June Term, who should I tell?

Please provide referrals for potential June Term community partners to Mrs. Swanson. Faculty members at the Upper School may also propose new sites for June Term consideration, using the proposal form provided in the team leader handbook.

If I am absent during June Term or do not pass, can I make up the credit?

Students who do not participate in June Term during the designated week will have to make up the lost credit during the summer. These arrangements will need to be made through Mrs. Swanson. Transportation, team leaders, and peer group collaboration will not be provided for students who need to make up the credit. Students needing to make up June Term will be accountable for meeting all the required components of the program (including reflection activities) in order to earn credit for participation.

How can my parents be involved?

Parent involvement will be helpful in the following areas:

- Provide reliable references for community partnerships
- Volunteers to provide meals or snacks for teams
- Provide or donate team-specific resources (tools, art supplies, gardening supplies,...)
- Contribute to a designated fund for scholarships for national & international trips
- Knowledge or experience with community partners that can be shared with teams in preparation for site experiences
- Encourage student enthusiasm and growth (ie: talk about your child's experience)
- Encourage further community sharing of June Term experiences by inviting students to share at your church, with extended family members, at local organizations, etc.
- Participate with your son/daughter in ongoing community events related to the experiences at the learning site (ie: community education classes, cultural celebrations, volunteer opportunities, benefit events, etc.)

How will MA communicate with me and my parents about important June Term updates?

Parents and students should refer to the *Schedule of Important June Term Dates* posted on the school website (under June Term links) as a valuable resource for anticipating critical related to June Term.

Students will receive ongoing communication regarding June Term through assemblies, advisors, and all-school announcements.

Parents will receive ongoing communication regarding June Term through the Upper School principal's newsletter (sent on a weekly basis via email).

Parents and students should contact the program director with any further questions or concerns not addressed in the handbook, printed handouts, or online documents.

Mrs. Amy Swanson
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ADDITIONAL Q & A FOR NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL SITES

What additional expectations and requirements are associated with going to a June Term site beyond the Twin Cities?

Paperwork:

- U.S. Passport is required for international travel and must be valid for 6 months beyond travel dates.
- Some international travel may require a Visa document. If needed, this will be communicated to you in advance, based on your trip.
- International travel may also require immunizations or medications. Please consult your physician and local travel clinic for medical advice on your travel situation.

Travel & Lodging:

- Accommodations are pre-arranged and may include hotels, hostels, churches, schools, or home stays. Students may be required to bring bedding or towels.

Costs:

- Costs vary and typically range from \$200 - \$4000.
- Costs include transportation (flight, busing, etc.), food, & accommodations.
- International trips will require initial deposits in order to secure a flight booking. Total payment of all trip costs will be due at least 1 month prior to the trip.

Preparation:

- One or more additional evening meetings with students and their parents may be planned in preparation for extended trips. Attendance at these orientation meetings will be required.

Length of Trip:

- National and international trips will likely extend beyond the one-week June Term period based on time needed for traveling to the sites; typically ranging in length from 6 - 14 days.

Reflection Retreat:

- Students on extended trips may not be able to attend the scheduled reflection retreat due to the trip length. In these circumstances, all reflection requirements for these groups will occur during the trip – guided by the faculty team leader.

GUIDELINES ON REGISTERING FOR SITE OPTIONS

A separate list of site options will be provided for each grade level. Students may **ONLY** register for sites that are on the list corresponding to your current grade level.

On the list of site options, the **SCHEDULE** column indicates the times that students will leave from and arrive back at the Minnehaha Academy Upper School campus each day of June Term week. Schedules that extend beyond these dates are indicated. **ALL** students must travel to their sites each day with their group members and faculty team leader.

The **COST** column on the site options list includes meals, transportation, and accommodations.

Students **MAY NOT** select a site that you visited in previous years of participation in June Term.

ALL students in grades 9-11 must complete and turn-in a *June Term Learning Site Sign-Up* form. Forms will be distributed and collected by **faculty advisors** during the designated advisee times in late February/ early March. (See the *Schedule of Important June Term Dates* posted on the school website under the June Term link). If students are absent on the day when forms are collected, the completed form must be turned in to your advisor asap **before Spring Break**.

Please review the list of site options as a family to avoid misunderstandings. It is important that students **consider potential scheduling conflicts** when they register (ie: SAT/ACT exam schedules, state athletic competitions, employment schedules, family obligations, etc.) . Students **MAY NOT** request any changes in their site preferences after registration forms are collected by their advisors, so remember to **consider choices thoughtfully**.

JUNE TERM REGISTRATION: LEARNING SITE SIGN-UP

PLEASE CLEARLY PRINT YOUR FIRST AND LAST NAME:

PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR GRADE LEVEL: 9th 10th 11th

PLEASE CIRCLE EVERY DESCRIPTOR BELOW THAT IDENTIFIES A COMMUNITY GROUP YOU HAVE VISITED DURING PREVIOUS JUNE TERM EXPERIENCES:

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| infants/toddlers | Asian (ie: Hmong) | Christian affiliation |
| elementary children | African American | non-Christian affiliation |
| middle school kids | Hispanic/Latino | poverty/social injustices |
| high school students | African (ie: Somali) | mental/physical disabilities |
| middle-aged adults | European | immigrants/refugees |
| elderly adults | Native American | rural/less urbanized |

ALL STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO BE AVAILABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN LOCAL JUNE TERM SITE VISITS DURING A TYPICAL SCHOOL DAY. PLEASE CHECK ALL STATEMENTS BELOW THAT INDICATE YOUR AVAILABILITY FOR PARTICIPATION IN JUNE TERM BEYOND THE NORMAL SCHOOL DAY, (IF APPLICABLE).

- I can participate locally during times that extend BEFORE the normal school day.
- I can participate locally during times that extend AFTER the normal school day.
- I can participate in a national immersion experience extending BEYOND the designated week of June Term.

IN THE SPACES PROVIDED BELOW, PLEASE LIST YOUR TOP 3 LEARNING SITE PREFERENCES FOR JUNE TERM:

1ST Choice: _____

2ND Choice: _____

3RD Choice: _____

Important Reminder!
You may NOT select a site that you visited in previous years.

