



COLLEGE COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

CONSIDERATIONS FOR COURSE PLANNING

CHALLENGING COURSEWORK FOR YOU: WHAT SHOULD YOU CONSIDER?

To prepare yourself for college-level work, enroll in high school courses that challenge YOU! **This will look different for every student.** Some students are stronger in certain subjects over others, so play to your strengths when building your academic plan and considering whether or not you should take Honors, AP, or Dual Credit courses. **Getting a grade of C, D, or F in a harder course does not do you any favors with the colleges.**

Colleges do review your high school transcript against the types of courses Calvary Christian High School offers by using our school profile, but this does not mean you need to take every single Honors, AP, or dual credit course we offer. Conversely, colleges also don't like to see that a student has taken an "academic vacation,"

especially in the senior year. **Balance is key.** Please note the **pre-requisite requirements** for Honors, AP, and Dual Credit courses in the most current copy of the CCHS Course Description Catalog.

Remember, many colleges, especially those who do a "holistic" review, want to see that you're more than just a strong academic student. They like to get a sense of who you are by how you manage your time and priorities with other enriching activities (e.g. sports, fine arts, leadership, clubs, part-time jobs, community service, or summer internships). These activities are an important part of your own journey to self-discovery of your skills, abilities, and interests, and they tell colleges who you are and what is most important to you.

COLLEGE PREPARATORY CONSIDERATIONS BY SUBJECT AREA

NOTE: SEE THE CURRENT VERSION OF THE CCHS COURSE DESCRIPTION CATALOG FOR COURSE OPTIONS AND POLICIES.

ENGLISH (LANGUAGE ARTS)

English courses help improve your **writing skills, reading comprehension, and vocabulary.** Writing and analyzing thought will be an enormous part of your college experience.

