



TEXAS
ONLINE PREPARATORY
SCHOOL

Course Catalog
2017 - 2018

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English Courses

English I– 9th grade

ENG104: Pre-AP Literary Analysis and Composition I

This course challenges students to improve their written and oral communication skills, while strengthening their ability to understand and analyze literature in a variety of genres. Students enrolled in this course work on independent projects that enhance their skills and challenge them to consider complex ideas and apply the knowledge they have learned.

Literature: Students read a broad array of short stories, poetry, drama, novels, autobiographies, essays, and famous speeches. The course guides students in the close reading and critical analysis of classic works of literature, and helps them appreciate the texts and the contexts in which the works were written. Literary selections range from the Greek tragedy *Antigone* to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* to contemporary pieces by authors such as Annie Dillard and Maya Angelou.

Language Skills: Students broaden their composition skills by examining model essays in various genres by student and published writers. Through in-depth planning, organizing, drafting, revising, proofreading, and feedback, they hone their writing skills. Students build on their grammar, usage, and mechanics skills with in-depth study of sentence analysis and structure, agreement, and punctuation, reinforced by online activities. Student vocabularies are enhanced through the study of Greek and Latin root words, improving students' ability to decipher the meanings of new words.

Course Length: Two semesters

Prerequisites: Level 2 on 8th grade English EOC exams and completion of 8th grade English.

***All students will be assigned Pre-AP English 1. The Honors Project is a mandatory assignment for all students assigned to Pre-AP courses.**

English II– 10th grade

ENG204: Pre-AP Literary Analysis and Composition II

In this course, students build on existing literature and composition skills and move on to higher levels of sophistication. Students work on independent projects that enhance their skills and challenge them to consider complex ideas and apply the knowledge they have learned.

Literature: Students hone their skills of literary analysis by reading short stories, poetry, drama, novels, and works of nonfiction, both classic and modern. Authors include W. B. Yeats, Sara Teasdale, Langston Hughes, Robert Frost, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Kate Chopin, Amy Tan, Richard Rodriguez, and William Shakespeare. Students have a choice of novels and longer works to study, including works by Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, and Elie Wiesel.

Language Skills: In this course, students become more proficient writers and readers. In composition lessons, students analyze model essays from readers' and writers' perspectives, focusing on ideas and content, structure and organization, style, word choice, and tone. Students receive feedback during the writing process to help them work toward a polished final draft. In addition to writing formal essays, résumés, and business letters, students write and deliver a persuasive speech. Students expand their knowledge of grammar, usage, and mechanics through sentence analysis and structure, syntax, agreement, and conventions. Unit pretests identify skills to address more fully. Students strengthen their vocabularies through thematic units focused on word roots, suffixes and prefixes, context clues, and other important vocabulary-building strategies.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: Level 2 on Eng 1 EOC, Pre-AP Literary Analysis and Composition I (or equivalent) or ENG 103: Literary Analysis and Composition I.

****All students will be assigned Pre-AP English II. The Honors Project is a mandatory assignment for all students assigned to Pre-AP courses.**

English III– 11th grade

ENG304: Pre-AP American Literature

In this course, students read and analyze works of American literature from colonial to contemporary times, including poetry, short stories, novels, drama, and nonfiction. The literary works provide opportunities for critical writing, creative projects, and online discussions. Students develop vocabulary skills and refresh their knowledge of grammar, usage, and mechanics in preparation for standardized tests. Students enrolled in this challenging course will also complete independent projects that deepen their understanding of the themes and ideas presented in the curriculum.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: Level 2 on ENG 1 & ENG 2 EOCs, ENG204: Pre-AP Literary Analysis and Composition II (or equivalent) or ENG203: Literary Analysis and Composition II (or equivalent)

***All students will be assigned Honors American Literature. The Pre-AP Project is a mandatory assignment for all students assigned to Pre-AP courses.**

ENG500: AP English Language and Composition

Students learn to understand and analyze complex works by a variety of authors. They explore the richness of language, including syntax, imitation, word choice, and tone. They also learn composition style and process, starting with exploration, planning, and writing. This continues with editing, peer review, rewriting, polishing, and applying what they learn to academic, personal, and professional contexts. In this equivalent of an introductory college-level survey class, students prepare for the AP exam and for further study in communications, creative writing, journalism, literature, and composition.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: Recommended Level 2 in ENG 2 EOC and ENG 1 EOC. Recommended 80 or above in ENG204: Pre-AP Literary Analysis and Composition II or ENG 203: Literary Analysis and Composition II (or equivalent)

English IV– 12th grade

ENG404: Pre-AP British and World Literature

Students read selections from British and world literature in a loosely organized chronological framework. They analyze the themes, styles, and structures of these texts and make thematic connections among diverse authors, periods, and settings. Students work independently on many of their analyses and engage in creative collaboration with their peers. Students also practice test-taking skills for standardized assessments in critical reading and writing.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: Level 2 on ENG 1 & ENG 2 EOC. ENG304: Pre-AP American Literature (or equivalent)

***All students will be assigned Pre-AP British and World Literature. The Honors Project is a mandatory assignment for all students assigned to Pre-AP courses.**

ENG510: AP English IV - Literature and Composition

In this course, the equivalent of an introductory college-level survey class, students are immersed in novels, plays, poems, and short stories from various periods. Students read and write daily, using a variety of multimedia and interactive activities, interpretive writing assignments, and discussions. The course places special emphasis on reading comprehension, structural and critical analyses of written works, literary vocabulary, and recognizing and understanding literary devices. Students prepare for the AP Exam and for further study in creative writing, communications, journalism, literature, and composition.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: Recommended Level 2 on ENG 1 and ENG 2 EOC. Recommended to have average of 80 or above in ENG500: AP English Language and Composition, ENG304: Pre-AP American Literature (or equivalent)—the Honors Project is a Mandatory Assignment for Pre-AP Courses.

