

THE BROTHER DAVID S. BAGINSKI
SCHOLAR PROGRAM FSC

PROGRAM GUIDE 2025–2026

scholarship discipleship citizenship





Contents

A Warm Welcome from the Scholars Program	1
Program Description	2
Guiding Principles	3
Brother David S. Baginski, FSC	6
Benefits of the Program	8
Admission to the Program	10
Curriculum	13
Good Standing and Withdrawal	17
Outcomes of the Program	19
Scholars Forum	21
Cultural Explorations	22
Scholars Checklist	24
Faculty Mentors, Administrators, and Past Directors	19
Social Media and Contact	21



A Warm Welcome from the Scholars Program

We are thrilled to welcome you The Brother David S. Baginski FSC Scholars Program! You have embarked on a path of personal growth, learning and discovery that will shape the rest of your life. This is your exciting first step toward becoming an exemplary citizen and leader, and you will be walking alongside other outstanding students on your journey.

As one of Central Catholic's three Signature Programs we are proud to offer an innovative program of study and cultural enrichment that is developing into a program of national prominence. The following pages will serve as your road map to the many resources and opportunities available to you. They also describe the LaSallian spiritual and academic values that inform our work.

To make the most of your time as a Baginski Scholar, we encourage you to:

- Familiarize yourself with the program information needed to successfully graduate
- Work in community with your fellow scholars
- Turn to your directors, faculty mentors, and peers for advice and support.

Our doors are always open, so please do not hesitate to visit the Scholars Room and our offices with any questions. We look forward to supporting you in your journey!

communitas docta virtutis

PROGRAM DIRECTORS

Todd Rooney, MA

Patrizia Costa, Ph.D.



Program Description

THE PROGRAM

A named Scholar in the program prepares for advanced studies at the university level through a liberal arts curriculum that is interdisciplinary and multi-faceted. The program is designed upon three pillars: scholarship, citizenship, and discipleship. Students will explore the humanities and understand their intersection with science and technology through issue-oriented investigations. They will grapple with such critical questions as “What shapes our knowledge?” “What makes good science?” “How does one live a just and happy life?” and “What does it mean to be human?”

Students are expected to enroll in Honor or AP sections of academic courses in the years prior to applying to the program. Once in the program, they will practice all the following: analytical and critical thinking skills, advanced research techniques, writing acuity, and effective verbal communication. The Junior Humanities Seminar will engage the students in critical inquiry, social justice perspectives, philosophical ethics and community-focused service projects rooted in the Lasallian tradition. In their Senior year, students will use the skills they have acquired to develop, defend and present an original research thesis.

At its core, the program is designed to encourage students to understand the intrinsic connections between their intellectual development and their responsibilities as global citizens. Many of the enrichment activities offered by the program are fueled by this intent.



Guiding Principles

Each year, Central Catholic High School inducts a small number of outstanding sophomores into The Brother David S. Baginski, FSC Scholars Program. This is a highly selective two-year program for juniors and seniors of exceptional merit and potential.

Established in 2002, the program is designed to enhance and enrich the academic and cultural experiences of talented, highly motivated students. The program can supplement academic interests in the humanities, social sciences, and applied sciences. It offers challenging curricular opportunities, encourages interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches to learning, and provides travel opportunities.

Through their shared extracurricular activities and dedication to academic excellence, students become a community of scholars that builds important connections and reinforces the program's commitment to the ethical application of knowledge and social justice.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of The Brother David S. Baginski, FSC Scholars Program is to foster intellectual and cultural growth essential to leadership in the service of humanity.

Participation in this program provides Scholars with a strong foundation that fosters intellectual curiosity, civic engagement, diversity of perspectives, leadership, creativity, innovation, experiential learning, applied learning, scholarship, culture of integrity, effective communication, and community building.

A deeper goal of the program is to motivate Scholars to reach beyond their individual niches and to understand that they can affect justice in society and, in fact, have a responsibility to do so.

DIVERSITY IN SCHOLARS

To ensure the success of all students, the Scholars Program is committed to diversity and inclusion.