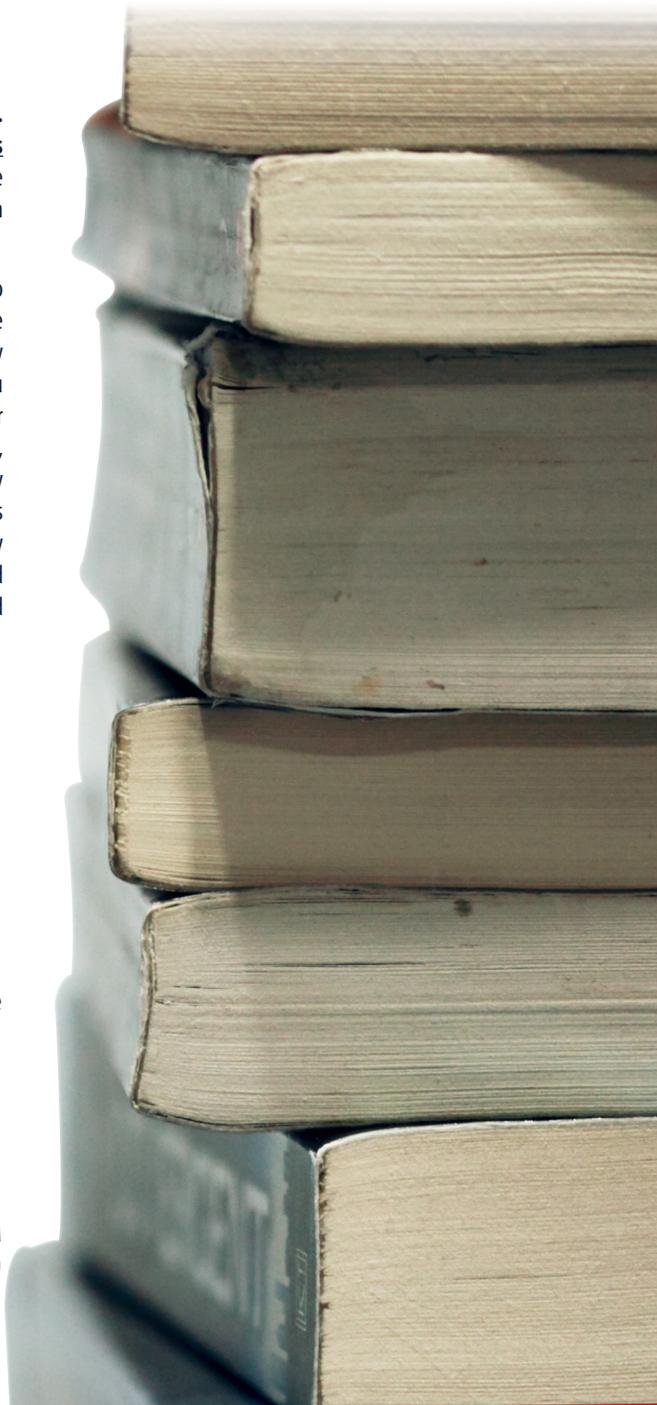
MATH

Algebra and Geometry help you succeed on college entrance exams and in college math classes. **The more competitive colleges** prefer four years of

math (or more if possible). You should take some combination of the following:

- Algebra I (required)
- Geometry (required)
- Algebra II (required)
- Upper-level Math of your choice

NOTE: Calculus is highly encouraged for STEM majors (**Science, Technology, Engineering, Math**) and Pre-Med programs.



IMPLICATIONS OF MATH SEQUENCE ON ACT/SAT

The order in which you complete your math sequence will have implications on when you take your ACT and SAT tests.

You should plan to start taking these college entrance tests *no later than the early spring of your junior year (February ACT and March SAT)*. In order to have the math foundation needed to be successful on these standardized assessments, you should complete Algebra I, Geometry, and at least first semester of Algebra II. The earliest a student should consider taking an ACT/SAT is at the end of the sophomore year, since a student should also have a minimum of two years of high school English prior to taking the ACT/SAT.

SCIENCE

Science teaches you how to think *analytically* and how to apply theories to reality. Colleges want to see that you've taken at least three years of *laboratory science* classes. A good combination includes a year of each of the following:

- Biology (required 9th grade)
- Chemistry (required 10th grade)
- Physics is an important course for *STEM* majors or Pre-Med programs.

NOTE: Other options for Science courses may be found in the Course Description Catalog.

Schools that are more competitive expect *four years of lab science courses*. Again, it is advisable that students take science in the senior year even if the minimum has been met.

SOCIAL STUDIES / HISTORY

Social Studies courses improve your understanding of local and world events by studying the cultures and history that helped shape them.

- World History – Sophomore Year (required at CCHS)
- United States History – Junior Year (required at CCHS)
- U.S. Government (first semester) – Senior Year (required at CCHS)
- Economics (second semester) – Senior Year (required at CCHS)

Competitive colleges will most likely want 4 years of a social science/history.

At CCHS, you may take Geography in your freshman year or take additional social science courses in 11th and 12th grade years.

WORLD LANGUAGES

World language study shows that you're willing to stretch beyond the basics. Colleges require at least *two years of study in the same world language* in sequential years. The more selective colleges will expect to see 3-4 years of a world language.

NOTE: While the majority of universities recognize ASL as a world language (including all in Florida), a very small number of colleges in the northeast, some in the Midwest, and the US Service Academies do not recognize ASL as a world language.

THE ARTS (1 CREDIT REQUIRED AT CCHS)

Research indicates that students who participate in the arts often do better in school and on standardized tests. The arts help you recognize patterns, learn to notice differences and similarities, and exercise your mind in unique ways.