Math Courses

MTH124: Pre-AP Algebra I

Students develop algebraic fluency by learning the skills needed to solve equations and perform manipulations with numbers, variables, equations, and inequalities. They also learn concepts central to the abstraction and generalization that algebra makes possible. Topics include simplifying expressions involving variables, fractions, exponents, and radicals; working with integers, rational numbers, and irrational numbers; graphing and solving equations and inequalities; using factoring, formulas, and other techniques to solve quadratic and other polynomial equations; formulating valid mathematical arguments using various types of reasoning; and translating word problems into mathematical equations and then using the equations to solve the original problems. Compared to MTH122, this course has a more rigorous pace and more challenging assignments and assessments. It covers additional topics including translating functions, higher degree roots, and more complex factoring techniques.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: Passing of 8th grade math

***All students will be assigned Pre-AP Algebra 1. The Honors Project is a mandatory assignment for all students assigned to Pre-AP courses.**

MTH204: Pre-AP Geometry

Students work with advanced geometric concepts in various contexts. They build in-depth ideas of inductive and deductive reasoning, logic, concepts, and techniques of Euclidean plane and solid geometry. They also develop a sophisticated understanding of mathematical structure, method, and applications of Euclidean plane and solid geometry. Students use visualizations, spatial reasoning, and geometric modeling to solve problems. Topics of study include points, lines, and angles; triangles; right triangles; quadrilaterals and other polygons; circles; coordinate geometry; three-dimensional solids; geometric constructions; symmetry; the use of transformations; and non-Euclidean geometries. Students work on additional challenging assignments, assessments, and research projects.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: Level 2 in ALG 1 EOC, MTH124: Pre-AP Algebra I (or equivalent)

***All students will be assigned Pre-AP Geometry. The Honors Project is a mandatory assignment for all students assigned to Pre-AP courses.**

MTH307: Math Models

In this course, student use algebraic, graphical, and geometric reasoning to recognize patterns and structure, to model information, and to solve problems from various disciplines. Students use mathematical methods to model and solve real-life applied problems involving money, data, chance, patterns, music design, and science. Math models from algebra, geometry, probability, and statistics and connections among these are used to solve problems from a wide variety of advanced applications in both mathematical and nonmathematical situations.

Course Length: Two Semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: MTH123: Algebra I (or equivalent) and MTH203: Geometry (or equivalents)

Notes: This course can count as a 4th math but must be taken prior to Algebra II. (See graduation requirements)

MTH304: Pre-AP Algebra II

This course builds upon advanced algebraic concepts covered in Algebra I and prepares students for advanced-level courses. Students extend their knowledge and understanding by solving open-ended problems and thinking critically. Topics include functions and their graphs; quadratic functions; complex numbers, and advanced polynomial functions. Students are introduced to rational, radical, exponential, and logarithmic functions; sequences and series; probability; statistics; and conic sections. Students work on additional challenging assignments, assessments, and research projects.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: Level 2 on ALG 1 EOC, MTH124 Pre-AP Algebra I and MTH204 Pre-AP Geometry (or equivalent).

***All students will be assigned Pre-AP Algebra II. The Honors Project is a mandatory assignment for all students assigned to Pre-AP courses.**

MTH403: Pre-Calculus/Trigonometry

Pre-calculus weaves together previous study of algebra, geometry, and functions into a preparatory course for calculus. The course focuses on the mastery of critical skills and exposure to new skills necessary for success in subsequent math courses. Topics include linear, quadratic, exponential, logarithmic, radical, polynomial, and rational functions; systems of equations; and conic sections in the first semester. The second semester covers trigonometric ratios and functions; inverse trigonometric functions; applications of trigonometry, including vectors and laws of cosine and sine; polar functions and notation; and arithmetic of complex numbers. Cross-curricular connections are made throughout the course to calculus, art, history, and a variety of other fields related to mathematics.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: MTH 123: Algebra I, MTH203: Geometry and MTH303: Algebra II (or equivalents)

MTH500: AP Calculus AB (Third Party Course-Not Taught by TOPS Staff)

This course is the equivalent of an introductory college-level calculus course. Calculus helps scientists, engineers, and financial analysts understand the complex relationships behind real-world phenomena. Students learn to evaluate the soundness of proposed solutions and apply mathematical reasoning to real-world models. Students also learn to understand change geometrically and visually (by studying graphs of curves), analytically (by studying and working with mathematical formulas), numerically (by seeing patterns in sets of numbers), and verbally. Students prepare for the AP exam and further studies in science, engineering, and mathematics.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: Recommended average of 80 or above in MTH204: Pre-AP Geometry, MTH304: Pre-AP Algebra II, MTH403: Pre-Calculus/Trigonometry (or equivalents)

MTH510: AP Statistics

This course is the equivalent of an introductory college-level course. Statistics—the art of drawing conclusions from imperfect data and the science of real-world uncertainties—plays an important role in many fields. Students collect, analyze, graph, and interpret real-world data. They learn to design and analyze research studies by reviewing and evaluating examples from real research. Students prepare for the AP exam and for further study in science, sociology, medicine, engineering, political science, geography, and business.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: Recommended average of 80 or above in MTH304: Pre-AP Algebra II (or equivalent).

Science Courses

SCI204: Pre-AP Biology

This course provides students with a challenging honors-level biology curriculum, focusing on the chemistry of living things: the cell, genetics, evolution, the structure and function of living things, and ecology. The program consists of advanced online lessons including extensive animations, an associated reference book, collaborative explorations, and hands-on laboratory experiments students can conduct at home. Honors activities include debates, research papers, extended collaborative laboratories, and virtual laboratories. K₁₂ lab kits contain all lab materials that cannot easily be found in the home.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: Completion of middle school Life Science (or equivalent), Level 2 on 8th grade Science EOC

***All students will be assigned Pre-AP Biology. The Honors Project is a mandatory assignment for all students assigned to Pre-AP courses.**

SCI304: Pre-AP Chemistry

This advanced course gives students a solid basis to move on to more advanced courses. The challenging course surveys all key areas, including atomic structure, chemical bonding and reactions, solutions, stoichiometry, thermochemistry, organic chemistry, and nuclear chemistry, enhanced with challenging model problems and assessments. Students complete community-based written research projects, treat aspects of chemistry that require individual research and reporting, and participate in online threaded discussions. Instructions for hands-on labs are included. K₁₂ lab kits contain all lab materials that cannot easily be found in the home.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: Success in previous science course, MTH124 Pre-AP Algebra I (or equivalents)

***All students will be assigned Pre-AP Chemistry. The Honors Project is a mandatory assignment for all students assigned to Pre-AP courses.**

