



Washington Aerospace Scholars

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Washington Aerospace Scholars (WAS)?

A two-part program for high school juniors focused on topics related to the history and future of flight, space exploration and aerospace design. Phase One is a five-month, online course designed in partnership with NASA and the University of Washington, which provides students the opportunity to earn five college credits. Phase Two is a six-day residency experience based at The Museum of Flight in Seattle, Washington.

Who is eligible?

Scholars must be a Washington state resident and be a current junior in high school.

Acceptance into the online course is based on completion of the application, program capacity, geographic location and responding to requests for additional information by the deadline. We value diverse voices and ideas and believe in the importance of bringing multiple perspectives to our discussion of topics related to human space exploration.

There are no math or science requirements for participation, but pre-algebra and essay writing coursework will be helpful. There will be academic support provided during the online course and students are able (and encouraged) to reach out their current high school teachers for help.

What's the difference between Phase One and Phase Two?

Phase One (*online course*) is a five-month, asynchronous, online course designed by NASA and the University of Washington (UW) consisting of eight online lessons and a final project. The curriculum focuses on the history of NASA, airplane and space vehicle design and the future exploration of space. Students can apply to receive five UW credits from the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics for their work in Phase One.

Phase Two (*Seattle Summer Residency at The Museum of Flight*) The work during Phase One is what qualifies students for the Summer Residency. During this six-day experience, students will get an exclusive inside look at the aerospace industry in Washington State through behind-the-scenes aerospace company tours, presentations from science and engineering experts and the opportunity to network informally with professionals. Summer Residency participants also get the opportunity to connect with like-minded peers from across the state and participate in engineering challenges, museum tours and team building activities.

When can I apply?

Applications are open from **September through mid-October**.



When does Phase One, the online course, begin?

Enrolled students will be able to access the Phase One website near the beginning of November. The programming officially begins with a short introductory activity due two weeks after the start date. The first full lesson will need to be completed one month after the website opens.

Will I get a grade on my high school transcript? Can I earn college credit and will it transfer?

Your performance on the WAS curriculum will not be shared with your high school or be reflected on your high school transcript. If you decide to leave the course early or do not successfully complete the course, your final grade will not be shared with anyone.

Students can elect to earn five University of Washington credits, based on their successful completion of the WAS online curriculum. **This course meets the natural science requirement for graduation from the University of Washington and therefore is highly transferable**, but we recommend that students contact universities they are interested in applying to, in order to confirm that this is the case. Students do not have to decide if they want to take the course for UW credit until they have completed several lessons, and the content remains the same regardless of if a student takes the course for credit or not. Students will also have the ability to withdraw from the course if they do not wish to receive a UW grade for their work.

How many online lessons are there?

There are eight lessons and a final project to complete and they are due every two weeks.

When do I complete the lessons?

Since the lessons are online, students can complete them at their own pace. When a lesson opens students have access to all the activities for that lesson and can set their own schedule for completion. Some students like working a little each night, where others prefer completing over the weekend, the key to success is finding a schedule that works for you and helps you to complete all activities by the lesson deadline on Tuesday at 11:55pm. Students will be provided a detailed schedule of deadlines and activity requirements at the start of the course. Lessons materials are made available every two weeks from November to March.

Who evaluates my online work? How do I get help if I need it?

Certified teachers currently teaching in STEM areas evaluate all Phase One work and each student is assigned to one specific Online Academic Evaluator (OAE) throughout the online course. Each activity has a grading rubric that outlines how students will be evaluated and OAEs will provide detailed feedback to help students improve. **Students are able to ask for help from their OAE, teachers in their current school and from WAS program leads during weekly virtual office hours.** We also have a virtual reference librarian who will provide help on online researching and essay writing.

What kind of work is required?

Each lesson consists of:

- Reading chapters and quiz (about 20–25 pages of online material)
- 500–750 word essay
- Space-related math problem
- Some lessons will also contain:
 - » online discussion forums
 - » virtual lab activities
 - » graphic design activities



How long will each Phase One activity take?