SAMPLE COURSE SCHEDULES

BASED ON CCHS DIPLOMA TYPES-SEE THE PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK FOR DETAILS

ADVANCED DIPLOMA 30 TOTAL CREDITS/15 CREDITS AT HONORS OR ABOVE

| MIDDLE SCHOOL | FRESHMAN YEAR | SOPHOMORE YEAR | JUNIOR YEAR | SENIOR YEAR |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | English I (H) | English II Honors or Pre-AP | English III Honors AP English Language & Composition | English IV Honors DC Composition or AP Language & Composition AP English Literature & Composition |
| Algebra I Honors Algebra I Honors & Geometry Honors | Geometry Honors Algebra II Honors | Algebra II Honors Pre-Calculus Honors | Pre-Calculus Honors AP Calculus AB | Calculus Honors AP Calculus BC or AP Statistics |
| | Geography Honors or World History & Geography Pre-AP | World History Honors or AP | U.S. History Honors, Dual Credit, or AP | U.S. Government Honors or AP (first semester) Economics Honors or AP Macroeconomics (second semester) |
| | Biology Honors | Chemistry Honors | Physics Honors or AP Chemistry w/ Lab | Any Upper-Level Science Physics Honors, AP Chemistry w/ Lab, AP Biology or AP Environmental |
| | Spanish I or ASL I Honors | Spanish II or ASL II Honors | Spanish III or ASL III Honors | Spanish IV Honors or AP Spanish Language; ASL IV Honors |
| | Bible I | Bible II | Select from options | Select from options |
| | PE/Health | Fine/Performing Art Credit | Online Course Credit (.05 credit) Elective Credits (1.5 credits) | Academic Core Electives (1 credit) |
| TOTALS | 1-2 Credits | 7 Credits | 7 Credits | 8 Credits |

This type of schedule is not for the faint of heart. It might impress an admissions committee, although it would certainly not guarantee admission to any highly selective college (even with a perfect SAT or ACT). It would also consume a great amount of time, and in order to participate in other activities (sports, music, youth group, work, community service), you would have to exhibit natural academic acumen and possess outstanding time management skills. Also, it allows virtually no flexibility. As you can see, this schedule possibly allows room for only one free period in your day each year of high school; that is, unless you are planning to do fine/performing arts or take technology courses. You also would need to complete 1-2 high school courses in middle school to even make this schedule workable.

On average about 25% of CCHS seniors graduate with the Advanced Diploma, but it's up to you and your parents (the CCHS College Counseling team would

be happy to advise you). You would have to weigh the advantages against the disadvantages. If your sole purpose in taking such a schedule is to get into Harvard or another highly selective college, just remember that getting into those schools is a long shot no matter what curriculum you take – and, they also highly value quality leadership and service to the community.

HONORS DIPLOMA 28 TOTAL CREDITS/12 CREDITS AT HONORS OR ABOVE

| | MIDDLE SCHOOL | FRESHMAN YEAR | SOPHOMORE YEAR | JUNIOR YEAR | SENIOR YEAR |
|---------------|------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | English I (H) | English II (Honors or Pre-AP) | English III Honors | English IV Honors, Dual Credit Composition, or AP Language & Composition |
| | Algebra I Honors | Geometry Honors | Algebra II Honors | Pre-Calculus Honors | Calculus Honors |
| | | Geography Honors | World History Honors | U.S. History Honors | U.S. Government Honors (first semester) Economics Honors (second semester) |
| | | Biology Honors | Chemistry Honors | Physics Honors, Marine Science Honors or Anatomy Honors | Physics Honors, Marine Science Honors, or Anatomy Honors |
| | | Spanish I or ASL I Honors | Spanish II or ASL II Honors | | |
| | | Bible I | Bible II | Select from options | Select from options |
| | | PE/Health | Fine/Performing Art Credit | Online Course Credit (.05 credit); Elective Courses (1.5 credits) | Elective Course (1 credit) |
| TOTALS | 1 Credit | 7 Credits | 7 Credits | 7 Credits | 6 Credits |

This is a much more practical and flexible schedule for the well-rounded student. You can interchange the honors courses for either traditional courses or **AP/Dual Credit** courses depending on where your academic strengths lie. While you don't need to take all four years of history/social studies for the Honors diploma, you will want to be aware that some out-of-state colleges require four years as a minimum. If a student has a specific area of interest

(such as fine arts, computer science, or continuing with a world language), these courses could count as academic core elective credits. This sample curriculum has a lot of flexibility and is strong enough to be attractive to most colleges.