SCI404: Pre-AP Physics

This advanced course surveys all key areas: physical systems, measurement, kinematics, dynamics, momentum, energy, thermodynamics, waves, electricity, and magnetism, and introduces students to modern physics topics such as quantum theory and the atomic nucleus. Additional honors assignments include debates, research papers, extended collaborative laboratories, and virtual laboratories. The course gives a solid basis for moving on to more advanced college physics courses. The program consists of online instruction and related assessments, plus an associated problem-solving book and instructions for conducting hands-on laboratory experiments at home. K₁₂ lab kits contain all lab materials that cannot easily be found in the home.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: MTH304 Pre-AP Algebra II

***All students will be assigned Pre-AP Physics. The Honors Project is a mandatory assignment for all students assigned to Pre-AP courses.**

SCI010: Environmental Science (Accelerated)

This course surveys key topic areas including the application of scientific process to environmental analysis; ecology; energy flow; ecological structures; earth systems; and atmospheric, land, and water science. Topics also include the management of natural resources and analysis of private and governmental decisions involving the environment. Students explore actual case studies and conduct five hands-on, unit-long research activities, learning that political and private decisions about the environment and the use of resources require accurate application of scientific processes, including proper data collection and responsible conclusions.

Course Length: One Semester

Credit: 1.0

Grade Levels: 10-12

Prerequisites: Biology

Note: This course meets the 4th year science requirement for graduation.

SCI500: AP Biology

This course is the equivalent of an introductory college-level course. This course guides students to a deeper understanding of biological concepts including the diversity and unity of life, energy and the processes of life, homeostasis, and genetics. Students learn about regulation, communication, and signaling in living organisms, as well as interactions of biological systems. Students carry out a number of learning activities, including readings, interactive exercises, extension activities, hands-on and virtual laboratory experiments, and practice assessments. These activities are designed to help students gain an understanding of the science process and critical-thinking skills necessary to answer questions on the AP Biology Exam. The content aligns to the sequence of topics recommended by the College Board.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: Success in SCI204: Pre-AP Biology and/or teacher/school counselor recommendation

SCI510: AP Chemistry (Third Party Course-Not Taught by TOPS Staff)

Students solve chemical problems by using mathematical formulation principles and chemical calculations in addition to laboratory experiments. Students prepare for the AP exam. The course content aligns to the sequence of topics recommended by the College Board and to widely used textbooks.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: Success in SCI304: Pre-AP Chemistry and MTH304: Pre-AP Algebra II (or equivalents), and teacher/school counselor recommendation

Social Studies Courses

Geography AVT – TX

This course examines a broad range of geographical perspectives covering all of the major regions of the world. Students clearly see the similarities and differences among the regions as they explore the locations and physical characteristics, including absolute and relative location, climate, and significant geographical features. They look at each region from cultural, economic, and political perspectives, and closely examine the human impact on each region. Students take diagnostic tests that assess their current knowledge and generate individualized study plans, so students can focus on topics that need review. Audio readings and vocabulary lists in English and Spanish support reading comprehension.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

HST104: Pre-AP World History

In this challenging survey of world history from prehistoric to modern times, students focus in depth on the developments and events that have shaped civilization across time. The course is organized chronologically and, within broad eras, regionally. Lessons address developments in religion, philosophy, the arts, science and technology, and political history. The course also introduces geography concepts and skills within the context of the historical narrative. Online lessons and assessments complement *World History: Our Human Story*, a textbook written and published by K12. Students are challenged to consider topics in depth as they analyze primary sources and maps, create timelines, and complete other projects—practicing advanced historical thinking and writing skills as they explore the broad themes and big ideas of human history. Students complete an independent honors project each semester.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

***All students will be assigned Pre-AP World History. The Honors Project is a mandatory assignment for all students assigned to Pre-AP courses.**

HST560: AP World History

This course is the equivalent of an introductory college-level course. This course spans the Neolithic age to the present in a rigorous academic format organized by chronological periods and viewed through fundamental concepts and course themes. Students analyze the causes and processes of continuity and change across historical periods. Themes include human-environment interaction, cultures, expansion and conflict, political and social structures, and economic systems. In addition to mastering historical content, students cultivate historical thinking skills that involve crafting arguments based on evidence, identifying causation, comparing and supplying context for events and phenomenon, and developing historical interpretation.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: Recommended Average of 80 or above in previous history course.

HST314: Pre-AP Modern U.S. History

This course is a challenging full-year survey that provides students with a comprehensive view of American history from the industrial revolution of the late nineteenth century to recent events. Readings are drawn from K12's *The American Odyssey: A History of the United States*. Online lessons help students organize study, explore topics in depth, review in preparation for assessments, and practice advanced skills of historical thinking and analysis. Activities include analyzing primary sources and maps, creating timelines, completing projects and written assignments, and conducting independent research. Students complete independent projects each semester.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

***All students will be assigned Pre-AP Modern U.S. History. The Honors Project is a mandatory assignment for all students assigned to Pre-AP courses.**

HST403: U.S. Government and Politics

This course studies the history, organization, and functions of the United States government. Beginning with the Declaration of Independence and continuing through to the present day, students explore the relationship between individual Americans and our governing bodies. Students take a close look at the political culture of our country and gain insight into the challenges faced by citizens, elected government officials, political activists, and others. Students also learn about the roles of political parties, interest groups, the media, and the Supreme Court, and discuss their own views on current political issues.

Course Length: One semester

Credit: .5

Prerequisites: HST303: U.S. History (or equivalent) is recommended, but not required

HST510: AP U.S. Government and Politics (Third Party Course-Not Taught by TOPS Staff)

This course is the equivalent of an introductory college-level course. Students explore the operations and structure of the U.S. government and the behavior of the electorate and politicians. Students gain the analytical perspective necessary to evaluate political data, hypotheses, concepts, opinions, and processes and learn how to gather data about political behavior and develop their own theoretical analysis of American politics. Students also build the skills they need to examine general propositions about government and politics, and to analyze specific relationships between political, social, and economic institutions. Students prepare for the AP exam and for further study in political science, law, education, business, and history.

Course Length: One semester/Offered Spring Semester Only

Credit: .5

Prerequisites: Recommended Level 2 on US History EOC and average of 80 or above in HST304: Pre-AP U.S. History (or equivalent)

HST413: U.S. and Global Economics

In this course on economic principles, students explore choices they face as producers, consumers, investors, and taxpayers. Students apply what they learn to real-world simulation problems. Topics of study include markets from historic and contemporary perspectives; supply and demand; theories of early economic philosophers such as Adam Smith and David Ricardo; theories of value; money (what it is, how it evolved, the role of banks, investment houses, and the Federal Reserve); Keynesian economics; how capitalism functions, focusing on productivity, wages, investment, and growth; issues of capitalism, such as unemployment, inflation, and the national debt; and a survey of markets in such areas as China, Europe, and the Middle East.

