

---

---

# ❖ How One Became a "Normalite" in 1878 ❖

---

---



**San José State**  
**UNIVERSITY**

## “Conditions of Admission” From the 1878 - 1879 *Catalogue and Circular* for the California State Normal School

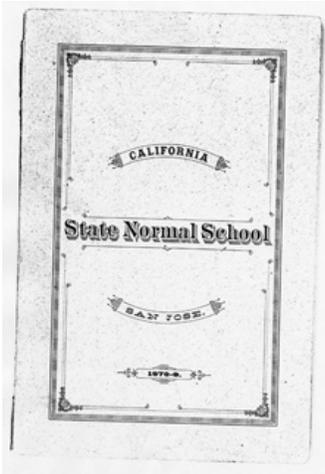
"For admission to the Junior Class, the following qualifications are requisite:

1. Age.—If ladies, sixteen; if gentlemen, seventeen years.
2. Certificates.—A valid certificate, State or County, of any grade.
3. Examinations.—A limited number, for the present, may be admitted on examination. They must present certificates of good moral character, and pass an examination upon the studies of the Junior year, such as would be required to obtain a third grade certificate. A certificate entitles the applicant to admission; but all pupils are examined, on entering the school, for classification. For the Junior Class, they are examined only in Spelling, Reading, Geography, Elements of Arithmetic, and Elements of Grammar. For entrance to Advanced Classes, in all the studies of the preceding classes.

Pupils who have passed through the Preparatory Class may, if in good bodily health, enter the Junior Class before becoming sixteen years of age, but, if they do so, will be charged a tuition fee of seventy-five cents per week until they are sixteen, as the law prescribes that "the School shall be free only to those who are sixteen years of age."

All pupils are examined monthly, and if they show either incapacity or unwillingness to do the required work, are assigned to lower classes, or excused from attendance.

None are admitted to the Senior Class under seventeen years of age.



Pupils may be admitted to the Junior, or Middle Classes, at any time during the year, but all applicants for admission to the Senior Class should present themselves at the beginning of the year, as none are graduated who have not been one year in attendance in the school. This is necessary in order to receive the necessary instruction in Methods of Teaching.

Applicants for admission are required to make and sign the following declaration: "I hereby declare that my purpose in entering the School is to fit myself for teaching, and that I intend to teach in the Public Schools of California;" and to make a deposit of FIVE DOLLARS, which will be refunded when they leave, if clear of the books of the Librarian, and if there are no charges for injury to reference books, building, or furniture.

Those who are unable to pass the preliminary examination for admission to the Normal School, can enter the Preparatory Class, until qualified. In this class a tuition is required.

As well be seen, the elementary course of study, comprising the studies of Junior and Middle Years, consists of those branches essential to qualify one to teach will in the common schools of the State, as well as to give the graduates a practical business education, with the requisite amount of training and culture so desirable in a teacher. To those completing this course, an elementary diploma and a second grade State certificate will be given, and it is be-

lieved that these will be considered, by District Boards, equivalent to a first grade county certificate in any county in the State.

The full course comprises the studies of the elementary course, and other subjects necessary to fit one to teach in the higher grades of schools, and to give a wider and more generous culture. Those completing this course will receive a full diploma and a first grade State certificate, perpetual, and requiring only the requisite experience to entitle the holder to an educational or life diploma.

Pupils may enter any course for which they are qualified, but a great advantage will be derived from taking the full elementary course, to secure that thoroughness of drill necessary to the skillful teacher.

NOTE.—Those who expect to complete the course should be prepared to meet an expense of about four dollars for an Herbarium and other appliances in Botany, in the Middle Year, and about the same amount for Chemical apparatus and Laboratory practice in the Senior Year."

---

---

# Sample Examination Questions to Help One Prepare to Enter the California State Normal School in 1879

## ARITHMETIC

1.  $\frac{2}{3}$  of a number is 12. What is  $\frac{7}{9}$  of the same number?
2. A boy gave half his apples to his brother, one-third of the remainder to his sister, and had twelve apples left. How many had he at first?

## GRAMMAR

3. Give three ways in which a noun may be in the objective case, with an example of each.
4. Give five uses of the comma.

## GEOGRAPHY

5. What is the diameter of the earth, expressed in miles?
6. What is longitude, and whence is it reckoned?

## PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY\*

7. Which has the more changeable climate, an island or a continent? Why?
8. What is the greatest depth at which living things are found in the ocean waters?

## NATURAL PHILOSOPHY\*

9. Name the force in nature that causes a stone to sink in water. The force that causes a balloon to rise in air. The force that causes the molecules of a solid to cling together. The force that causes glue to cling to wood.
10. Give the use of the fly-wheel, the governor, and the sliding valve in a steam engine.

\* Questions for admission to the Middle Class (the other questions were for entrance to the Junior Class).

*Note: An article in the San Francisco Chronicle of October 21, 1870 reporting on the October 20, 1870 ground-breaking ceremony at Washington Square refers to the Normal School students as "Normalites."*

## What did Students of the Normal School Study?

The 1878-1879 Normal School Catalogue notes the following courses of instruction:

Algebra	Household Science
Arithmetic	Lectures on Astronomy and Geology
Botany	Methods of Teaching
Chemical Lectures	Natural Philosophy
Chemistry	Observations in the Training School
Composition	Orthography
Criticism and English Literature	Penmanship
Drawing	Physical Geography
Elementary Algebra	Physiology
Elements of Natural Philosophy	Practice in the Training School
English Grammar	Reading
General Review of Elementary Studies	School Law and Constitution
Geometry	U.S. History
Higher Algebra	Vocal Music
	Zoology



Please Visit the  
SJSU History  
Web Site  
For More  
Information

<http://www.sjsu.edu/sjsuhistory/>

The artwork on this page is from the 1878-1879 Catalogue and Circular.

Credits:

SJSU Library Special Collections

SJSU History Webmaster