



COURSE PLANNING GUIDELINES

FROM THE COLLEGE COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

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 higher level course does not enhance your academic transcript.

Colleges 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 use 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 strengthen your **writing skills, reading comprehension, and vocabulary**. Writing and analyzing thought will be an enormous part of your college experience. CCHS requires an English class each year of attendance with a minimum of 4 high school credits.

MATH

CCHS requires a math class each year of attendance with a minimum of 4 credits in mathematics as a graduation requirement. **The more selective colleges prefer 4-6 years of math.** At a minimum, you should take the following:

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

NOTE: Calculus is highly encouraged for Engineering, Pre-Med, and other STEM majors. Statistics Honors is **NOT** recommended in junior year unless the student plans to take AP Statistics in senior year.



Implications for Standardized Testing

The sequence in which you complete your math courses will impact the timing of your ACT/SAT/CLT exams.

You should 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/CLT 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/CLT.

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**)
- 2 Upper Level Science Courses

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

Schools that are more selective expect 4-6 years of science. 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 10th grade**)
- United States History – Junior Year (**required 11th grade**)
- U.S. Government (first semester) – Senior Year (**required 12th grade**)
- Economics (second semester) – Senior Year (**required 12th grade**)

Selective 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 levels. **The more selective colleges will expect to see 3-4 levels of the same world language.**

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

THE ARTS (1 credit required)

Research indicates that students who participate in the arts often perform 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 Course Description Catalog for Details

Advanced Diploma 30 Total Credits/15 credits at Honors or Above

Review the Course Description Catalog to confirm prerequisites and explore upper-level course options in core subject areas. Consult your college counselor as needed.

MIDDLE SCHOOL	FRESHMAN YEAR	SOPHOMORE YEAR	JUNIOR YEAR	SENIOR YEAR
	English 1 Honors or English 1 Pre-AP	English 2 Honors or English 2 Pre-AP	English 3 Honors or AP English Language & Composition	<div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">English 4 Honors AP English Lit. & Composition AP English Language & Composition</div> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">AP English Lit. & Composition (recom.) or Dual Credit - See Pre-Req.</div>
Algebra 1 Honors Algebra 1 Honors & Geometry Honors	Geometry Honors Algebra 2 Honors	<div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 5px;">Algebra 2 Honors</div> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">Math for College Algebra, Pre-Calculus Honors or AP Pre-Calculus</div>	Pre-Calculus Honors, or AP Pre-Calculus Select from Upper-Level Math course options	Select from Upper-Level Math course options
	Geography Honors, World History & Geography Pre-AP, or AP Human Geography	World History Honors or AP	U.S. History Honors, Dual Credit, or AP	U.S. Government Honors, Dual Credit, or AP first semester Economics Honors, Dual Credit, or AP Macroeconomics second semester
	Biology Honors	Chemistry Honors	Select from Upper-Level Science course options	Select from Upper-Level Science course options
	World Language 1 Standard or Honors	World Language 2 Standard or Honors	World Language 3 Standard or Honors	World Language 4 Honors or AP (if available)
	Freshman Bible	Sophomore Bible	Junior Bible (Options)	Senior Bible (Options)
	PE and Health	Arts Credit	Elective .5 credit Personal Finance .5 credit	Academic Core Electives (1-2) Credits
1-2 Credits	7 Credits	7 Credits	8 Credits	7-8 Credits

This is a rigorous course progression. It might impress an admissions committee, although it would certainly not guarantee admission to any highly selective college (even with a perfect SAT/ACT/CLT). This schedule is best suited for a student who wishes to be highly challenged and has excellent time management skills.

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 is happy to advise you). You need to weigh the advantages against the disadvantages. If your sole purpose in taking such a schedule is to get into a highly selective college, remember, these types of universities also value quality leadership, meaningful service, a stellar essay, and perhaps, impressive standardized test scores.

Honors Diploma *28 Total Credits/12 credits at Honors or Above*

Review the Course Description Catalog to confirm prerequisites and explore upper-level course options in core subject areas. Consult your college counselor as needed.