Course Length: One semester

Credit: .5

Prerequisites: HST404: U.S. Government and Politics (or equivalent) is recommended, but not required

HST520: AP Macroeconomics (Third Party Course-Not Taught by TOPS Staff)

This course is the equivalent of an introductory college-level course. Students learn why and how the world economy can change from month to month, how to identify trends in our economy, and how to use those trends to develop performance measures and predictors of economic growth or decline. Students also examine how individuals and institutions are influenced by employment rates, government spending, inflation, taxes, and production. Students prepare for the AP exam and for further study in business, political science, and history.

Course Length: One semester

Credit: .5

Prerequisites: Recommended average of 80 or above in MTH304: Pre-AP Algebra II (or equivalent)

HST540: AP Psychology

This course is the equivalent of an introductory college-level course. Students receive an overview of current psychological research methods and theories. They explore the therapies used by professional counselors and clinical psychologists, and examine the reasons for normal human reactions: how people learn and think, the process of human development and human aggression, altruism, intimacy, and self-reflection. Students prepare for the AP Exam and for further studies in psychology and life sciences.

Course Length: One semester/Offered Spring Semester Only

Credit: .5

Prerequisites: None

Foreign Language

WLG100: Spanish I

Students begin their introduction to Spanish with fundamental building blocks in four key areas of world language study: listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing. Students are initially trained to recognize key sounds and basic vocabulary, not only in written form but also through ear training that leads quickly to oral production. Vocabulary and grammar topics are introduced in an ongoing adventure story that prompts students to use skills from all four language-learning areas. Students learn fundamental grammar as embedded in authentic spoken language. Cultural information covers major Spanish-speaking areas in Europe and the Americas. Engaging graphics, videos, and games keep students interested, and make learning languages exciting.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: None

Note: Students who have already succeeded in the high school level Spanish I should enroll in Spanish II rather than in Spanish I.

WLG110: French I (Third Party Course-Not Taught by TOPS Staff)

Students begin their introduction to French by focusing on the four key areas of foreign language study: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The course represents an ideal blend of language learning pedagogy and online learning. Each unit consists of a new vocabulary theme and grammar concept, reading and listening comprehension activities, speaking and writing activities, multimedia cultural presentations, and interactive activities and practices which reinforce vocabulary and grammar. There is a strong emphasis on providing context and conversational examples for the language concepts presented in each unit. Students should expect to be actively engaged in their own language learning, become familiar with common vocabulary terms and phrases, comprehend a wide range of grammar patterns, participate in simple conversations and respond appropriately to basic conversational prompts, analyze and compare cultural practices, products, and perspectives of various French-speaking countries, and take frequent assessments where their language progression can be monitored. The course has been carefully aligned to national standards as set forth by ACTFL (the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages).

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: None

Note: Students who have already succeeded in the high school level French I should enroll in French II rather than in French I.

WLG200: Spanish II

In this continuing introduction to Spanish, students deepen their focus on four key skills in world language acquisition: listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing. A continuing storyline introduces and reinforces new vocabulary, while activities prompt students to analyze meaning from context, and then to reproduce new vocabulary in real-life oral expression. Additional verb tenses and idiomatic expressions are also introduced. As in Spanish I, students learn grammar through supplemental texts that supply traditional charts, tables, and explanations. Cultural information addresses Spanish as it is used around the globe. Engaging graphics, videos, and games keep students interested, and make learning languages exciting.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: WLG100: Spanish I

WLG210: French II (Third Party Course-Not Taught by TOPS Staff)

Students continue their study of French by further expanding their knowledge of key vocabulary topics and grammar concepts. Students not only begin to comprehend listening and reading passages more fully, but they also start to express themselves more meaningfully in both speaking and writing. Each unit consists of a new vocabulary theme and grammar concept, reading and listening comprehension activities, speaking and writing activities, multimedia cultural presentations, and interactive activities and practices which reinforce vocabulary and grammar. There is a strong emphasis on providing context and conversational examples for the language concepts presented in each unit. Students should expect to be actively engaged in their own language learning, understand common vocabulary terms and phrases, use a wide range of grammar patterns in their speaking and writing, participate in conversations and respond appropriately to conversational prompts, analyze and compare cultural practices, products, and perspectives of various

French-speaking countries, and take frequent assessments where their language progression can be monitored. By semester 2, the course is conducted almost entirely in French. The course has been carefully aligned to national standards as set forth by ACTFL (the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages).

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: WLG110: French I

WLG300: Spanish III

Intermediate Spanish students who have a strong base of vocabulary, speaking, and listening skills reach a new level of mastery and fluency in this course. Through games and compelling stories, students learn advanced grammar and vocabulary, with an emphasis on correct accents and comprehension of real-world native speech. Error-recognition technology helps students eliminate common mistakes from their speaking and writing. Engaging graphics, videos, and games keep students interested, and make learning languages exciting.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: WLG200: Spanish II (or equivalent)

WLG310: French III (Third Party Course-Not Taught by TOPS Staff)

Students further deepen their understanding of French by focusing on the three modes of communication: interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational. Each unit consists of a variety of activities which teach the students how to understand more difficult written and spoken passages, to communicate with others through informal speaking and writing interactions, and to express their thoughts and opinions in both formal and informal spoken and written contexts. Students should expect to be actively engaged in their own language learning, use correct vocabulary terms and phrases naturally, incorporate a wide range of grammar concepts consistently and correctly while speaking and writing, participate in conversations covering a wide range of topics, respond appropriately to conversational prompts, analyze and compare cultural practices, products, and perspectives of various French-speaking countries, read and analyze important pieces of literature, and take frequent assessments where their language progression can be monitored. The course is conducted almost entirely in French. The course has been carefully aligned to national standards as set forth by ACTFL (the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages).

