

## **ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

Students should refer all questions concerning the academic program to their advisors or Academic Dean Sharona Barzilay. Non-academic school issues should be referred to Dean of Students Steve Chabon, or Director of Service and Community-Based Learning Amanda Luckey.

After consultation with their advisors, students choose a course of study before each semester begins. Individual class schedules are prepared by Schedule Administrator Lisie Harlow and given to students before the opening day of each semester. Although we do our best to accommodate student course requests, students are not guaranteed their schedules, teachers, or electives of choice. At times, balancing of section sizes may necessitate schedule changes between semesters. No change of schedule can be made without the approval of the teachers concerned, the advisor, the Schedule Administrator, and, in some cases, the department head and the Academic Dean.

### ***Advisors***

The purpose of the advisor system is to guarantee each student regular, close, and supportive contact with a faculty or staff member. The advisor serves to give prompt and individualized attention to each advisee's questions, problems, and concerns, and to help advisees design programs that serve them well and keep them progressing toward graduation. Students and parents should contact advisors when questions arise about a student's performance, progress, or program. The Academic Dean assigns each new student an advisor. Returning students normally continue with their original advisor, but students may request a change in advisor by consulting with the Academic Dean. Parent-teacher conferences may be arranged by contacting the Academic Dean.

### ***Grading System and Reports***

The school year is divided into two semesters and grade reports are issued in the middle and at the end of each semester. Mid-term grades are progress reports only; unlike semester grades, they do not appear on student transcripts. For ninth-graders whose courses run the full year, all grades are progress reports until the end of the year, when a final grade is given for the entire course. In addition to the letter grade, grade reports include teachers' analysis and advice.

Grading is on the standard A through F basis. A grade of D- or better is passing; however, in foreign languages, mathematics, science, and English, a grade of C- or better must be attained before a student may advance to the next level. Students who end the year with a D+ or lower in one of these disciplines will be required to do approved summer work or to repeat the course. Summer work may be done through school-approved tutoring. Such work should be documented with a report by the tutor for the student's file. Students who receive grades of D+ or lower in any discipline are strongly encouraged to take graded, credit-earning courses at local high schools, colleges, or online. Doing so may help mitigate the impact of the D on their transcripts. Official transcripts from such courses should be sent to the school for placement in the student's file. To be eligible for student government and for interscholastic athletic competition students are expected to maintain a grade point average of C or better.

Assignments submitted late, after excused absences and teacher-granted extensions have been taken into account, will lose credit according to department and course policies specified in course descriptions. Special circumstances may force a student to take an "Incomplete." An incomplete must be replaced by a grade within a specified time established by agreement between teacher and student,

that completion date not normally to exceed August (for spring semester courses) or June (for fall semester courses) following the granting of the incomplete. Failure to complete work by the agreed-upon date will result in no credit for the missing work.

### ***Commendations***

Commendations are made and written by individual teachers and program directors and are based on student performance in a specific course (both yearlong and semester courses) or in a particular activity. Commendations are given for extraordinary participation in, contribution to, or achievement in a particular course or for extraordinary leadership of and/or contributions to activities outside the classroom. Any of these elements is sufficient, assuming that the student has not detracted from the course or activity or from their development in other areas. There is no minimum grade requirement for commendations. Teachers and program directors are strongly encouraged not to commend more than 15% of the students in a given course or activity. Copies of commendations are sent to families with end-of-semester grade reports.

### ***Cum Laude Society***

Established in 1906, this national honor society maintains chapters at schools whose academic standards it approves. Its aim is to recognize high scholarship and sound character in students of member schools. The College Prep chapter was installed in June 1973. Rules of the society limit membership to no more than 20% of any graduating class. Factors considered for election include the length of the student's enrollment in the school, the degree of challenge provided by the student's courses, and the grade point average.

### ***Graduation Requirements***

#### **Course Units**

English	4
Arts	1 (a)
World Languages	3 (through Level III) (b)
History	3 (c)
Math	3 (through Level III)
Science	3 (d)
Total Units Required	17

#### **Non---Credit Requirements**

Freshman Foundations	9th grade
Sophomore Health	Spring semester 10th grade
Intraterm	Four years (e)
Recreation, Health & Fitness (RHF)	Three years or four seasons of sports (f)

- (a) May be taken as four ¼-unit classes or two ¼-credit classes plus a ½-unit course. Participation in at least two arts disciplines is required. Please note that the University of California (UC) system requires that students complete a single arts course in a yearlong sequence.
- (b) In rare cases, this requirement may be met by two years each of two languages.
- (c) World Civilizations, Western Civilization, U.S. History.
- (d) Physics, Chemistry, Biology.

- (e) Students may petition, as either juniors or seniors, to substitute a college trip/tour for one year of Intraterm.
- (f) Sophomores, juniors and seniors may petition the Athletics Department to have an outside physical activity satisfy the RHF requirement.

Courses are offered and given credit on a semester or yearly basis. Each yearlong academic course receives one unit of credit. Semester academic courses earn  $\frac{1}{2}$  unit per semester, and most arts courses earn  $\frac{1}{4}$  unit per semester. A minimum of 17 units, distributed as outlined above, is required for graduation. Students entering College Prep after the ninth grade will normally receive credit for courses taken elsewhere. Work done in their previous schools will be considered in placing students at the appropriate level and in determining which specific departmental graduation requirements must be met at College Prep. In addition to credit-earning courses, students are required to take the non-credit courses/activities outlined above.