PROGRAM MOTTO

communitas docta virtutis
a scholarly community of virtue

PILLARS AND VALUES

Scholarship: We pursue truth with courage and conviction

THE BROTHER DAVID S. BAGINSKI FSC SCHOLARS PROGRAM



Citizenship: We participate in the creation of a more just world

Discipleship: We serve others with compassion in the LaSallian tradition

THE SCHOLARS MEDAL

The Scholars' medal was first awarded at the 2017 Baccalaureate Ceremony. It was designed by the Directors, Patrizia Costa and John J. Allen, with guidance from Brother Benedict Oliver, FSC. Our three pillars—scholarship, citizenship, and discipleship—appear on a ribbon above our motto. Four symbols are stamped in bronze: hands joining in solidarity representing the foundation of democratic citizenship; laurel leaves indicating peace and justice; a lamp of learning signifying devotion and constancy to our mission; and a book of scholarship representing the school's commitment to lifelong learning. The name and graduation date of each scholar are engraved on the reverse. The school seal completes the design.



THE BROTHER DAVID S. BAGINSKI FSC SCHOLARS PROGRAM



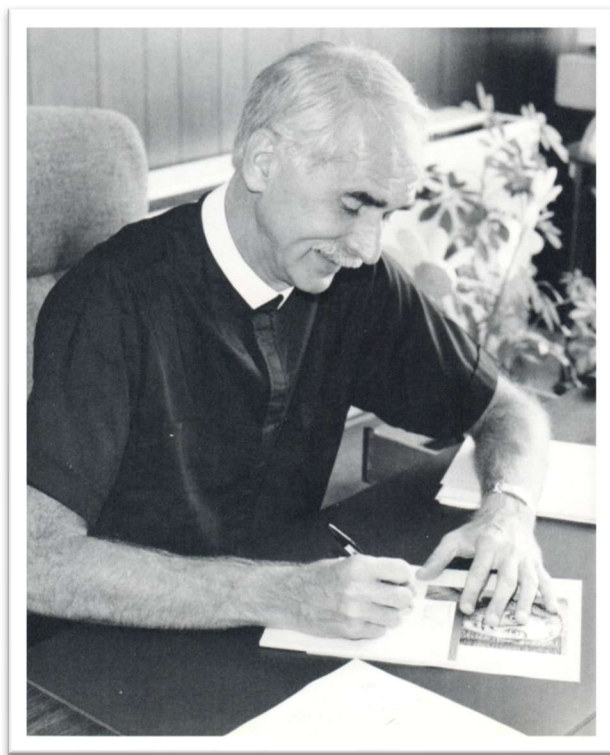


Brother David S. Baginski, FSC

Brother David was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on June 1, 1947. He attended Pittsburgh grammar schools and graduated from South Hills Catholic High School in 1964. He entered the Brothers' Novitiate in Ammendale, Maryland, on June 15 of that year. In 1969, he received a B.A. degree from LaSalle College. His major was English. He continued his studies at Southern California University and Duquesne.

He took his perpetual vows in Pittsburgh on May 14, 1972, and dedicated 25 years of his life as a De La Salle Christian Brother. In addition to serving as vice principal and teacher at Central Catholic from 1983 to 1991, he also served at South Hills Catholic (69-75), West Catholic in Philadelphia (75-76, 79-83), St. John's College High in Washington (91-92), Seaton-La Salle (92-94) and Hudson Catholic Regional in Jersey City (94-96). In the late 70's, he worked as the District Vocations Director.

The tall, lanky teacher with a charismatic demeanor made his classes come alive with his gregarious teaching style and an eclectic taste in literature. He was a mentor to some, a father to others, and an inspiration to the lives he touched daily. Many recall him as a "people's principal"



who tended to the needs of the students, faculty and staff. He had a great capacity to touch the hearts of young people, his Brothers and colleagues. Wherever he went, he was a source of community, great excitement, and energy as well as much playfulness and laughter. The District of Baltimore described him as one of the "worker bee" giants in its history. He loved learning and infusing the same passion in his students. As an administrator, he always taught the largest class, whether it was English, Religion, or other subjects.

