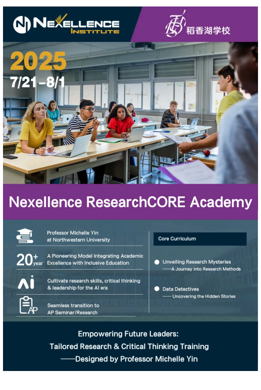

Nexellence Institute Overview

Nexellence Institute
A Pioneering Model Integrating Academic Excellence with Inclusive Education

Backed by Rigorous Academic Research

Founded by Professor Michelle Yin at Northwestern University, synthesizing 20+ years of groundbreaking research and practice in inclusive and gifted education.

Rooted in Dr. Yin' s decades of research, Nexellence Competency-Based Curriculum Framework is designed to empower all learners to develop a research mindset and core life skills through a scaffolded, interdisciplinary educational experience.

The teaching team is composed of seasoned experts in the field of education, balancing scholarly rigor with instructional innovation.

Transformative Educational Framework

01 Curriculum Architecture

Aligned with U.S. Common Core Standards and Advanced Placement (AP) requirements to guarantee academic competitiveness.

Rooted in Universal Design for Learning (UDL)—which ensures that courses are designed to meet the needs of diverse learners—its interdisciplinary curriculum spans science, technology, and the social sciences. The framework emphasizes flexibility, engagement, and personalized growth, breaking away from the constraints of traditional education to champion creativity and diverse ways of thinking.

02 Methodological Innovation

Our dynamic hybrid curriculum is meticulously designed to empower students with all abilities to unlock their full potential.

This comprehensive program integrates academic training in advanced research and data analytic skills, social-emotional learning, and life skill development to create a well-rounded educational experience. Both in-person and virtual options are available to accommodate different learning preferences and accessibility needs.

Nexellence Institute seamlessly integrates cutting-edge academic research with practical, learner-centered design, fostering confident researchers, ethical thinkers, and inclusive leaders of tomorrow.

More Info：
https://nexellence.org

Program Overview

Duration：
2-week immersive English program（Select one of the two courses，from July 21 to Aug 1）

Eligibility ：
Current enrolled outstanding Chinese students in Grades 7-10 (including neurodiverse learners)

Core Objectives:
- Cultivate research skills, critical thinking & leadership for the AI era
- Seamless transition to AP Seminar/Research

Unique Advantages:
- Designed by Prof. Michelle Yin (Northwestern University, 20+ years in inclusive education)
- For details: https://sites.northwestern.edu/michelleyin/
- Interdisciplinary curriculum: Executive function training + SEL + Data Science
- Project-based learning (PBL) in small groups：Each class is limited to 20 students

Core Curriculum

Course 1: Unveiling Research Mysteries——A Journey into Research Methods

Highlights

- **From Curiosity to Discovery:** Transform questions into structured research
- **Real-world Topics:** Focus on youth-related social, tech & education issues
- **Dual-mode Learning:** lectures + hands-on projects

Sample Projects

- How social media shapes Gen-Z self-identity?
- Campus belongingness across friend groups
- Urban teens' willingness for climate action

Outcomes

- Formulate researchable questions from real-world issues
- Master essential qualitative/quantitative research methodologies for AP Research
- Conduct ethically sound research using surveys interviews, observations and other methods
- Generate real-world impact through professional analysis and effective dissemination of research findings

Course 2: Data Detectives—— Uncovering the Hidden Stories

Highlights

- **Detective-style Learning:** Decode campus life data with Tableau/R/Python
- **3-Step Progress:** Data cleaning → Visualization → Storytelling
- **Data Storytelling Contest:** With expert feedback

Sample Projects

- Sleep duration vs. GPA correlation study
- Next popular club prediction mode
- How lunch choices affect afternoon focus?

Outcomes

- Master data visualization fundamentals
- Create interactive Tableau/R/Python dashboards
- Transform raw data into compelling stories
- Make evidence-based decisions

Faculty Team

Dr. Gizem Toska, PhD, is a counseling psychologist and educator with a strong background in psychological research, social-emotional learning, and talent development. She brings a deep commitment to fostering academic and personal growth in diverse learners. At Research CORE Summer Camp, she leads the Research Methods course, helping students build a strong foundation in how to ask meaningful questions, design studies, and think critically like young researchers. Her teaching is inquiry-based, accessible, and thoughtfully designed to support gifted and twice-exceptional learners through every step of the research process.

Dr. Toska has held several university faculty positions where she has lectured on relevant topics for learners of all ages. Her teaching and leadership have consistently emphasized student-centered learning, inclusive practices, and the development of core academic and emotional competencies—areas particularly relevant to supporting gifted and twice-exceptional students. Since 2024, she has been working with Dr. Yin to support the development of the Nexellence curriculum, with a particular focus on social-emotional learning and skill development for learners with diverse learning needs. Her approach blends academic rigor with emotional insight—ensuring that every student develops the mindset, confidence, and tools to succeed as a researcher and as a learner.