The minimum load a student may carry is four academic courses; a typical load includes five academic courses. A program with six academic courses is very heavy and almost never advisable. Such a load will be allowed only after consultation with and the support of a student's teachers, advisor, and the Academic Dean. When students request six academic classes, their advisor and current teachers are polled about the advisability of undertaking such a load. If one or more of those polled vetoes a student's request, the request is denied. Typically, only a handful of students each year are allowed six academic classes. In order to graduate, seniors must pass all courses in which they are enrolled in the spring semester.

Semester-long courses include English III and IV, language IV and V, Math Analysis & Introduction to Calculus, Applied Mathematics, Math V, AP Statistics, upper-level science courses, arts courses, and several electives offered from semester to semester. All other courses are offered, for credit, only on a yearlong basis.

A student who drops a course receives no credit for that course. In the case of a yearlong course, a student must successfully complete the year for any credit to be given.

### ***Recreation, Health & Fitness (RHF)***

As a graduation requirement, a student must participate in six semesters of the Recreation, Health and Fitness (RHF) program. This may be accomplished in one of the following ways:

1. participating in interscholastic athletics
2. participating in the dance program
3. participating in activity classes each week
4. weekend adventure trips offered several times per semester
5. OAR (Outside Athletics/Recreation) (10th – 12th grade only)

A detailed description of the RHF system can be accessed on the College Prep website.

### ***Senior Option***

As a means of addressing added demands placed on seniors by the many responsibilities associated with the college application process, the faculty offers the senior option, a way of helping seniors plan, make choices, and learn to manage their time independently. For fall semester courses only:

- Seniors are allowed either to (a) drop from each of their courses one assignment from a list of eligible assignments given out at the beginning of the semester, none of the assignments on the list to exceed 15-18% of the final grade. Typical assignments might include essays or tests. Or (b) to drop the lowest grade among eligible assessments.
- Seniors are required to notify teachers two days before they plan to exercise option (a) above.

### ***Standardized Testing***

Students take the PSAT in October of their junior year. Most students also take it, entirely for practice, in their sophomore year. Most students take either the ACT or SAT Reasoning Test in April or May of their junior year (a small handful take both); however, test-taking patterns can be variable, and it may sometimes make sense for a student to sit for these exams at another time. The SAT Subject Tests are typically taken in June of junior year, but can also be taken at various points, depending on the student's program. Please see the SAT Subject Test Guide and the college counseling website for more details. Detailed information about planning the sequence and timing of tests is also available from the student's advisor, the college counselors, and the Academic Dean. Students are strongly encouraged to seek planning advice from these sources before sitting for any of these exams.

### ***Dropped Courses***

Students wishing to drop courses should consult with their advisors and complete the necessary forms before the drop deadline (usually the fourth week of classes). If a course is dropped after the deadline, the course is entered on the student's transcript with the grade WP (Withdrawn Passing) or WF (Withdrawn Failing).

### ***Advanced Placement***

Advanced Placement examinations, national exams that may earn college credit, are generally the culmination of Advanced Placement courses. These courses include: language IV or above, Math V (Calculus AB or BC), AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Physics, AP Environmental Science, AP Music Theory, AP Statistics, and AP Studio Art. (These courses are not all taught every year.) These courses are taken primarily in the junior or senior year. There are, however, several exams that students may decide to take with some additional preparation outside of class. Examples are European History (at the end of the sophomore year), English Literature, and U.S. History (at the end of the junior year). AP exams are different from SAT Subject Tests and are not a required part of college applications. Students should see their college counselors with any questions about how AP exams relate to college admissions. Students are strongly encouraged to check with their teachers, faculty advisors, and the college counselors about the advisability of taking these exams.

### ***Independent Study***

Seniors who are strongly motivated to study areas and topics not covered by our curriculum may pursue independent study as one-quarter unit courses with the prior approval of a faculty sponsor, their advisors, the curriculum committee, and the Academic Dean. Independent Studies are not taken in lieu of "solid" courses. Any senior wishing to take on such a project should, in the semester before they expect to do the work, present a full proposal to the curriculum committee. The specific requirements will be set by the faculty sponsor in collaboration with the student. As a rule, the requirements will include substantial research, reading and writing, assessments, presentations and regular meetings with the sponsor. Seniors who want to do an independent project in the arts should consult with the head of the Arts Department for more specific information and requirements. Seniors are encouraged to take a standard five-solid course load. Seniors scheduled for the independent study

option must be scheduled for a minimum of four “solid” courses in addition to the independent study. Seniors may undertake only one independent study per semester.

### ***Intraterm***

Intraterm, which consists of special courses, field studies, community service, and trips during one week of the school year, provides students with opportunities for personal growth over and above those that the regular curriculum can accommodate. Depending on the particular courses that a student takes, there may be additional charges. Annual participation in Intraterm is required of all students. See the section on graduation requirements for more information.

### ***Learning Center***

The Learning Center is a resource for students interested in seeking extra academic help. The staff members are available several periods of each day for one-on-one work with students and review sessions at various times throughout the week. The Learning Center is also a place for students to receive assistance with study skills, learning strategies and organization/time-management. The Learning Center staff members oversee College Prep’s peer tutoring program. If a student works with an outside tutor, we ask that parents coordinate that tutoring with the teacher of the related subject, or with the Learning Center.

### ***Academic Probation***

A student with at least one grade of D+ or lower at the end of a grading period may be placed on academic probation, which may involve restrictions on participation in school activities, loss of open campus and other privileges, and/or regular consultations with teachers. In certain cases, an advisor may recommend that a student be placed on probation during a grading period. The status of a student on academic probation is reviewed after four weeks by the student’s advisor and the Academic Dean.

A student who receives two or more Ds at the end of a semester or who is repeatedly on academic or disciplinary probation may be asked to leave the school.