

## Methods to Earn College Credit

- **The College Board Advanced Placement Program (AP)**
- **College Credit by Articulation**
  - **Advanced Technical Credit Program (ATC)**
  - **Local Articulation Options**
- **Dual Credit by Concurrent College Enrollment**
- **Credit by Examination or for Experience**

High school students participating in Tech Prep programs may earn college credit by all five methods listed above.

High school students can include courses in their graduation plans that may apply toward academic and/or technical degrees at colleges and universities statewide.

Students may earn college credit immediately, earn banked credit (credit in escrow) through articulation, or prepare to test-out of a college degree requirement.

High school courses taken for this purpose should help advance a student's career goal and/or count toward a two- or four-year college degree in the student's area of interest.

## The College Board Advanced Placement Program (AP)

is a nationally recognized program for introducing students to college-level work while they are still in high school. Students who enroll in higher-level academic courses identified for Advanced Placement may be eligible to receive college credit based on high school course grades and performance on national AP examinations. Colleges and universities publish policies for award of AP credit or AP advanced placement in their bulletins.

### Advantages



- Exposure to college-level coursework
- Student AP exam score of 3 or above counts as an advanced measure for the Distinguished Achievement Program
- Recognized at colleges and universities nationwide
- Large selection of academic courses included in the AP program
- State-sponsored incentive program for participating school districts



### Possible Limitations

- Applies to AP-designated academic courses only
- College Board AP examination fee required
- Students must score a 3 or above on AP exam to count as an advanced measure, potentially delaying award of the Distinguished Achievement Program seal
- Award of credit or advanced placement at colleges and universities varies depending on examination scores
- Secondary schools may be limited in AP course offerings and course scheduling options

## College Board Advanced Placement Program

<b>How to participate</b>	In the fall, schools indicate intent to participate by completing a College Board participation form and selecting an AP coordinator. Students enroll in AP high school courses offered by a school participating in the College Board Advanced Placement Program.
<b>Type of courses involved</b>	Academic. Selected from over 30 state-approved AP courses.
<b>High school transcript (AAR) course code</b>	"P"
<b>High school course numbers and abbreviations</b>	Course numbers in the Advanced Placement section of PEIMS Code Table C022 that begin with the letter "A." These course codes may be used by school districts that offer The College Board Advanced Placement courses in accordance with 19 TAC 74.29 and 74.30.
<b>Student selection</b>	Schools may allow open enrollment in AP courses or may be very restrictive in admitting students to AP courses. According to The College Board, the program is not designed only for elite or gifted and talented students. Participation by minority and economically disadvantaged students is encouraged. Schools are encouraged by The College Board to develop written guidelines for admitting students into AP courses.
<b>Faculty requirements</b>	High school faculty with formal College Board staff development. AP workshops and institutes are state-funded and may be offered by regional education service centers (ESCs).
<b>Terms for award of high school credit</b>	Passing grade as established by the participating school district.
<b>Terms for award of college credit</b>	Qualifying exams are offered by participating schools in May. Students must meet minimum or qualifying scores on College Board AP exams that are determined by the college or university awarding credit. Credit is awarded after enrollment in a college or university.
<b>Student GPA and Graduation Plan</b>	The school may establish a weighted GPA for AP courses. Scores of 3 or above on AP examinations count as advanced measures for the Distinguished Achievement Program.
<b>Student enrollment status</b>	Enrolled in high school only.
<b>Texas Success Initiative</b>	A student is not required to be assessed for basic skills using one of the four approved Texas higher education instruments before enrolling in AP courses.
<b>Tuition and fees</b>	AP exam fees are \$82 and fee reduction credits are available. The State of Texas funds a fee subsidy for low-income students. Although colleges may charge a fee to transcript credit, no college tuition is required.
<b>Benefits to students</b>	High school students may receive weighted points toward their GPA. Students who qualify can receive college credit for general academic core requirements for two- and four-year college degrees.