HONORS DIPLOMA

“ You can interchange the honors courses for either traditional courses or AP/Dual Credit courses depending on where your academic strengths lie.”

COLLEGE PREPARATORY DIPLOMA 26 TOTAL CREDITS

| MIDDLE SCHOOL | FRESHMAN YEAR | SOPHOMORE YEAR | JUNIOR YEAR | SENIOR YEAR |
|---------------|------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| | English I | English II | English III | English IV |
| | Algebra I | Geometry | Algebra II | Pre-Calculus |
| | | World History | U.S. History | U.S. Government (first semester) Economics (second semester) |
| | Biology | Chemistry | Marine Science or Anatomy | |
| | Spanish I; ASL I | Spanish II; ASL II | | |
| | Bible I | Bible II | Select from options | Select from options |
| | PE/Health | Fine/Performing Art Credit | Online Course Credit (.05 credit); Elective Courses (1.5 credits) | Elective Course (2 credits) |
| TOTALS | 6 Credits | 7 Credits | 7 Credits | 6 Credits |

The College Preparatory schedule is a good example of a schedule that is less demanding, but, combined with solid grades, can still prepare you for many colleges. Again, it gives you even more flexibility to perhaps increase the rigor in the subject areas you are gifted in but also allows you to explore other subject areas such as technology, music, or art.

Maybe you play several sports, work part-time, or have a leadership role that requires a lot of your time. Perhaps you already have a good idea of what

you'd like to do after graduation, or a specific college that you'd like to attend. Maybe you struggle in certain subjects, so you need margin in your schedule to focus your studies. Talk with your parents and a college counselor about these things, and together, you can work out a course schedule that fits you and can enable you to reach your objectives.



SOME ADVICE FOR YOU RE: AP AND DUAL CREDIT COURSES

DUAL CREDIT (or what is also called dual enrollment) refers to the practice of high school students taking college-level courses to earn credits toward fulfilling BOTH high school graduation requirements AND earning credits toward a college degree. CCHS offers several approved dual credit options. CCHS does not participate in the Early College options, however.

If you decide to take a dual credit course, please remember *you have just started your college transcript*. Students are required by the colleges to submit dual credit final college transcripts. If you perform well, that will be great for your college GPA. If, however, you do not perform well, then that grade becomes a permanent part of your college transcript no matter where you end up attending. Please follow the procedures outlined by the Academic Department for registering to take a Dual Credit course offered by CCHS.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT is a program provided by The College Board. AP courses are considered by colleges to be very rigorous and are taught at the college-level. College credit is available by taking the AP Exam for the particular subject and earning a score that a college deems acceptable for college credit. The AP scores range from a low of 1 to a high of 5. Submitting AP scores to colleges is optional. *Most colleges will*

accept a minimum score of a 3 for college credit; however, others may require a 4 or 5 for credit. There are a small number of colleges that, while they see AP as a great way to prepare for their college, will not accept AP credit. They desire that you take their version of these college courses (e.g. Harvard University). If you choose to take an AP course at CCHS, you will be required to take the AP Exam.

BENEFITS OF AP & DUAL ENROLLMENT

Taking college dual enrollment courses and/or Advanced Placement courses *may lead* to college credit and thereby advanced standing when you enroll in college. This means you may be able to move more quickly into interesting advanced classes. Additionally, you may free up enough time to pursue a double major or to study abroad without adding additional years to your college studies.

You will want to research the requirements various colleges have for AP and dual credit transfer work. Even if these types of courses don't get you advanced standing at college, you have done yourself a huge favor by preparing for the level of academic difficulty at these institutions and the colleges acknowledge that fact in the admissions review.