Dr. Burhan Ogut, PhD, is an adjunct professor at Northwestern University, a principal scientist and national expert in educational data science, with over twenty years of experience leading high-impact research projects that use big data, machine learning, and data visualization to improve educational outcomes. At the Nexellence Summer Camp, he brings this expertise directly to students, guiding them through hands-on learning with Tableau and Python to uncover insights, spot patterns, and tell compelling stories through data.

Dr. Ogut is also an adjunct professor at Northwestern University, where he teaches data science, machine learning, and natural language processing in policy analysis. His instruction bridges deep technical skill with real-world relevance, and he is known for making complex concepts accessible to all learners. At Nexellence, he designs inclusive, high-energy sessions where students explore real datasets and learn to think critically like data scientists—equipping them with skills they can apply far beyond the classroom.

Mrs. Meghan Hussey Lim is an inclusive education expert with over a decade of global experience advancing accessibility, equity, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in education. At the Nexellence Summer Camp, Professor Lim plays a critical role in embedding UDL principles across every aspect of the program—from course structure and instructional tools to classroom engagement strategies. Her work ensures that gifted, neurodiverse, and twice-exceptional students are supported to learn, thrive, and express their strengths throughout the summer experience.

Prior to joining Nexellence, Meghan served as the Inclusive Education Advisor at USAID, where she led the agency' s global task force to integrate UDL across all education initiatives. She has also worked with Special Olympics on youth and education inclusion and conducted research on autism education in China as a Fulbright Scholar. Her expertise shapes the heart of Research CORE' s approach: creating accessible, high-expectation learning environments where every student feels seen, valued, and empowered to succeed.

Daily Schedule

Session 1 (July 21-Aug 1)

Time	Activity	Format
9:00–10:30	Research Method	Lecture
10:30–12:00	Research Method	Group Activity
13:00–14:30	Data Storytelling	Lecture
14:30–16:00	Data Storytelling	Group Project

Session 2 (July 21-Aug 1)

Time	Activity	Format
9:00–10:30	Research Method	Group Project
10:30–12:00	Research Method	Lecture
13:00–14:30	Data Storytelling	Group Project
14:30–16:00	Data Storytelling	Lecture

Note：Lunch Time：12:00 - 13:00

Key Features

- **Western Pedagogy:** Lectures mirror Northwestern University seminar style.
- **Academic Advisory Sessions:** Prof. Michelle Yin serves as the program' s academic advisor, offering strategic guidance and instructions.
- **Interactive Rotations:** Alternating lectures/hands-on projects prevent fatigue.
- **Peer Learning:** Group projects foster teamwork (e.g., designing surveys together)
- **Admission Workshop of Top Research Institute:** Detailed introduction of top university applications and life in the U.S.

Why Choose Us?

- **For Gifted & Neurodiverse Learners：**
  Particularly targeted at gifted students, and inclusive of neurodiverse learners such as those with ADHD, dyslexia, and other students with different learning styles
- **College Prep：**
  A completion certificate co-stamped by the Institute and Tsinghua International School Daoxiang Lake， along with a recommendation letter from Dr.Yin (for outstanding students)
- **AP Capstone Ready**

Admission Requirements

・ A valid Chinese tourist visa
・ Standardized Test
Requirements (Meet either criterion)：
- MAP/PSAT scores ⩾ 80%
- TOEFL ⩾ 80

・ Alternative Materials：
- Two recommendation letters from core subject teachers
- Liberal arts portfolio (e.g., writing samples, awards) OR STEM portfolio (e.g., competition certificates, independent projects)

Note：Interviews will be required for Non-Test-Taken

Enrollment

Location:
Tsinghua International School Daoxiang Lake , No. 1 Ningcui Road, Haidian District, Beijing

Tsinghua International School Daoxiang Lake (referred to as "THISDL") is three schools in one, including Tsinghua International School, Daoxiang Lake School and THISDL Kindergarten. Located at No. 1 Ningcui Road, Haidian District, Beijing, THISDL is a school that offers both international and domestic education from kindergarten to 12th grade. The campus covers an area of 145 acres with a total construction area of 162,000 square meters. Established in 2020, the school currently has over 1,630 students, divided into the National Program Division, the Bilingual Division, and the International Division, meeting the needs of students regardless of their future goals. In addition, the school has unique programs catering to special talents in arts and sciences, including Music Innovation Program （MIP）, Art and Design Program (ADP), Science and Innovation Program (SIP) and the PEP "π" Scholar Athlete's Program. It is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, including a a 400-meter track; professional theater; multi-purpose hall; separate kindergarten facility; student dormitories; faculty living accommodations; several athletic facilities (including swimming pool, surfing center, basketball court, badminton court, fencing center, table tennis hall, tennis courts, indoor golf course, trampoline room, fitness center, spinning classroom, and more). Two libraries with nearly 100,000 books; fossil museum; specialized music, art, and dance classrooms; multiple science laboratories; cafeteria; and a cafe, which creates an excellent learning environment. For more information: http://www.thisdl.cn/en/

Fees:
Summer Camp Fee （Meals & Accommodation included): $4360 ($4098 for early bird before May 20th, 2025)

Enrollment is open globally
Registration Link:https://forms.gle/dZwSyQwufhbXJkTs9
Contact：nancyjiang@thisdl.edu.cn