One of his favorite quotes was this one by the 19th-century Quaker Missionary Etienne de Grellet: "I shall pass through this world but once. If, therefore, there be any kindness I can show, or any good thing

THE BROTHER DAVID S. BAGINSKI FSC SCHOLARS PROGRAM



I can do, let me do it now ... for I shall not pass this way again."

Brother David died on April 23, 1996, at Hudson Catholic High School in Jersey City, NJ. Two beautiful trees were planted on campus in his honor to symbolize the growth he fostered in his students.



Benefits of the Program

STUDENTS IN THE PROGRAM

- Become part of an engaged and culturally connected community of peers
- Experience meaningful learning opportunities rooted in a Catholic intellectual tradition and a Lasallian spiritual heritage
- Receive guidance and direction from faculty advisors to reach their full potential as thoughtful, creative, socially responsible, empathetic, and productive men of faith, scholarship and service.
- Develop an individualized academic research path
- Participate in enrichment programs and cultural experiences
- Engage in university-level seminars and writing
- Develop a service-oriented consciousness, leading to a commitment to public service and active participation in a democratic society.

DESIGNATION OF THE PROGRAM ON THE SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT

Students in good standing may list their affiliation to the program on their transcript and use this special recognition in applying to post-secondary institutions.

A COMMUNITY OF SCHOLARS

The program values the examination of ideas both individually and within a community of scholars. Students in the program develop a shared intellectual curiosity by taking a seminar together in Junior year and by sharing their research efforts in Senior year. Through events and outings, students also have opportunities to learn together outside of the classroom.

INTERDISCIPLINARY AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY WORK

Students with a significant interest in interdisciplinary work take advantage of a comparative approach whereby an idea is examined from at least two analytical vantage points.

OPPORTUNITIES TO FORGE CONNECTIONS

Scholars forge connections with alumni, friends of the program, distinguished academics, and field experts.

THE BROTHER DAVID S. BAGINSKI FSC SCHOLARS PROGRAM



THE SCHOLARS ROOM

Located on the first floor of the main building, the Scholars Room provides a quiet study area for students in the Scholars Program. Students are encouraged to use the space during free periods and for after-school activities.



Admission to the Program

Our program welcomes applications from highly qualified and motivated sophomores. Many of our applicants are in the top 10% of our school, but this is not a requirement for eligibility. What we value most is an applicant's desire to participate in a communal life of scholarship and ethical service, to ground themselves in critical thinking through texts and discussion, and to engage with fellow students and faculty members in developing research projects that may set the stage for future opportunities and ways of thinking.

We highly regard applicants who are keenly motivated to contribute to a program that will, in turn, nourish their high school experience and their ambitions in the service of humanity.

ELIBIGILITY

Qualified students are selected from a pool of applicants each Spring. This is a competitive process, and no one is guaranteed entrance. All eligible students are encouraged to apply. Transfer students may apply no later than the beginning of the Fall term at the discretion of the Directors.

To be eligible, students should:

- Be in their Sophomore year
- Have taken a minimum of three Advanced Placement or Honors courses.
One of these must be a writing-intensive course such as *AP Human Geography*, *Exploring Literature and Writing I or II*, or *AP European History*
- Demonstrate an ability to work at a minimum GPA level of 3.5
- Demonstrate academic competence and excellence
- Have an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary curiosity
- Show promising interest in social causes and the passion to make a positive difference in the world
- Be willing to participate in discussions with confidence, resourcefulness of ideas, and respect for others
- Demonstrate a commitment to abide by the high standards of academic integrity at Central Catholic
- Be enrolled or plan to enroll in three years of foreign language study or take an AP language course.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested students are invited to apply through the application available on the program's webpage and an interview with the directors. Admission decisions are made in the spring semester (usually in March) for admission the following Fall. Incomplete applications will not be

THE BROTHER DAVID S. BAGINSKI FSC SCHOLARS PROGRAM



considered. If an applicant is unsure of curricular requirements, program expectations, or opportunities available, he is encouraged to meet with one of the Program Directors before starting to work on his application.