## **The Advanced Technical Credit Program (Statewide Articulation)**

is an advanced placement program initiated in the 1999-2000 school year to provide a method for high school students who continue technical programs of study in college to receive credit for knowledge and skills without duplication of coursework. Students successfully demonstrating college-level competence in content-enhanced high school courses are eligible to receive banked (in escrow) credit for courses that are part of an associate of applied science (AAS) degree or certificate plan offered by public two-year colleges. Some universities may also honor these courses, particularly those that offer BAAS, BAT, BSIS, or similar baccalaureate degrees.

### Advantages



- Exposure to college-level coursework
- Course grade of 3.0 or above counts as an advanced measure for the Distinguished Achievement Program
- Recognized at many public two-year colleges across the state
- Large selection of career and technology courses and some academic courses
- Students begin a college technical major in high school



### Possible Limitations

- Applies primarily to the associate of applied science (AAS) degree
- Credit applies only if a student can use the course in a related college degree plan
- Credit banked until a student completes six semester hours of additional college-level coursework, which may include AP, CLEP, and/or dual credit
- Transfer of credit to universities may be limited
- Secondary schools may be limited in articulated career and technology or academic course offerings and course scheduling options

## The Advanced Technical Credit Program (ATC)

<b>How to participate</b>	Schools elect to participate by offering courses identified for statewide articulation and by faculty participation in state-required staff development. Students enroll in specific high school courses offered by a school participating in the ATC Program.
<b>Type of courses involved</b>	Primarily career and technology, some academic; selected from over 100 state-approved courses.
<b>High school transcript (AAR) course code</b>	"A"
<b>High school course numbers and abbreviations</b>	CT course numbers in the ATC section of PEIMS Code Table C022 that include the letter "T." These course codes may be used by school districts that adhere to the teacher staff development and course content requirements outlined by TEA and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in ATC Program policies and procedures.
<b>Student selection</b>	Students are selected based on interest in technical careers that require a minimum of a one-year certificate and their ability to do college-level work. For award of college credit, most statewide-articulated courses must be taken at the junior or senior levels.
<b>Faculty requirements</b>	High school faculty with qualifications equal to or greater than the minimum required for college faculty teaching the college-equivalent course and who have successfully completed state-required staff development, which may be offered by colleges, Tech Prep consortia, and/or education service centers (ESCs).
<b>Terms for award of high school credit</b>	Passing grade as established by the participating school district.
<b>Terms for award of college credit</b>	Course grade of 80 or above in all courses or course sequences. The student must enroll in a participating two-year college within 15 months of high school graduation, and declare a degree plan that includes the college-equivalent course. A college may require a student to complete 6 additional college hours.
<b>Student GPA and Graduation Plan</b>	The school may establish a weighted GPA for these courses. Completion of these courses with a grade of 3.0 or higher counts as advanced measures for the Distinguished Achievement Program.
<b>Student enrollment status</b>	Enrolled in high school only.
<b>Texas Success Initiative</b>	A student is not required to be assessed for basic skills using one of the four approved Texas higher education instruments before enrolling in statewide-articulated courses.
<b>Tuition and fees</b>	Although colleges may charge a fee to transcript credit, there is no college tuition required.
<b>Benefits to students</b>	High school students may receive weighted points toward their GPA. Students who qualify can receive credit for technical course requirements for a two-year associate of applied science degree or one-year certificate.

## Local articulation options

provide high school students options for award of articulated college credit for high school or college courses not covered by the Advanced Technical Credit Program (Statewide Articulation) and a method to articulate courses and programs with colleges not participating in the ATC Program. Conditions for award of credit for courses that are part of an associate of applied science (AAS) degree plan are described in locally developed articulation agreements. Some universities may also honor these courses.