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: WLG210: French II (or equivalent)

Fine Arts

Fine Art (Art I credit)

This course combines art history, appreciation, and analysis, while engaging students in hands-on creative projects. Lessons introduce major periods and movements in art history while focusing on masterworks and the intellectual, technical, and creative processes behind those works. Studio lessons provide opportunities for drawing, painting, sculpting, and other creative endeavors.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: None

Music Appreciation

This course introduces students to the elements, instrumentation, and historical periods of music. Students will learn significance of surroundings and time periods and how they both influenced the music of the day. Students will listen to and evaluate several types of music, and will be assessed through projects, presentations, and exams on the knowledge and understanding of music.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: None

Physical Education

Physical Education AVT – TX

This course combines online instructional guidance with student participation in weekly cardiovascular, aerobic, muscle-toning, and other activities. Students fulfill course requirements by keeping weekly logs of their physical activity. The course promotes the value of lifetime physical activity and includes instruction in injury prevention, nutrition and diet, and stress management.

Course Length: One or Two semesters

Credit: .5 or 1.0

Prerequisites: None

Speech

ENGo20: Public Speaking - TX

Students are introduced to public speaking as an important component of their academic, work, and social lives. They study public speaking occasions and develop skills as fair and critical listeners, or consumers, of spoken information and persuasion. Students study types of speeches (informative, persuasive, dramatic, and special occasion), read and listen to models of speeches, and prepare and present their own speeches to diverse audiences. Students learn to choose speaking topics and adapt them for specific audiences, to research and support their ideas, and to benefit from listener feedback. They study how to incorporate well-designed visual and multimedia aids in presentations and how to maintain a credible presence in the digital world. Students also learn about the ethics of public speaking and about techniques for managing communication anxiety.

Course Length: One semester

Grade Levels: 10-12

Credit: .5

Electives

ENG030-AVT: Creative Writing

Students create original essays, poems, and short stories in this course, which uses two textbooks and focuses on the four-step process writing model. They read professionally written forms of creative writing as models and then integrate their impressions of these works with their personal life experiences as they compose their own writing projects. Students are encouraged to write about topics they find engaging as they practice writing on the following themes: narration, definition, process analysis, cause and effect, and comparison/contrast. After students turn in each assignment, the teacher supplies detailed suggestions for revision. This feedback helps students learn how to improve their self-expression and self-editing skills.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: .5 /1.0

Prerequisites: None

Grade Levels: 10-12

Note: This course only counts as the 4th English for certain endorsements in the Foundation Graduation Plan

OTH040: Reaching Your Academic Potential - TX

Students learn essential academic skills within the context of their learning style, individual learning environment, and long-term goals. This course helps students develop habits for more successful reading, writing, studying, communication, collaboration, time management, and concentration. It also provides insights into how the brain works when they are learning, and ways to maximize its potential.

Course Length: One semester

Credit: .5

Prerequisites: None

Grade Levels: 9-12

OTH010: Skills for Health - TX

This course focuses on important skills and knowledge in nutrition; physical activity; the dangers of substance use and abuse; injury prevention and safety; growth and development; and personal health, environmental conservation, and community health resources. The curriculum is designed around topics and situations that engage student discussion and motivate students to analyze internal and external influences on their health-related decisions. The course helps students build the skills they need to protect, enhance, and promote their own health and the health of others.

Course Length: One semester

Credit: .5

Prerequisites: None

Grade Levels: 9-12

BUS030: Personal Finance - TX

In this introductory finance course, students learn basic principles of economics and best practices for managing their own finances. Students learn core skills in creating budgets, developing long-term financial plans to meet their goals, and making responsible choices about income and expenses. They gain a deeper understanding of capitalism and other systems so they can better understand their role in the economy of society. Students are inspired by experiences of finance professionals and stories of everyday people and the choices they make to manage their money.

Course Length: Two semesters

Credit: 1

Prerequisites: None

Grade Levels: 9-12

HST010-APL: Anthropology

This course presents a behavioral science that focuses on the study of humanity and culture. Students learn the foundations of the five main branches of anthropology including physical, social, linguistic, archeological, and cultural. They are provided the opportunity to apply their observational skills to the real-life study of cultures in the United States and around the world.

Course Length: One semester

Credit: .5

Prerequisites: None

Grade Levels: 10-12

Family and Consumer Science

In this course, students develop skills and knowledge to help them transition into adult roles within the family. They learn to make wise consumer choices, prepare nutritious meals, contribute effectively as part of a team, manage a household budget, and balance roles of work and family. They gain an appreciation for the responsibilities of family members throughout the life-span and the contributions to the well-being of the family and the community.

Course Length: Two Semesters

Credit: 1

Prerequisites: None

Grade Levels: 9-12

Contemporary World Issues

In this course, students will compare the geography, governments, economies, and cultures of the world. Emphasis will be placed on learning about the civics, politics, economics, structures, processes and policies of the United States and then comparing them with those of the international community. Students will use what they know and learn about the United States and the world to analyze current events and contemporary issues. Reasoning and research skills will be applied to the content throughout the course.

Course Length: Two Semesters

Credit: .5/1.0

Prerequisites: None

Grade Levels: 10-12

Mythology and Folklore

Mighty heroes. Angry gods and goddesses. Cunning animals. Mythology and folklore have been used since the first people gathered around the fire as a way to make sense of humankind and our world. This course focuses on the many myths and legends woven into cultures around the world. Starting with an overview of mythology and the many kinds of folklore, the student will journey with ancient heroes as they slay dragons and outwit the gods, follow fearless warrior women into battle and watch as clever animals outwit those stronger than themselves. They will explore the universality and social significance of myths and folklore, and see how they are still used to shape society today.

Course Length: One Semester

Credit: .5

Prerequisites: None

Grade Levels: 10-12

Introduction to Marketing

Students find out what it takes to market a product or service in today's fast-paced business environment. They learn the fundamentals of marketing using real-world business examples. They learn about buyer behavior, marketing research principles, demand analysis, distribution, financing, pricing, and product management.

Course Length: Two Semester

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: None

Grade Levels: 9-12

Web Design

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the essentials of Web design, from planning page layouts to publishing a complete site to the Web. Students learn how to use HTML to design their own Web pages. The course covers basic HTML tags for formatting text, as well as more advanced tags. Through real-world design scenarios and hands-on projects, students create compelling, usable websites using the latest suite of free tools.