APPLICATION MATERIALS

All eligible applicants who wish to be considered for admission will be asked to:

- Complete an application
- Provide two teacher recommendations
- Write a short response to an assigned prompt
- Provide a writing sample, a creative or STEM project from their sophomore year
- Provide a copy of their transcript

AT THE APPLICATION INTERVIEW

Students interviewing with the Directors will be asked a series of questions about their application and motivation for applying. The interviews are used to assess their suitability and interest in the program.

Students should demonstrate an ability to articulate their own ideas and express a willingness to belong within a community of scholars who travel together, study together, and reflect on their experiences as a collective group. The professional conduct of interviewees will be considered, as well as their verbal and analytical skills.

Students can also use the interview as an opportunity to ask questions about the program.

PROGRAM FEE

The Baginski Scholars Program implemented a fee of \$875 beginning in the Fall of 2025. This fee helps to cover the cost of some Scholars Forum events, trips, and other program activities. The fee is charged in conjunction with tuition at the beginning of the Fall semester. Requests for fee waivers will be considered for financial aid recipients.

If, at any time, a student no longer wishes to be a member of the scholars' program, the student will receive a refund in accordance with the following refund policy:

- A student who withdraws from the program prior to the beginning of the Fall Semester is entitled to a full refund of any monies paid that year.

THE BROTHER DAVID S. BAGINSKI FSC SCHOLARS PROGRAM



- Withdrawal during the Fall semester will provide a partial refund (\$250). Withdrawal during the Spring semester will result in no refund.



Curriculum

JUNIOR HUMANITIES SEMINAR

(Level 5, AP Level, 1 credit)

The humanities seminar explores some of the most enduring philosophical, ethical, and social questions of humanity through a variety of ancient and contemporary texts, spanning multiple genres. The seminar is taught in small discussion settings such as undergraduate and graduate seminars. Students will be conversant in classical texts of an ethical nature and will be asked to write and express their thoughts utilizing various philosophical frameworks.

Students reflect on the nature of truth and goodness from varied perspectives, including great works of literature and many avenues of philosophical discourse. Students will be tasked with participation in and application of a service project in addition to a summative position paper of their own choosing. The strength of the seminar experience lies in the communal discussion and debate of primary texts, and the empowerment of students to engage the contemporary problems of the world through a historical, literary, and philosophical lens. In the spring, Juniors will travel as a class, usually over a three-day period, to provide aid to poor or marginalized communities. The site locations are non-profit, 501c3 or faith-based organizations whose mission and work address community needs.

By the completion of Junior Seminar, students should be able to:

- Evaluate the world from culturally diverse and nuanced perspectives
- Understand the broad scope of ethics from ancient to contemporary discourse through the investigation of primary source materials
- Critically engage with philosophical theories and theorists that challenge the *status quo* of societies and cultures
- Identify and apply differing ethical systems, while articulating their advantages and disadvantages
- Synthesize and analyze moral questions raised by works of literature, poetry, and philosophy as they relate to the questions “What does it mean to be human?” and “How does one live a just and moral life?”
- Write and research competently in the style of informed, academic discourse

SCHOLARS FORUM

(Pass/Fail, ½ credit)

This half-credit course features discussions on contemporary issues, performances, visiting-guest lectures by renowned experts, films, musical and theatrical performances, and field trips. The



course allows students to engage in cultural explorations beyond the traditional classroom setting.

SENIOR THESIS

(Pass/Fail 1 credit)

Senior Thesis marks the culmination of a student's experience in the Scholars Program. Students engage in a sustained examination of a significant problem, question, or issue under the guidance of the Senior Director, a second reader and a field professional/expert. They articulate a developed, ethical argument in response to the motivating question or issue. The end goal is to make an independent contribution to human knowledge.

Excellent research, analysis, and contextualization of a body of primary and secondary sources is expected. Students go beyond what others have written and to think critically, incorporate their own ideas, and reflect on the topic in an original way. They must also venture outside of the classroom and assume the responsibilities associated with a commitment to independent scholarship. The value of the thesis will be inherent not just in the thesis itself but in the thesis process. Students learn to: conceptualize and structure their work over interim goals and deadlines; develop a relationship with advisors; deepen their understanding of a specific topic; explore their personal values around a topic; learn to overcome obstacles and setbacks; work with limited resources; practice good time management; and hone their critical thinking and writing skills.

