The Gunston School Bay Studies 2016

First and second year students begin with foundational learning experiences that provide direct contact with the Chesapeake Bay. Students then progress into immersive experiences with a specific curriculum focus. Third and fourth year students participate in seminar-style programs that reach beyond the Bay and connect with professional disciplines.

Foundation Trips (First and Second Year Students)

CBF's Fox Island— This program, led by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, takes students to study and stay in this local island's environment. Students then sail on the skipjack Rebecca Raurk to see the traditional means of dredging for oysters. To end the week, students participate in the preparation and delight of island seafood.

Echo Hill— How have boats been used to travel and fish the bay? What is the state of the Chester River watershed? With the past as perspective, students will explore Chesapeake's natural/human history and culture during a four night overnight stay on board the Annie D. and the skipjack Elsworth.

Tools of the Trade -- Watermen and their crafts -- Immerse yourself in the craft of boatbuilding through a unique partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. Students will spend their week at the Museum working in the boatyard and spending time out on the water in the Museum's collection of small crafts.

Ecology of the Bay -- Learn and experience the Chesapeake Bay through a variety of day trips in the region. Students will sail on CBF's skipjack, paddle with Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center, go on a research cruise with Washington College's Center for the Environment and Society, and complete a service project on Gunston's campus.

Experiential Trips (Second and Third Year Students)

Farm to Fork - Food and farming are critical parts of our local environment. This year's focus is on the farm to table trend. Farm to fork, pasture to plate, cow to cup… call it what you'd like, it's a consistent growing area of emphasis for chefs and restaurants. Be ready to tromp through fields and carry the harvest to the kitchen! Through this experience, students will focus on local farms and restaurants around the Chesapeake, and plant raised beds on campus to continue the movement at Gunston.

Sultana Projects— Get excited about this mixed days and overnights kayaking trip through several scenic, undeveloped tidal tributaries of our Chesapeake region. Students will feel fully immersed with nature while camping with the surrounding fauna and flora.

Mission to Chesapeake Bay -- Explore the Chesapeake Bay from above and from below. Students will design, build, and launch rockets with cameras to explore our environment from the sky. They will also have an opportunity to build ROVs (remotely operated vehicles) with sensors to explore the underwater environment. Together, these two projects introduce the students to studying the Chesapeake Bay environment using remote sensing devices.onboard.

History — Bay History- The Chesapeake Bay was at the center of early American history and played a central role in the underground railroad that helped many to escape slavery. Through walking tours, visits to museums, and guided kayaking tours we will encounter the Bay's history in Annapolis, Mt. Harmon Plantation, the Blackwater Refuge, and other locations.

Advanced Program Offerings (Third and Fourth Year Students)

Global Water Rights - A vital resource, an innate human right, and source of so much conflict. Investigate water resources locally, regionally, and globally through an overnight experience with Heifer International and day excursions locally. Field investigations include time to canoe and collect water samples in numerous rivers in our region.

Capturing a Sense of Place -- Pictures and Prose -- Explore how artists use a variety of mediums to convey the identity of the Chesapeake Bay Region. Activities include day trips to local natural areas, writing, photography, and drawing.

Islands Out of Time with CBF's Port Isobel— Offered in partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and based from Tangier Island, students will investigate the threat of sea level rise tied to climate change. From glacial rebound to the impact of a meteor strike millions of years ago to melting glaciers, factors affecting water levels in the Chesapeake Bay are complex and dynamic. Students will engage in hands-on investigations, real world simulations, and utilize digital mapping software to understand the impact of sea level change.

Field Science in the Amazon River Basin - This program offers students the opportunity to study an analogous system to the Chesapeake Bay. Miles of river, multiple governing bodies, and intensive resource use are just a few of the overlaps between the Chesapeake Bay watershed and the Amazon River watershed. Birding opportunities abound in the region and our partnership with Cornell University's Ornithology Lab allows students to complete meaningful citizen science research projects.

Philosophy of Nature -- American literary greats were inspired by their time in nature and created the transcendentalist movement. Spend three days immersed in nature as you backpack along the Appalachian Trail and go spelunking in the Chesapeake watershed karst region.