## Advantages



- Exposure to college-level coursework
- Course grade of 3.0 or above counts as an advanced measure for the Distinguished Achievement Program
- Designed to meet regional college program requirements
- Based on courses offered by the high school and local college
- Students begin a college technical major in high school



## Possible Limitations

- Applies primarily to the associate of applied science (AAS) degree
- Award of credit depends on terms of each local agreement
- Transfer of credit to other colleges or universities may be limited
- Individual agreements with multiple colleges may be required
- Competency examinations may be required for award of college credit

## Local Articulation Options

<b>How to participate</b>	Schools elect to enter into articulation agreements for specific courses or programs with two-year colleges.
<b>Type of courses involved</b>	Primarily career and technology, some academic.
<b>High school transcript (AAR) course code</b>	"A" and identification of the college courses and the participating college and course articulations in the local use area on the reverse side of the transcript (AAR).
<b>High school course numbers and abbreviations</b>	Course numbers in the relevant sections of PEIMS Code Table C022. Schools may use ATC statewide-articulated courses numbers in local agreements if ATC course and faculty requirements are met.
<b>Student selection</b>	Students are selected based on interest in technical careers that require a minimum of an associate degree, their ability to do college-level work, and any additional terms outlined in the local articulation agreement.
<b>Faculty requirements</b>	High school faculty with qualifications equal to or greater than the minimum required for college faculty teaching the college equivalent course, and any additional requirements outlined in the local articulation agreement.
<b>Terms for award of high school credit</b>	Passing grade as established by the participating school district.
<b>Terms for award of college credit</b>	Conditions outlined in the local articulation agreement.
<b>Student GPA and Graduation Plan</b>	The school may establish a weighted GPA for these courses. Completion of these courses with a grade of 3.0 or higher counts as advanced measures for the Distinguished Achievement Program.
<b>Student enrollment status</b>	Enrolled in high school only.
<b>Texas Success Initiative</b>	A student is not required to be assessed for basic skills using one of the four approved Texas higher education instruments before enrolling in locally articulated courses.
<b>Tuition and fees</b>	Although colleges may charge a fee to transcript credit, there is no college tuition required.
<b>Benefits to students</b>	High school students may receive weighted points toward their GPA. Students who qualify can receive credit for technical course requirements for a two-year associate of applied science degree or one-year certificate.

## Dual credit by concurrent college enrollment

is a process through which students gain early admission to a college or university and enroll in academic and/or technical courses for college credit before they graduate from high school (concurrent enrollment). Students may also receive high school credit on successful completion of these courses (dual credit). Tuition for the college course is paid either by the student or by the student's school, or may be waived by a participating two- or four-year college.

### Advantages



- Exposure to college courses often taught on a college campus
- Course grade of 3.0 or above counts as an advanced measure for the Distinguished Achievement Program
- College credit is awarded on successful completion of course requirements
- Early college admission
- Enhanced course transferability



### Possible Limitations

- Students must meet college admission requirements
- Students must meet college basic skills assessment requirements
- Students are generally limited to taking two concurrent college courses each semester
- Students may be subject to college tuition and fees
- Students may need to travel to a college campus

## Dual Credit by Concurrent College Enrollment

<b>How to participate</b>	High school students enroll as an early admission student in a participating institution of higher education to earn college credit. Courses may be taken on the college or university campus, or a college may offer the course at the high school.
<b>Type of courses involved</b>	Academic or technical.
<b>High school transcript (AAR) course code</b>	"D"
<b>High school course numbers and abbreviations</b>	High schools awarding credit toward graduation for college courses determine course equivalents for dual credit.
<b>Student selection</b>	Students are selected based on their interest in early admission to college and their ability to do college-level work. Students must pass all sections of the TAAS or TAKS and obtain approval from their designated school official, and may be subject to terms of the Texas Success Initiative (see below).
<b>Faculty requirements</b>	Either college faculty or high school faculty that meet the minimum requirements as specified by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and who are selected, supervised, and evaluated by the college.
<b>Terms for award of high school credit</b>	Determined by policies adopted by the local school district's board of trustees.
<b>Terms for award of college credit</b>	High school, as well as college credit, is transcribed immediately upon successful completion of the course. Grading criteria should be devised to allow faculty the opportunity to award high school only or high school and college credit depending on student performance.
<b>Student GPA and Graduation Plan</b>	The school may establish a weighted GPA for these courses. Completion of college courses with a grade of 3.0 or higher counts as advanced measures for the Distinguished Achievement Program.
<b>Student enrollment status</b>	Enrolled in high school and college concurrently.
<b>Texas Success Initiative</b>	A student is required to be assessed for basic skills using one of the four approved Texas higher education instruments before enrolling in dual credit courses, unless exempt because of TAAS, TAKS, ACT, and/or SAT scores, or intent to enroll in a college certificate program of less than 42 semester credit hours.
<b>Tuition and fees</b>	Student is subject to all applicable college tuition and fees. The student's school may pay tuition or institutions of higher education may waive tuition.
<b>Benefits to students</b>	High school students may receive weighted points toward their GPA. Students who qualify can receive immediate credit for general academic core requirements and/or technical requirements for two- or four-year college degrees.