By the completion of Senior Thesis, students should be able to:

- Develop critical questions about complex issues or ideas and develop their own perspectives rather than simply accept those of previous scholars
- Question, organize, and use prior knowledge about a topic
- Evaluate the relevance, credibility, limitations, and implications of evidence used to support an argument, taking context into consideration
- Employ appropriate disciplinary, interdisciplinary, or multi-disciplinary approaches to form a well-reasoned scholarly argument
- Attribute knowledge and ideas accurately using an appropriate citation style
- Offer solutions, conclusions based on research, analysis, or evidence, considering limitations and implications
- Adapt an argument for context, purpose, and/or audience
- Engage in peer review to receive and thoughtfully consider constructive responses to one's work
- Demonstrate perseverance on a long-term project and manage time accordingly

THE BROTHER DAVID S. BAGINSKI FSC SCHOLARS PROGRAM



- Employ ethical research practices
- Present their work in an engaging way in a public forum and manage a Q&A session with skill and tact

All theses are defended in early Spring. They are presented at the Senior Thesis Symposium in April.

A bound physical copy and a digital copy of each thesis are housed in the Scholars' Library.

BAGINSKI SCHOLARS ABROAD

(Pass/Fail ½ credit)

Each summer, usually in June and July, the Scholars Program offers a short-term (10- to 15-day) study abroad elective. This elective provides a rich academic and cross-cultural experience where students are encouraged to make intrinsic connections between their intellectual development and their responsibilities as global citizens.

In the two semesters before the trip, the Directors and/or a guest faculty member coordinate readings and a series of workshops that provide immersive study of location-specific topics in the humanities and sciences.

The following is a list of study abroad opportunities offered by the program since 2017 (with the exclusion of pandemic years).

- 2017 *The Arts and Cultures of Rome*—Glenn Campbell, History
- 2018 *The Giants of Albion: Curated Readings from Britain*—Todd Rooney, English
- 2019 *La variedad española: Una historia compleja*—Brian Hanrahan, World Languages
- 2022 *Jewels of the Adriatic Sea*—Justin Belardi, Science
- 2024 *Mitteleuropa: The Center lies East*—Kurt Retenauer

Students who have participated in past study abroad electives have characterized the experience as “life-changing” because of the following opportunities:

- To advance in personal growth and acquire cultural awareness about different places and people
- To see other viewpoints that differ from their own ethnic, national, or religious perspectives
- To become more culturally empathetic, tolerant, self-confident, and independent
- To increase their intercultural proficiency
- To increase levels of international political concern, cross-cultural interest, and cultural cosmopolitanism.

THE BROTHER DAVID S. BAGINSKI FSC SCHOLARS PROGRAM





Good Standing and Withdrawal

GOOD STANDING IN THE PROGRAM

The Brother David S. Baginski, FSC Scholars Program prides itself on being a program of opportunity, rather than one of requirements. However, there are some standards to which students must adhere. Scholars are expected to:

1. Maintain high academic standards. A GPA check will occur at the end of the 2rd quarter of every semester. Students must maintain Honor Roll status (3.5 GPA average) every semester. If a Scholar's cumulative unweighted GPA falls below 3.5, he must submit a petition for a probationary semester or quarter. It should be stressed that merely submitting a petition does not guarantee a student's ability to continue in the program. A petition will be approved or rejected after review. A meeting with one of the Directors is also required for all students who are petitioning for a probationary semester or quarter
2. Accumulate a minimum of 15 credits in Honors or Advanced Placement (AP) level courses
3. Commit to being an active and willing participant in Scholars Program offerings, including attending scholar forum events and participating in cultural and service-learning trips
4. Actively abide by the Standards of Academic Integrity set forth by Central Catholic HS. Violation of Academic Integrity will not be tolerated. All violations will be referred to the Honor Board, which will recommend a course of action to the Directors. Violations of cheating, abet cheating, or plagiarism in any classes at Central Catholic or falsification in one's academic work will be cause for dismissal from the Scholars' Program
5. Demonstrate strong character and appropriate comportment, especially in their interactions with one another. Consequently, the Program Directors reserve the right to dismiss from the Scholars Program any student who patently disparages another scholar or exhibits behavior unbecoming of a Central Catholic student.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM

By withdrawing, a student formally relinquishes all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of a Baginski Scholar at Central Catholic High School.