“

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. - Jeremiah 29:11

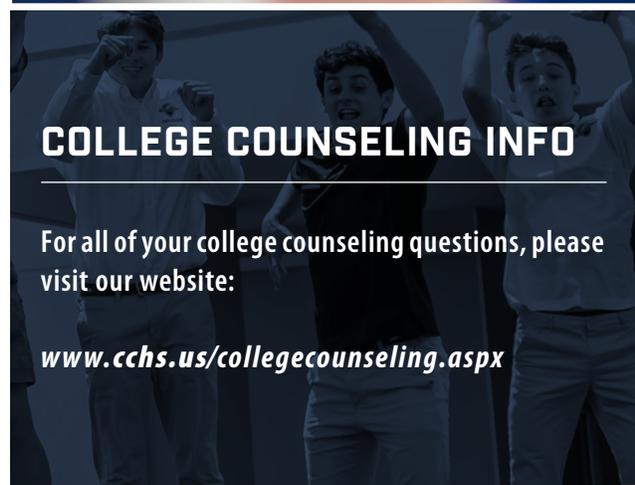
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COLLEGE COUNSELING INFO

For all of your college counseling questions, please visit our website:

www.cchs.us/collegecounseling.aspx





PERSONALIZED FOUR-YEAR ACADEMIC PLANNING FORM

Take a moment to map out your personal four-year academic plan.

| STUDENT'S NAME: _____ | | DIPLOMA: _____ | | | TOTAL CREDITS: | TOTAL HONORS / AP/DC CREDITS: |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| COURSES TAKEN / PLANNED | | | | | | |
| SUBJECT | HS CREDITS PRE 9 TH GRADE | 9 TH | 10 TH | 11 TH | 12 TH | |
| BIBLE ALL YEARS AT CCHS | | | | | | |
| ENGLISH ALL YEARS AT CCHS | | | | | | |
| MATH 4 OR MORE CREDITS | | | | | | |
| SCIENCE 3-4 CREDITS | | | | | | |
| SOCIAL STUDIES / HISTORY 3-4 CREDITS | | | | | | |
| WORLD LANGUAGE 2-3 CREDITS | | | | | | |
| HEALTH - 0.5 CREDIT | | | | | | |
| PE - 0.5 CREDIT OR 2 SEASONS OF SPORT MARCHING BAND | | | | | | |
| FINE ARTS 1 CREDIT | | | | | | |
| ONLINE COURSE 0.5 CREDIT | | | | | | |
| ADDITIONAL COURSES | | | | | | |
| TOTAL CREDITS | | | | | | |
| HONORS / AP / DC CREDITS | | | | | | |



SETTING SMART ACADEMIC GOALS FOR HIGH SCHOOL

DIRECTIONS: Imagine yourself walking across the stage at commencement as a graduate of CCHS. How do you want to be known? What would you like to have accomplished in your time here? You fulfill those ambitions with each decision you make on a daily basis, and students who actually write down daily, weekly, and more long-term goals are more likely to achieve those incremental goals that lead to long-term success.

GOAL WRITING REMINDERS: WHEN YOU WRITE GOALS THEY SHOULD BE “SMART” GOALS:

- Specific – What do you want to accomplish & what are the requirements?
- Measurable – How will you know when you have met your goal?
- Achievable - Do you have the necessary resources to accomplish you goals?
- Relevant – Why is this goal important to your future?
- Timely – How long will it take to reach your goal? When will you work on it?

A FEW EXAMPLES OF SMART GOALS

I will get an A on my next English paper by making sure I understand the assignment, letting my teacher read my draft, and completing 3 revisions before the due date.

I will setup a binder with folders for each class by the end of the first week of school and organize my binder once a week.

I will do 1 hour of Khan Academy each week to improve my understanding in areas of weakness identified on my PSAT.

NOW, WRITE AT LEAST 3 SMART GOALS FOR YOURSELF FOR EACH PERIOD OF TIME:

My top goals by graduation from high school are as follows:

- 1
- 2
- 3

My top goals by the end of this year are as follows:

- 1
- 2
- 3

My top goals by the end of the first semester are as follows:

- 1
- 2
- 3

What commitments will you need to make in order to reach your goals?