

# GREENVILLE CLASSICAL ACADEMY

## The University-Model School<sup>®</sup> (UMS)

### What is it?

A UMS is a hybrid of a traditional 5-day-a-week school and homeschooling that blends the best of both methods. UMS students have quality classroom instruction together with caring parental involvement while using a college-style schedule. The immediate goal of a UMS is quality, cost-effective, college-preparatory education accomplished in a way that gives parents more time for imparting the faith and values they hold precious.

### Why?

University-Model<sup>®</sup> schooling was developed to fulfill two basic purposes:

- 1) to offer students the opportunity to acquire a high degree of academic achievement and
- 2) to preserve and strengthen the God-ordained family relationships in which the Christian faith is most effectively fostered.

### Four primary benefits:

#### **Relationship with instructor**

Students have a relationship with a teacher who is competent and passionate about their subject matter.

- God has equipped each of us with gifts and talents. As a student's coursework gets more difficult, a UMS gives parents the opportunity to rely on the strengths of others while maintaining a strong influence on their child.

#### **Responsibility for education**

Students are equipped to take responsibility for their own education after graduation.

- The focus of the UMS is on preparing students to become independent, spiritually and academically, so the model structure of a UMS provides a gradual transition from dependent learning to independent learning.

#### **Relationship with family**

The relationship between students and parents is encouraged, not torn down.

- Parents are enabled to have a meaningful relationship with their children since the family is not tied to a 5-day-a-week traditional school schedule.

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## Resources

- Because students are in school 3/5 of the traditional time with 2/5 of the time spent in Home Study, tuition rates reflect this difference. A UMS structure will allow a classical, Christian education through GCA to be financially accessible to more families.

## Additional Benefits

- The average level of teacher education will rise. Our experience this year has proven that there are many capable teachers in the Greenville area who would love to teach part-time, but do not want the commitment of a full-time position. A UMS is a perfect fit for such a person.
- NAUMS requires a Character Development program which works alongside the academic program. This involves a weekly Upper School Chapel on Fridays with special speakers and a required number of “Community Service” hours for students.
- The UMS schedule encourages a solid work ethic in students.
- The freer schedule allows parents time to supplement a child’s typical education with internships, extracurricular activities, etc.

## UMS and GCA

The UMS structure fits well with GCA’s Core Values.

GCA is a **Christian** school. The National Association of University-Model<sup>®</sup> Schools (NAUMS) requires that participating schools be distinctly Christian.

GCA desires to provide a **rigorous** education. The UMS structure will help GCA hold high standards for our students by enabling the school to hire highly qualified teachers in a part-time capacity.

GCA is **classical**. GCA’s mission is to build on the foundation of the School of Grammar with a fully developed School of Logic and School of Rhetoric. NAUMS does not dictate curriculum – GCA can and will remain distinctly classical.

GCA desires to be **transformative**. While GCA believes that parents are ultimately responsible to the Creator to guide and disciple their children, we desire to see God use GCA as an instrument to come alongside parents. GCA wants to assist parents (not replace them) in carrying out the Biblical mandate to bring up their children in the training and admonition of the Lord. We believe the UMS structure will allow parents a unique opportunity to strengthen family relationships and to provide a high level of education.

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## **GCA has joined!**

GCA became a member of the National Association of University-Model<sup>®</sup> Schools (NAUMS) last spring and we are following their direction as we transition our Upper School using the new UMS schedule. For the 2010-11 school year, we are considered a Transitioning University-Model School by NAUMS. It is our goal to have the program fully implemented by the 2011-2012 school year.

## **How it works**

GCA will offer the majority of Upper School core courses on a Monday-Wednesday-Friday class schedule. Some additional courses will be offered on a Tuesday-Thursday schedule for older students. The alternating days will be “Home-Study Days” with parents assisting and guiding students at home.

Since the University-Model system requires significant communication between the teacher and the parent, establishing an effective and efficient method for this communication is essential. GCA Board members have visited, called and discussed the University-Model system with many other UMS schools. GCA will use a web-based system of communication called RenWeb where teachers can post grades and basic lesson plans on-line and e-mail parents.

## **Can you help? Yes!**

- Spread the word! We believe this system will appeal to many families, so help us share the plan with others!
- Teachers? Do you know of any folks who are gifted teachers but who may not want a full-time position? Tell them about GCA and the University-Model School.

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## FAQs

### **What about the Lower School?**

The Lower School will remain unchanged. We believe that GCA Lower School is successfully fulfilling the mission of the school, and we have no plans to change it. The UMS structure will affect only grades 7-12.

### **Why a MWF schedule instead of TWTh?**

- A MWF schedule is best for the student and the educator. It provides a simple rotation between school days and home days which helps students apply what has been learned and return the following day with questions or further input.
- The MWF schedule is also the common college schedule. It allows a student to prepare for a college educational structure while under the supervision of the parents.
- The MWF schedule also opens up the possibility for TTh classes for students in the higher grades. UMS schools generally offer some courses on TTh (as is consistent with a college schedule), and GCA will follow the precedent of other University-Model<sup>®</sup> Schools.

### **How can we maintain a distinctly classical method with part-time teachers?**

It is the job of the GCA administration and Board to hire teachers who understand the classical method in addition to their subject matter along with a Biblical worldview. We have the same criteria for the Upper School teachers that we have for Lower School teachers. Teachers GCA will undergo a rigorous hiring process including:

- reference checks
- background check
- being an active member of a local church which is in agreement with GCA's Statement of Faith
- signature agreeing to a Statement of Moral Integrity
- ability to be able to communicate with parents on a timely basis

### **How does this differ from a co-op?**

A UMS is not a co-op. It differs in several key ways.

- Grades are issued by GCA and not the homeschooling parent.
- Parents are not required to fulfill a certain number of on-site “volunteer hours” on class days.
- GCA provides extracurricular activities with plans to offer even more (full athletics program, debate, etc.)
- The GCA teacher does the lesson planning and provides these lesson plans to parents on a weekly basis.

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## **What about accreditation?**

- GCA plans to receive certification from NAUMS within 2 years and be accredited by AdvancedEd within 3 years. This will allow GCA graduates (who meet GCA's graduation requirements) to graduate from an accredited school.

## **What if I only want my child to take one or two classes?**

Students are allowed to enroll in as little as one University-Model School class. A full-time UMS student is one who is taking at least six, but part-time UMS students are welcome. Some homeschooling families choose to remain classified as a homeschooling family and use GCA's UMS program to supplement the course work being done at home.

## **Are students required to wear uniforms?**

GCA's daily dress code requires a navy blue, white or burgundy collared shirt with sleeves (e.g., polos, turtlenecks, oxfords) and khaki or navy blue slacks or shorts. Girls may also wear skirts, skorts, or jumpers. Part-time students are not required to purchase the dress uniform.