Students who wish to withdraw from the program must first meet with the Directors to discuss the request and its ramifications, including their graduation requirements. If moving forward with the withdrawal, the student must present a declaration of intent to withdraw in the form of a letter to the Directors stating their reason for withdrawal. Only when this request is acknowledged in writing by the directors—and therefore not automatically upon submitting it—will a student be officially withdrawn from the program. The counseling office will make the approved changes to his schedule and transcript after that.

THE BROTHER DAVID S. BAGINSKI FSC SCHOLARS PROGRAM



Students who withdraw from the program in this fashion in their junior year, however, are not automatically dropped from Junior Seminar. This may entail completing unfinished work for a grade, even though the student has dropped or intends to drop the Scholars Program.



Outcomes of the Program

THE PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU

- Understand the interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary nature of learning
- Practice advanced research, writing, and oral communication skills
- Possess a greater awareness and appreciation for cultural programs
- Be familiar with the foundational corpus of books, ideas, and philosophies that have shaped civilizations around the world
- Examine contemporary issues and current events through a critical lens and engage in meaningful, socially responsible discussions about these issues
- Build connections with a scholarly community inside and outside of the school
- Function intellectually at higher levels of thought
- Apply ethical models to research questions
- Apply leadership skills in solving community problems
- Be accustomed to accepting new challenges and opportunities with enthusiasm.

JUNIOR SEMINAR SPIRIT AWARDS

At the discretion of the Junior Director, several awards are given to students who best exemplify the spirit and work of Junior Seminar.

HARVARD BOOK AWARD

Each year, at the all-school Honors Convocation, one outstanding senior Scholar is awarded “The Harvard Book Award” for demonstrating excellence in scholarship and achievement in other nonacademic areas. This award is given by the alumni of Harvard University to nearly 2,000 selected high schools from around the world. Central Catholic is one of these schools.

BEST THESIS AWARD

At the Senior Symposia, the Faculty Advisory Council for the Scholars Program presents a “Best Senior Thesis” award to one student based on the following criteria: originality, work ethic, writing, knowledge of the field, and societal impact. Several awards for “Outstanding work on the Senior Thesis” and one award for “Best Presentation” are awarded as well.



The following is a list of the Best Theses since 2017:

- Max Nowalk, *Using a Chomsky-Herman Lens to Understand Fear in the Media*, 2017
- Warren Sipe, *Facilitating Positive Business-Community Interactions to Mitigate the Impacts of Gentrification in the Pittsburgh Area*, 2018
- Simon Hebert, *The Happiness Habit: an Introduction to the Skills and Practices Conducive to Happiness*, 2019
- Nathan Jordan, *Bottom Text: A Mimetic Approach to Understanding Community and Postmodernism*, 2020
- William Koloc, *Third Spaces that Bring Communities Together: A Narrative Inquiry into Pittsburgh Polish Hill, Alcoholics Anonymous and Central Catholic High School*, 2021
- Jason Ficorilli, *Reconsidering Club Functionality and Controlled Club Development in European Football: A Critical Inquiry of UEFA's Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play Regulations*, 2022
- Donovan B. Allen, *The Unspeakable Unwritten: Narrative of Darkness in Toni Morrison's Beloved*, 2023
- Luke McCartney, *Aftertaste: Deconstructing the Perpetual Colonial Dynamics of the Coffee Industry*, 2024
- Santino Balistrieri, *Something Comforting, Empowering the Chronically Ill Toward the Re-Embodiment of the Self and the Community*, 2025

SCHOLARS MEDAL

At Commencement, Scholars receive a bronze medal in recognition of their superlative achievements in the program.