Course Length: Two Semesters

Credit: 1.0

Prerequisites: None

Grade Levels: 9-12

Supplemental Courses

ORNo10: Online Learning

The Online Learning course explains to students how the K₁₂ high school program works, and provides tips on successful online learning. Students are introduced to the online tools they will use during their high school experience, including the Learning Management System that delivers course assignments. Students take part in online discussions and practice submitting computer-scored assessments and other assignments to teachers. Lifelong learning skills such as time management and study habits are also covered. By the end of the course, students will be fully prepared to begin their K₁₂ high school courses.

Course Length: 6–8 hours

Credit: This course does not count towards requirements for graduation.

Prerequisites: None

Note: Automatically placed on schedule.

Graduation Plan
Students Entering 9th grade 2013-2014 and earlier**

****You have the option to remain on your previous graduation plan or switch to the new state Foundations graduation plan (see page 26-32 for those graduation requirements). Below are the graduation requirements for the plan you are currently on:**

Subject Area	Recommended Graduation Plan		Distinguished Graduation Plan**	
		Credits		Credits
English	English I, II, III, IV	4	English I, II, III, IV	4
Math	Algebra I Geometry Algebra II Precalculus Math Models may be taken in place of Precalculus but it must be successfully completed prior to taking Algebra II	4	Algebra I Geometry Algebra II Precalculus Math Models may not be used as a 4 th math	4
Science	Biology Chemistry Physics IPC may be taken as a 4 th science but it must be completed before taking Chemistry & Physics If not taking IPC, the 4 th credit may come from Forensic Science, Environmental Science, Astronomy, AP Biology, AP Chemistry, or AP Physics	4	Biology Chemistry Physics IPC may not be used as a science credit The 4 th credit may be selected from Forensic Science, Environmental Science, AP Biology, AP Chemistry, or AP Physics	4
Social Studies	World Geography World History US History Government (1/2 credit)	3 ½	World Geography World History US History Government (1/2 credit)	3 ½
Economics	Economics	½	Economics	½
Foreign Language	2 years of SAME language	2	3 years of SAME language	3
Physical Education	PE Foundations	1	PE Foundations	1
Speech	Communication Applications	½	Communication Applications	½
Fine Arts	Fine Arts, Music Appreciation, or AP Art History	1	Fine Arts, Music Appreciation, or AP Art History	1
Electives	See current course listing for available TOPS electives	5½	See current course listing for available TOPS electives	4½
Total Credits Required for Graduation		26	**Students graduating on this plan must also complete 4 advanced measures	26

Foundations Graduation Plan
Students Entering 9th grade 2014-2015 AND students already in high school

Subject Area	Foundations Plan with Arts & Humanities endorsement, Social Studies	
		Credits
English	English I, II, III, 4 th advanced English course Advanced English courses: English 4, Creative Writing	4
Math	Algebra I Geometry 2 Advanced math courses Advanced math courses: Math Models, Algebra 2, Precalculus, AP Calculus, AP Statistics **Math Models must be taken before Algebra 2 to count as an advanced math course	4
Science	Biology IPC (Physical Science) or advanced science course Advanced science course #3 Advanced science course #4** Advanced science courses: Chemistry, Physics, Environmental Science, Forensic Science, Astronomy, AP Biology, AP Physics, AP Chemistry **With parent permission, students may substitute any TEKS based course in the following content areas for the science requirement: ELA and Reading, Social Studies, Economics, LOTE and Fine Arts	4**
Social Studies	World Geography <u>OR</u> World History US History Government (1/2 credit) 2.0 credits from additional social studies courses Additional social studies courses: World Geography or World History (whichever you have not taken yet), anthropology, psychology, sociology, AP Psychology	4 ½
Economics	Economics	½
Foreign Language	2 years of SAME language	2
Speech	Communication Applications	½
Physical Education	PE Foundations	1
Fine Arts	Fine Arts, Music Appreciation, or AP Art History	1
Electives	See current course listing for available TOPS electives	4 ½
Total Credits Required for Graduation		26

A student may earn an arts and humanities endorsement by completing foundation and general endorsement requirements and:

- (A) A total of five social studies courses
- (B) four levels of the same language in a language other than English
- (C) two levels of the same language in a language other than English and two levels of a different language in a language other than English

**A student may earn a performance acknowledgment for outstanding performance (1) in a dual credit course, (2) on an AP test,

Subject Area	Foundations Plan with Arts & Humanities endorsement, Foreign Language	
		Credits
English	English I, II, III, 4 th advanced English course Advanced English courses: English 4, Creative Writing	4
Math	Algebra I Geometry 2 Advanced math courses Advanced math courses: Math Models, Algebra 2, Precalculus, AP Calculus, AP Statistics	4
Science	Biology IPC (Physical Science) or advanced science course Advanced science course #3 Advanced science course #4** Advanced science courses: Chemistry, Physics, Environmental Science, Forensic Science, Astronomy, AP Biology, AP Physics, AP Chemistry **With parent permission, students may substitute any TEKS based course in the following content areas for the science requirement: ELA and Reading, Social Studies, Economics, LOTE and Fine Arts	4**
Social Studies	World Geography <u>OR</u> World History US History Government (1/2 credit)	2 ½
Economics	Economics	½
Foreign Language	All 4 credits from SAME language <OR> 2 credits from language #1 + 2 credits from language #2	4
Physical Education	PE Foundations	1
Speech	Communication Applications	½
Fine Arts	Fine Arts, Music Appreciation, or AP Art History	1
Electives	See current course listing for available TOPS electives	6 ½
Total Credits Required for Graduation		26

A student may earn an arts and humanities endorsement by completing foundation and general endorsement requirements and:

- (A) A total of five social studies courses
- (B) four levels of the same language in a language other than English
- (C) two levels of the same language in a language other than English and two levels of a different language in a language other than English
- (D)

**A student may earn a performance acknowledgment for outstanding performance (1) in a dual credit course, (2) on an AP test,

(3) on the PSAT, the ACT-Plan, the SAT, or the ACT

Subject Area	Foundations Plan with STEM endorsement, Math	
		Credits
English	English I, II, III, 4 th advanced English course Advanced English courses: English 4, Creative Writing	4
Math	Algebra I Geometry Algebra 2 Precalculus AP Calculus OR AP Statistics	5
Science	Biology IPC or advanced science course Chemistry Physics Advanced science courses: Environmental Science, Forensic Science, Astronomy, AP Biology, AP Physics, AP Chemistry	4
Social Studies	World Geography <u>OR</u> World History US History Government (1/2 credit)	2 ½
Economics	Economics	½
Foreign Language	2 years of SAME language	2
Physical Education	PE Foundations	1
Speech	Communication Applications	½
Fine Arts	Fine Arts, Music Appreciation, or AP Art History	1
Electives	See current course listing for available TOPS electives	5 ½
Total Credits Required for Graduation		26

