

Course Scheduling Considerations

Students register for courses in February or March prior to the following school year. It is important to thoughtfully consider as a family your student's schedule for the upcoming year and then to complete the registration process in a timely fashion because school staffing needs for the following year are based on course registration results; however, changes in a student's course selections can be made through June. Sophomores and Juniors should meet with their School Counselor concerning course selections for the following year. Freshmen are also welcome to do so. A complete catalog of all courses offered at Whitman is available in the School Counseling Office or can be accessed online at the MCPS website:

www.mcps.k12.md.us/curriculum/coursebulletin.

School Counselors recommend that parents and students keep the following in mind when making course selections:

- The most important thing is to keep a balanced course load. Learning is most productive when students are challenged but not unduly stressed.
- Course selections should take into consideration time commitments for extracurricular activities such as athletics, clubs, religious school, community service/SSL obligations, internships, etc.
- The school usually recommends 5 academic courses and 2 electives; students with 6 or 7 academic classes may struggle. Only in rare circumstances should an 8-period day (a schedule where all periods are filled with courses, with no period for lunch) be considered. This is not a healthy arrangement for most students and can usually be avoided by working with the counselor.
- Students are encouraged to fulfill PE, Health, and Tech Ed requirements during the Freshman or Sophomore year. *Courses that fulfill the Tech Ed requirement have changed beginning with the Class of 2012 (see reverse side for details).*
- Colleges are looking for solid achievement rather than students struggling with too many hard courses. Students should take classes that reflect their strengths.
- Select the course level (regular, honor, or Advanced Placement)** based on a realistic assessment of the number of hours needed and available to handle the current workload. The time needed to complete homework varies significantly among students.
- Plan next year's courses based on past performance. Look at the student's motivation and achievement to date.
- Consider the individual student's ability to handle stress and need for sleep.
- The biggest jump in course difficulty is in the Junior Year. Students should look at the AP course workload surveys completed by students enrolled in these courses and use these as a guide when signing up for AP classes. The goal is to take rigorous classes, but not so difficult that performance suffers.

**The 25th day of the semester is the last day to drop a class and not have it appear on the transcript. Any changes made after that date (including switching from honors or AP to regular level classes) will be reflected on the student's transcript along with the grade at the time of the drop. This is the policy of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS).

Please remember the goal is to have a healthy, well-rested student who is not only a successful learner, but has time to pursue outside interests.

An interactive registration worksheet that can be used to help students and parents in course selection and scheduling can be accessed at www.mcpscourses.org.

Summer School Sessions

MCPS is responsible for planning all summer sessions, and the information is usually available in the early spring. A few select courses are available as online summer courses. Please visit the MCPS website for additional information: www.mcps.k12.md.us.

Technology Education Requirement

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) requires that each student complete one credit of technology education. Courses that satisfy the new technology education requirement have changed beginning with the Class of 2012. Whitman offers the following courses that have been approved by MSDE to meet the new technology education credit graduation requirements for the graduating class of 2012: *Introduction to Engineering Design*; *Principles of Engineering*; and *Foundations of Technology* (only available as an online course).

Counselors encourage students attempt to complete this Tech Ed requirement during the Freshman or Sophomore year.

The Classes of 2010 and 2011 will adhere to the previous Tech Ed course requirements. Courses that satisfy the current technology education requirement for students graduating in the years 2010–2011 will be marked with a TE.

Online Learning

The half-credit *Comprehensive Health Education* course, the half-credit *Personal Finance* course, and the one-credit *Foundations of Technology* Tech Ed course are available online. Please see a counselor for details and refer to the MCPS Student eLearning website: <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/onlinelearning/>