Scholars Forum

One of the highlights of the program is the Scholars Forum. This is a half-credit course that students enroll in for both semesters of their Junior and Senior years. It features lectures, local field trips, discussions, films, gallery exhibitions, poetry readings, opera, and symphony performances.

SCHOLARS OPEN FORUM

The Open Forum provides an opportunity for Seniors to design their own discussion sessions. Here they can debate critical issues and examine a range of questions drawn from the arts, sciences, and politics. They may also present on an aspect of their ongoing research for their Senior Thesis.

GRADING CRITERIA

To receive a grade of “pass,” students must attend five events on the Forum’s calendar by the end of each semester. Incomplete grades will not be given in this course. Students may have absences during the semester, either excused or unexcused, and they may still receive a grade of “pass” if they attend 5 events. Students must attend all events with the Scholar’s group, not independently. Nor can they get credit for attending the same event through another class at Central. Failure to meet the attendance requirement will result in probation or dismissal from the program.

FORUM ETIQUETTE

All students are expected to adhere to the relevant rules of etiquette while in the Forum. All books, cell phones, and iPads must be put away, unless students are taking notes. Students should sit up and focus on the presentation. Questions to Forum guests must be posed respectfully. Please note that tardiness is unacceptable. Students arriving late will not receive attendance credit.



Cultural Explorations

FALL SCHOLARS TRIP

All students in the Scholars Program take part in one trip per year to a major arts and culture city in the USA. In recent years, we have visited Boston, New York, Washington, DC, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Baltimore.

The trips are scheduled with sightseeing, museum visits, performances, and lectures by special guests. The trip aims to expose students to the nature of travel and introduce them to a new culture and city. The itinerary is meant to enrich the intellectual content that the boys are already learning, in effect, extending the classroom beyond the walls of Central Catholic. The trip challenges students through engagement with university professors in a classroom setting, entering into dialogue with critical texts and experts in their field.

Another goal of the trip is to teach students how to see a city in its myriad aspects and to instill the joy of exploration and the importance of place. Interaction with alumni and various experts teaches students to value the lifelong commitment to education. Central to these cultural experiences is the bond of community formed among the Scholars and the mentors who accompany them.

BAGINSKI SCHOLARS ABROAD

Students in the program can enroll in an optional Summer Study Abroad opportunity.

Studying abroad at the high school level is a unique opportunity not only to anticipate the possibilities available at the university level, but to expose students to the diversity of culture and the excitement of international travel. The academic portion of the trip teaches students to view travel as more than a touristic venture, and to understand such excursions as educational and transformational to the human spirit.

Since the Study Abroad Program was founded in 2017, students have traveled to Italy, England, Scotland, Spain, Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Bosnia, Hungary, Austria, and Czechoslovakia.



SERVICE-LEARNING TRIP

The annual service trip for Juniors in the Baginski Scholars Program typically takes place in April. Given the seminar's emphasis on ethics and the Scholar's Program's pillar of discipleship, a service-learning experience is an essential and formative undertaking for our young scholars. We have been returning to the same location in Wheeling, WV, each year, which has allowed for sustained engagement and investment in a particular community and service sites like the urban farming cooperative Grow Ohio Valley and the Wheeling Soup Kitchen. These service experiences have produced transformative encounters and perspectives in our students and seek to fill a real need in the community of Wheeling. As scholars who are part of the Catholic intellectual tradition, we seek to foster community and strive to better participate in the universal call to care for one another. We have worked closely with the Appalachian Institute to develop a program that is both informative and rooted in practical service to others. The boys will learn about and experience the history of the Appalachian region and the many economic, health, and environmental problems it faces.