Phase One is the equivalent of taking a five-credit college course, therefore students will need to be able to commit to spending **15–20 hours** over the course of two weeks to complete each lesson. Students find that creating a weekly schedule helps them to manage the online course work in addition to their other commitments.

What if I miss a deadline?

WAS understands that there are a multitude of things that can prevent students from meeting lesson deadlines, so we allow students to turn in activities late and students always receive some credit for submitting work. Having a few late activities isn't going to prevent you from having success in the course.

How are students selected for the Summer Residency?

Students are notified in mid-March if they are selected for the Summer Residency. Invitation for the summer is based on several factors, including successful completion of all Phase One material and final score on the Phase One lessons. The typical student who qualifies for Phase Two is someone who has completed all of their online activities and been consistent in submitting quality work.

When does the Summer Residency take place?

There are generally several residencies offered at The Museum of Flight in Seattle during the summer following the online course. Students who qualify for residency will be able to provide their preference for which residency they would like to attend. Please note that due to scheduling issues, we cannot guarantee a student will receive their first choice of residency week, but we do try to place students in their first or second choice. Each residency runs Sunday afternoon through Friday afternoon, and the proposed dates for the summer will be determined by February.

What are the benefits of being a WAS alumni?

After completing the Summer Residency, students are enrolled into an exclusive alumni network; giving access to select scholarships up to \$124,000. Alumni are encouraged to apply for competitive paid internships; expanding their network and developing their skill set to advance their positions within field.

The benefit of joining our alumni network has proven to be favorable, WAS alumni are attending top-tier colleges and universities across the country, providing insight about potential universities and degree programs. Many of our 2,000 student alumni are currently working at leading aerospace and STEM companies around the world. If enhancing your network and improving your professional opportunities is appealing, you will enjoy the financial and intangible benefits of WAS.

What is the cost to participate?

There is no cost to participate in Phase One of Washington Aerospace Scholars! If a student wants to receive an official transcript with UW credits for their work in Phase One they can register through the UW after completing several lessons. The cost to receive credit is approximately \$255. **Families experiencing financial need may apply for Credit Tuition Assistance to cover up to 100% of the cost.** We will supply all of the information on registering after the course has begun.

Should a student qualify for Phase Two, the tuition is \$1,850. This is not due until April, and **families experiencing financial need may apply for Residency Tuition Assistance to cover up to 100% of the cost.** Summer Residency tuition covers lodging, transportation, meals and all supplies for the six-day residency. Students are expected to transport themselves to/from Seattle for the residency, but if a student needs transportation support the WAS program may be able to provide assistance.



Who can apply for tuition assistance?

There is no cost to participate in Phase One, but **any** student for whom the cost of Phase One UW Credit or Phase Two Residency Tuition would be a financial burden on their family can apply for tuition assistance. Most families who apply do receive financial assistance.

Families who qualify for government assistance programs are given priority within the amount of funding available.

How do I apply for tuition assistance?

As there is no cost to participate in Phase One, Credit Tuition Assistance applications will be available in December, before registration for the optional UW credit. Notifications of UW Credit Tuition Assistance awards will be made before UW Credit Registration and payment is due.

Summer Residency Tuition Assistance Applications are sent in March along with Residency invitations. Notification of Residency Tuition Assistance awards will be made before the Residency deposit is due.

Financial Assistance Timeline:

October	Student Accepted to WAS Program & Online Course begins
December	Credit Tuition Assistance application available for optional credit
January	Credit Tuition Assistance award notifications & registration for UW Credit
March	Residency Tuition Assistance application sent with invitations to Summer Residency
April	Summer Residency Tuition Assistance award notifications
May	Summer Residency registration forms due

Still have questions?

Please call Janice Crew, WAS Program Manager at 206.764.5864 or email
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