## Credit by examination or for experience

offers students an opportunity to demonstrate college-level knowledge and earn college credit or advanced placement by examination, or by petitioning a college or university for credit after documentation of appropriate experience. Students demonstrate knowledge by taking College Board CLEP exams (academic courses) or college or university departmental exams (academic and technical courses).

## Advantages



- No specific course enrollment required
- Students may opt to take an examination for credit at any time
- CLEP examination scores accepted at colleges and universities nationwide
- Large selection of CLEP examinations for academic courses
- High school students can bank CLEP examination scores pending college enrollment



## Possible Limitations

- CLEP examinations are offered for academic courses only
- CLEP examination fees are required. Colleges may also charge tuition or fees for credit by departmental examination or for experience
- Colleges and universities may have different policies regarding award of credit for CLEP examinations
- Not all college or university departments offer credit by departmental examination or for experience

## Credit by Examination or for Experience

<b>How to participate</b>	A student may elect to take College Board CLEP examinations in high school or college and departmental examinations after college enrollment by contacting the appropriate college or university department or testing center.
<b>Type of courses involved</b>	CLEP exams are academic. Select from over 30 CLEP exams and any number of departmental opportunities to demonstrate proficiency in academic and technical subjects.
<b>High school transcript (AAR) course code</b>	<i>Not applicable.</i>
<b>High school course numbers and abbreviations</b>	<i>Not applicable.</i>
<b>Student selection</b>	Any student desiring to document attainment of college-level knowledge in academic or technical areas.
<b>Faculty requirements</b>	<i>Not applicable.</i>
<b>Terms for award of high school credit</b>	<i>Not applicable.</i>
<b>Terms for award of college credit</b>	Depends on college policies for award of credit or advanced placement for CLEP exams and policies for departmental award of credit-by-examination and/or for experience.
<b>Student GPA and Graduation Plan</b>	<i>Not applicable.</i>
<b>Student enrollment status</b>	Usually enrolled in college. May be enrolled in high school and bank CLEP credit for future credit award.
<b>Texas Success Initiative</b>	Not required for CLEP exams taken in high school. Departmental exams or credit for experience may be subject to a postsecondary institution's basic skills assessment policy.
<b>Tuition and fees</b>	CLEP exam fees are \$55 and local colleges may charge an additional service fee. Colleges and universities may charge for local examinations and may charge a fee to transcript credit.
<b>Benefits to students</b>	No specific courses need to be taken and there is no specific time line for examinations.

# Answers to Common Questions

## Earning College Credit in High School

**1. Are College Board Advanced Placement (AP) courses designed only for Gifted and Talented students?**

**No.** The College Board states that the program is “not designed for elite or gifted and talented students,” and The College Board encourages participation by minority and economically disadvantaged students.

**2. Are College Board Advanced Placement (AP) courses valuable only to students entering a four-year college or university after graduation?**

**No.** College Board Advanced Placement courses are valuable to students planning to attend both two-year and four-year institutions of higher education. In addition to providing exposure to higher-level academic skills, AP courses apply to both academic and technical certificates and degrees at these institutions.