Scholars Checklist

SOPHOMORES

- ☐ Apply for admission into the Scholars Program at the beginning of the Spring semester
- ☐ Attend two Sophomore Reading Group meetings
- ☐ Register for Junior Seminar for the Fall
- ☐ Commit to 3 years of the same foreign language or satisfactory completion of an Advanced Placement (AP) language class

JUNIORS

- ☐ Enroll in Junior Seminar and Scholars Forum
- ☐ Participate in the cultural trip to a major US city offered by the program
- ☐ Visit a service site with the Junior Seminar class
- ☐ Complete a 15-page, article-length work of scholarship
- ☐ Attend 2 out of 3 nights of the Senior Symposium
- ☐ Register for Senior Thesis if all pre-requisites are met
- ☐ Present a proposal for Senior Thesis
- ☐ Optional: present a poster at a conference or submit a short research paper for publication
- ☐ Optional: enroll in Summer Study Abroad

SENIORS

- ☐ Enroll in Senior Thesis and Scholars Forum
- ☐ Participate in the cultural trip to a major US city offered by the program
- ☐ Complete a research thesis that meets all the requirements of the Scholars Program, including passing a defense before a three-person faculty panel
- ☐ Turn in two copies of the thesis for binding. One copy will be housed in the Scholars Library
- ☐ Present the thesis at the Senior Symposium
- ☐ Complete a program survey
- ☐ Attend the Senior Banquet to celebrate the Senior Class accomplishments and receive a certificate of completion
- ☐ Be formally recognized at commencement exercises at which scholars wear their Scholars Medal in addition to honors cords and traditional graduation regalia



Faculty Mentors, Administrators, and Past Directors

ADMINISTRATORS

Mr. Jack Wallace, FSC

Principal

mandrejko@centralcatholichs.com

Ashley Salamacha

Vice Principal of Academics

asalamacha@centralcatholichs.com

DIRECTORS

Todd Rooney, M.A.

trooney@centralcatholichs.com

Patrizia Costa, PhD

pcosta@centralcatholichs.com

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The general purpose of the Advisory Council is to serve as a sounding board and offer feedback as the “eyes and ears” of the school, review or assess the impact and overall well-being of the program, assist the Directors in setting strategic direction, and guiding the program toward its mission. The members of the council also participate as follows:

1. Attend a Council meeting in the fall with the Directors
2. Assist with chaperoning field trips nationally and internationally
3. Serve on the judging panel for “best thesis” and “best oral presentation” for Senior Thesis

THE BROTHER DAVID S. BAGINSKI FSC SCHOLARS PROGRAM



Our 2022-2023 Advisory Council is comprised of:

Carolyn Niederlander
Faculty, Science Department
cniederlander@centralcatholics.com

Sara Budacki, M.S. Ed.
Faculty, English Department
sbudacki@centralcatholics.com
Kurt Retenauer, M.S. Ed
Faculty, English Department
kretenauer@centralcatholics.com

JOHN J. ALLEN, PHD DIRECTOR 2016-2024

"The Scholars Program is exactly the type of educational experience I longed for when I was a student in high school—academically challenging, inquiry-driven, and culturally formative. Students in the Scholars Program engage the world through travel, study, and service, but always alongside each other as co-seekers on a quest to understand the true, the good, and the beautiful. Such encounters shape students and teachers into a community of virtue that knows how to cherish the life of the mind and embody the actions of the heart. I am honored to have been a part of the ongoing story of the Scholars Program as a dedicated mentor and fellow student."

MATTHEW SUDNIK, MA – DIRECTOR 2007-2016

"The Scholars Program strives to cultivate a brotherhood of curious and cultured young men. It's an intellectual journey. Whether traveling long distances for weekend visits to faraway universities or attending local lectures and theatrical performances in Pittsburgh, the scholars encounter bold ideas, strong personalities, compelling facts, and divergent philosophies. Together, they encourage collective enthusiasm about the pursuit of learning. It is my hope that this all-encompassing experience of education will remain with the scholars throughout their adult lives."

THE BROTHER DAVID S. BAGINSKI FSC SCHOLARS PROGRAM



BROTHER ERNEST MILLER, FSC, D. MIN – FOUNDING DIRECTOR 2002-2007

“Drawing from Plato's *The Apology*, our students should live an 'examined life' whereby they are encouraged to exhibit critical thought in their faith life, speech, public responsibilities, and academic life.”

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook @baginskischolars

Instagram @cchs_baginski_scholars

LinkedIn @The Brother David S. Baginski FSC Scholars Program

Website centralcatholics.com/baginskischolars

CONTACT

The Brother David S. Baginski, FSC Scholars Program
Central Catholic High School
4720 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213
412-208-3449