A student may earn a STEM endorsement by completing foundation and general endorsement requirements including Algebra II, chemistry, and physics and:

- (A) a coherent sequence courses for four or more credits in CTE that consists of at least two courses in the same career cluster including at least one advanced CTE course which includes any course that is the third or higher course in a sequence. The courses may be selected from courses in all CTE career clusters or CTE innovative courses approved by the commissioner of education. The final course in the sequence must be selected from the STEM career cluster.
- (B) A total of five credits in mathematics by successfully completing Algebra I, geometry, Algebra II and two additional mathematics courses for which Algebra II is a prerequisite
- (C) A total of five credits in science by successfully completing biology, chemistry, physics, and two additional science courses

**A student may earn a performance acknowledgment for outstanding performance (1) in a dual credit course, (2) on an AP test,

(3) on the PSAT, the ACT-Plan, the SAT, or the ACT

Subject Area	Foundations Plan with STEM endorsement, Science	
		Credits
English	English I, II, III, 4 th advanced English course Advanced English courses: English 4, Creative Writing	4
Math	Algebra I Geometry Algebra 2 Advanced math course Advanced math courses: Precalculus, AP Calculus, AP Statistics	4
Science	Biology Chemistry Physics 2 Advanced science courses Advanced science courses: Environmental Science, Forensic Science, Astronomy, AP Biology, AP Physics, AP Chemistry	5
Social Studies	World Geography <u>OR</u> World History US History Government (1/2 credit)	2 ½
Economics	Economics	½
Foreign Language	2 years of SAME language	2
Physical Education	PE Foundations	1
Speech	Communication Applications	½
Fine Arts	Fine Arts, Music Appreciation, or AP Art History	1
Electives	See current course listing for available TOPS electives	5 ½
Total Credits Required for Graduation		26

A student may earn a STEM endorsement by completing foundation and general endorsement requirements including Algebra II, chemistry, and physics and:

- (A) a coherent sequence courses for four or more credits in CTE that consists of at least two courses in the same career cluster including at least one advanced CTE course which includes any course that is the third or higher course in a sequence. The courses may be selected from courses in all CTE career clusters or CTE innovative courses approved by the commissioner of education. The final course in the sequence must be selected from the STEM career cluster.
- (B) A total of five credits in mathematics by successfully completing Algebra I, geometry, Algebra II and two additional mathematics courses for which Algebra II is a prerequisite
- (C) A total of five credits in science by successfully completing biology, chemistry, physics, and two additional science courses

**A student may earn a performance acknowledgment for outstanding performance (1) in a dual credit course, (2) on an AP test, (3) on the PSAT, the ACT-Plan, the SAT, or the ACT

Subject Area	Foundations Plan with Multidisciplinary Endorsement, Core Focus	
		Credits
English	English I, II, III, IV	4
Math	Algebra I Geometry 2 advanced math courses Advanced math courses: Math Models, Algebra 2, Precalculus, AP Calculus, AP Statistics **Math Models must be taken before Algebra 2 to count as an advanced math course	4
Science	Biology IPC or advanced science course Chemistry or Physics Advanced science courses: Environmental Science, Forensic Science, Astronomy, AP Biology, AP Physics, AP Chemistry	4
Social Studies	World Geography World History US History Government (1/2 credit)	3 ½
Economics	Economics	½
Foreign Language	2 years of SAME language	2
Physical Education	PE Foundations	1
Speech	Communication Applications	½
Fine Arts	Fine Arts, Music Appreciation, or AP Art History	1
Electives	See current course listing for available TOPS electives	5 ½
Total Credits Required for Graduation		26

*Endorsement: A student may earn a multidisciplinary studies endorsement by completing foundation and general endorsement requirements and:

- (A) four advanced courses that prepare a student to enter the workforce successfully or postsecondary education without remediation from within one endorsement area or among endorsement areas that are not in a coherent sequence
- (B) four credits in each of the four foundation subject areas to include English IV and chemistry and/or physics
- (C) four credits in advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, or dual credit selected from English, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, languages other than English, or fine arts

**A student may earn a performance acknowledgment for outstanding performance (1) in a dual credit course, (2) on an AP test, (3) on the PSAT, the ACT-Plan, the SAT, or the ACT

Subject Area	Foundations Plan with Multidisciplinary Endorsement, AP/Dual Credit Focus	
		Credits
English	English I, II, III, 4 th advanced English course Advanced English courses: English 4, Creative Writing	4
Math	Algebra I Geometry 2 Advanced math courses Advanced math courses: Math Models, Algebra 2, Precalculus, AP Calculus, AP Statistics **Math Models must be taken before Algebra 2 to count as an advanced math course	4
Science	Biology IPC (Physical Science) or advanced science course 2 Advanced science courses Advanced science courses: Chemistry, Physics, Environmental Science, Forensic Science, Astronomy, AP Biology, AP Physics, AP Chemistry	4
Social Studies	World Geography <u>OR</u> World History US History Government (1/2 credit)	2 ½
Economics	Economics	½
Foreign Language	2 years of SAME language	2
Physical Education	PE Foundations	1
Speech	Communication Applications	½
Fine Arts	Fine Arts, Music Appreciation, or AP Art History	1
Electives	See current course listing for available TOPS electives	2 ½
Endorsement Electives	Four credits from AP or dual credit selected from English, math, science, social studies, economics, or foreign language	4
Total Credits Required for Graduation		26

*Endorsement: A student may earn a multidisciplinary studies endorsement by completing foundation and general endorsement requirements and:

- (A) four advanced courses that prepare a student to enter the workforce successfully or postsecondary education without remediation from within one endorsement area or among endorsement areas that are not in a coherent sequence
- (B) four credits in each of the four foundation subject areas to include English IV and chemistry and/or physics
- (C) four credits in advanced placement, International Baccalaureate, or dual credit selected from English, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, languages other than English, or fine arts

**A student may earn a performance acknowledgment for outstanding performance (1) in a dual credit course, (2) on an AP test, (3) on the PSAT, the ACT-Plan, the SAT, or the ACT

Foundations Graduation Plan FAQ

HOUSE BILL 5 & FOUNDATIONS GRADUATION PLAN (FHSP)

1. What is House Bill 5?

House Bill 5 (HB 5) was signed into law by Governor Perry on June 10, 2013. HB 5 dramatically revises the number of high school student assessments required for graduation as well as overall graduation plans in Texas. In the long-term, these revisions will impact the state accountability system for schools, charters and districts.