MIDDLE SCHOOL	FRESHMAN YEAR	SOPHOMORE YEAR	JUNIOR YEAR	SENIOR YEAR
	English 1 Honors or English 1 Pre-AP	English 2 Honors or English 2 Pre-AP	English 3 Honors → or AP English Language & Composition →	English 4 Honors , AP Language & Composition, Dual Credit - See Pre-Req. AP English Lit. & Composition (recom.) or Dual Credit - See Pre-Req.
Algebra 1 Honors	Geometry Honors	Algebra 2 Honors	Math for College Algebra, Pre-Calculus Honors, or AP Pre-Calculus	Select from Upper-Level Math course options
	Geography Honors, World History & Geography Pre-AP, or AP Human Geography	World History Honors or AP	U.S. History Honors, Dual Credit, or AP	U.S. Government Honors or AP first semester Economics Honors, Dual Credit or AP Macroeconomics second semester
	Biology or Honors	Chemistry or Honors	Select from Upper-Level Science course options	Select from Upper-Level Science course options
	World Language 1 Standard or Honors	World Language 2 Standard or Honors	Optional World Language	Optional World Language
	Freshman Bible	Sophomore Bible	Junior Bible (Options)	Senior Bible (Options)
	PE and Health	Arts Credit	Elective .5 credit Personal Finance .5 credit	Academic Core Elective
1 Credit	7 Credits	7 Credits	7 Credits	6-7 Credits

This is a 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 upon 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 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*

Review the Course Description Catalog to confirm prerequisites and explore upper-level course options in core subject areas. Consult your college counselor as needed.

MIDDLE SCHOOL	FRESHMAN YEAR	SOPHOMORE YEAR	JUNIOR YEAR	SENIOR YEAR
	English 1 or Honors	English 2 or Honors	English 3 or Honors	English 4 or Honors
	Algebra 1 or Honors Pre AP	Geometry or Honors	Algebra 2 → Algebra 2 Honors →	Math for Data or Math for College Algebra Select from Upper-Level Math course options
	World Geography Honors <i>optional</i>	World History or Honors	U.S. History or Honors	U.S. Government or Honors <i>first semester</i> Economics or Honors <i>second semester</i>
	Biology or Honors	Chemistry or Honors	Select from Upper-Level Science course options	Select from Upper-Level Science course options <i>(Optional but recommended)</i>
	<i>Recommended to begin World Language in Sophomore Year</i>	World Language 1 Standard or Honors	World Language 2 Standard or Honors	Optional World Language
	Freshman Bible	Sophomore Bible	Junior Bible <i>(Options)</i>	Senior Bible <i>(Options)</i>
	Elective Credit	PE and Health and Art Credit	Elective <i>.5 credit</i> Personal Finance <i>.5 credit</i>	Academic Core Elective
	Minimum of 6 Credits	Minimum of 7 Credits	Minimum of 7 Credits	Minimum of 6 Credits



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

You might participate in multiple sports, work part-time, or hold a leadership position that demands a lot of your time. Discuss with your family and a college counselor how to balance these commitments with your academics. Together, you can develop a course plan that suits you and helps you achieve your goals.

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.

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 application. If you do not perform well, then that grade becomes a permanent part of your college transcript regardless where you attend. Please follow the procedures outlined in the Course Description Catalog 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. If you choose to take an AP course at CCHS, you will be required to take and pay for the AP Exam.

Benefits of AP & Dual Enrollment

Taking college dual enrollment courses and/or Advanced Placement courses **may lead** to college credit. This means you may be able to move more quickly into 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.

“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

COLLEGE COUNSELING INFO

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

www.cchs.us/academics/college-counseling-department.cfm



GPA WEIGHTING:

Honors & Pre-AP Courses:	0.5 pt
Advanced Placement & Dual Credit:	1.0 pt

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 <i>Pre 9th Grade</i>	9th	10th	11th	12th
Bible <i>All Years at CCHS</i>					
English <i>All Years at CCHS</i>					
Math <i>All Years at CCHS</i>					
Science <i>3-4 Credits</i>					
Social Studies/History <i>3-4 Credits</i>					
World Language <i>2-3 Credits</i>					
Health - 0.5 Credit					
PE - 0.5 Credit <i>Or 2 Seasons of Sport/Marching Band/Color Guard</i>					
Arts - 1 Credit					
Personal Finance - 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 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 your 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 digital folders on my iPad for each class by the end of the first week of school and organize my folders 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?