**3. Are courses designated for the Advanced Technical Credit (ATC) Program (statewide articulation) valuable only to career and technology students taking a coherent sequence of career and technology courses?**

**No.** Courses for advanced placement by statewide articulation are potentially useful to many students.

- First, they provide an alternative avenue to satisfy advanced measures for the Distinguished Achievement Program for all students.
- Second, they can be used as higher-level career and technology electives in a student’s high school graduation plan.
- Third, students who complete all requirements can apply these credits toward relevant two-year college certificates and associate degrees, whether they used these courses in high school as electives, as part of a career and technology coherent sequence, or as part of a Tech Prep program sequence. Some universities also honor these courses.

**4. Can a student get credit for locally articulated courses at colleges other than the one listed in the local articulation agreement?**

Maybe. Some colleges honor local articulation agreements executed by other community and technical colleges. Colleges evaluate student requests for award of credit based on individual merit.

**5. When do schools and colleges develop local articulation agreements?**

Local articulation agreements are developed for three reasons.

- First, they are developed to provide local articulation options for courses not listed in the ATC Articulated Course Crosswalk.
- Second, they are used to award college credit for statewide-articulated high school courses when the college does not offer the college-equivalent course(s) listed in the ATC Crosswalk.
- Third, they are developed to provide local articulation options for colleges not participating in the Advanced Technical Credit Program.

**6. Can colleges or schools offer mixed classes of concurrently enrolled students and students seeking credit by statewide or local articulation?**

Yes, as long as all students in the class are receiving the same content-enhanced, college-equivalent instruction.

**7. Are all ATC statewide-articulated courses eligible for advanced measures for the Distinguished Achievement Program?**

Yes. According to the Texas Administrative Code, all college academic courses and Tech Prep articulated courses count as long as the student completes the course in grades 11 or 12 with a grade of 3.0 or higher. The advanced measure is recognized as soon as the student successfully completes the course. Transcribing of college credit is not required.

**8. Can a student use a combination of methods to earn college credit in high school graduation plans?**

Yes. A student may use as many methods as practical to earn college credit, but should consider how they can use these courses in college degree plans that are of interest to them.

# References and Resources

## **High School Transcript (Academic Achievement Record, AAR)**

Revised Minimum Standards for the AAR, Texas Education Agency, May 2004.  
<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/taa/sgtanalign092904a7.doc>

## **Distinguished Achievement Program**

- Prior to 2001-2002 School Year  
Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part II, Chapter 74, Subchapter B, §74.13 (a)(3)
- Beginning with 2001-2002 School Year  
Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part II, Chapter 74, Subchapter D, §74.44 (d)

## **College Board Advanced Placement and CLEP Programs**

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)



## **Texas Advanced Placement Incentive Program**

Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part II, Chapter 74, Subchapter C, §74.29

## **Concurrent Course or Dual Credit Requirements**

- Public Schools  
Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part II, Chapter 74, Subchapter C, §74.25
- Public Community and Technical Colleges  
Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part I, Chapter 9, Subchapter H, §9.145  
See also HB 1621, 78<sup>th</sup> regular session, Texas Legislature
- Public Universities  
Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part I, Chapter 5, Subchapter M, §5.262  
See also SB 258, 78<sup>th</sup> regular session, Texas Legislature

## **Texas Success Initiative**

Section 58 of Senate Bill 286, 78<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, repeals Sections 51.306 and 51.3061 of the Education Code relating to the Texas Academic Skills Program. Section 37 of the legislation establishes the "Success Initiative" relating to student assessment and developmental education as Section 51.3062 of the Education Code. The took effect on September 1, 2003.

## **Related Web Sites**

Texas Education Agency  
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board  
Resource Site – Preparing for College  
Advanced Technical Credit (ATC) Program  
Tech Prep Programs

[www.tea.state.tx.us](http://www.tea.state.tx.us)  
[www.thecb.state.tx.us](http://www.thecb.state.tx.us)  
[www.CollegeForTexans.com](http://www.CollegeForTexans.com)  
[www.atcTexas.org](http://www.atcTexas.org)  
[www.TechPrepTexas.org](http://www.TechPrepTexas.org)