2. What is the Foundation Plan?

The Foundation High School Program replaces the previous minimum, recommended, and distinguished graduation plans. Additionally, it allows students to earn endorsements in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), business and industry, public services, Arts and humanities and multidisciplinary studies.

3. What courses are included in the Foundational Plan diploma?

The requirements of the new Foundation diploma are specifically outlined in the TOPS Course Catalog Graduation Plan section.

4. I looked online and it says I only need 22 credits to graduate – why do all of the plans you show in the Course Catalog say 26 credits are needed to graduate?

Twenty two credits are required for graduation on the Foundations Only (No Endorsements) graduation plan. This plan limits college options for students and so we at TXVA encourage students to complete an endorsement in order to broaden their options after high school. Students must meet certain requirements to drop to the Foundations Only plan and it must be agreed upon by the student, parent, and administration before the change would be permitted.

5. Does graduating with the Foundation Plan with an endorsement qualify my student for 4-year educational institutions?

Yes. All students graduating with the Foundation Plan with an endorsement will be eligible to apply to all in-state, out-of-state, public and private four year colleges and universities.

6. What about the Top 10% rule?

Students who complete the Distinguished Level of Achievement on the Foundation Plan are eligible for admissions to in-state public universities under the Top 10% automatic admissions provision.

ENDORSEMENTS

7. I thought there were more endorsements to choose from than the ones you have listed. Why don't I see those choices?

The reason you only see 3 endorsements (but with different options for each!) for TOPS at this time is these are the only ones we are currently equipped to offer. As we continue to grow and offer more courses, our plan is to be able to offer ALL of the state's endorsements and graduation options.

8. Why do I have to select an endorsement? Can't I wait and see what classes I like before I choose?

TEA requires that all students select an endorsement upon entering 9th grade. For TOPS students, this will occur initially during the 9th grade registration process. However, students are allowed to change their endorsement throughout their high school career.

9. Does a student have to choose one of the five endorsements on top of the Foundation Plan?

TOPS believes choosing to graduate with an endorsement will help position your student for success in his or her future. Students must meet certain requirements to drop to the Foundations Only (no endorsement) plan and it must be agreed upon by the student, parent, and administration before the change would be permitted.

10. When will students choose an endorsement?

Students will select an endorsement during the 9th grade registration process. That selection will be confirmed with the high school counselor prior to the end of the student’s 9th grade year. Students are allowed to change their endorsement throughout their high school career by completing appropriate paper work.

11. I selected an endorsement, but what if I change my mind?

Students will be allowed to change their endorsement throughout their high school career within certain windows. If at any time you are thinking you might want to change your endorsement, reach out to your school counselor and they can help you decide if it is the best option for you or not and go over how it will impact your course selection and graduation timeline.

12. What happens if the student changes his/her mind about the selected endorsement when he/she is a Junior or Senior?

Students are allowed to change their endorsement throughout their high school career but should select core courses that do not limit their options.

13. Some of the endorsements have different core course requirements in the math, science, English and social studies area. If I want more than one endorsement, which core courses do I select?

To keep your options open, you may want to select the core courses that will qualify you for multiple endorsements. The most rigorous core course requirements are in the STEM endorsement area.

14. Do students have to take every class within /under an endorsement? What if they want to take/choose classes NOT listed under their endorsement choice?

Students must take at least four credits in an endorsement area. They can take any other classes they wish but must have necessary credits for an endorsement.

15. Which endorsement will colleges prefer?

The FHSP diploma is still very new. Colleges are still likely to look at specific core courses taken, the rigor of those courses, student GPA, SAT/ACT scores, extracurricular activities, and student involvement to evaluate the student on an individual basis. Students and parents need to be aware of any admission requirements for the university or college they plan to attend.

16. Are students only allowed to graduate with one endorsement?

No. Students may earn multiple endorsements.

17. Will my endorsement limit me from enrolling in certain colleges?

The FHSP diploma is still very new. Colleges are still likely to look at specific core courses taken, the rigor of those courses, student GPA, SAT/ACT scores, extracurricular activities, and student involvement to evaluate the student on an individual basis. Students and parents need to be aware of any admission requirements for the university or college they plan to attend.

DISTINGUISHED LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT

18. Is there a “distinguished diploma” students can obtain under HB 5?

Yes. Under HB 5, students can obtain a Distinguished Achievement level above the Foundation Diploma that can be attained in any of the above-mentioned endorsement programs by completing an additional science and math credit.

19. How can I graduate as Distinguished?

You must complete 4 credits of math, including Algebra 2.

You must complete a total of 4 credits of science.

You must complete one endorsement.

20. What is the difference between the Foundation with Endorsement and the Distinguished Level of Achievement?

The only difference is that Algebra 2 must be part of the student’s four math choices.

21. What is a Performance Acknowledgement? How can I earn one?

A performance acknowledgement is recognition on the diploma for activities and success above the standard requirements. A performance acknowledgement can be earned in the following ways:

- Dual Credit course: Complete 12 college hours with a GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Bilingualism and Biliteracy:
 - GPA of 80 in all English classes AND
 - 3 credits in a language other than English with 80 or higher OR Score 3 on AP Language test
 - AND meet exit criteria for Bilingual or ESL program or Score Advanced High on TELPAS
- On AP test or IB exam
 - The IB program is not offered at TXVA, you would have to come in with that test/score of 4 or higher
 - Score 3 or higher on the AP test
- On PSAT, ACT-PLAN, the SAT or ACT
 - Achieve National Merit Scholar on PSAT test
 - Achieve 1250 on SAT for combined critical reading and math score
 - Achieve composite score of 28 on ACT (excluding the writing sub score)
 -

SPECIFIC COURSE QUESTIONS

22. How do I know if I should take World Geography or World History?

Although not required, students are still encouraged to take both courses. If your plan does not allow you to take both, we encourage you to choose World History as it will better help you prepare for the US History STAAR test you will take later in your high school career.