

Honors Level And Advanced Placement (AP) Courses

For the academically qualified and highly motivated, CVCS offers challenging AP and Honors level courses; these courses are accelerated, demanding, stimulating and time-consuming. CVCS expects some of you to choose these courses for the challenges and the rewards.

The Academic Counselors and teachers of prerequisite classes review new students' records. Students are then recommended for placement in Honors/AP level courses based on meeting the following criteria:

“B+” (88%), or above, in their present honors course, or an “A” (93%) or above, in their present college prep level courses on each semester report card in their current class.

Excellent control of behavior including limiting excessive talking, following rules of class, consistent dress code compliance, serious attitude toward learning, personal responsibility, demonstration of a high level of effort, and timely completion of assignments.

Strong communication skills including reading, writing, speaking, and reasoning abilities, a demonstration of refined academic skills including frequent participation in class discussion, proficient note taking abilities, neatness of work, and strong organizational abilities.

Attendance to these honors and AP courses is critical. Students with excessive absences may be considered for removal from the class by the teacher and/or administration.

Completion of summer reading and required documentation (in classes requiring reading) is required prior to the first class session or according to the schedule given by the teacher. Students who are new to the school will be given additional time to complete this assignment.

Removal from an Honors/AP class will result if a student fails to maintain satisfactory grade and behavior standards while enrolled in the class. Once the student has been removed from an Honors/AP courses, he/she will not be reconsidered for placement for Honors/AP courses in that subject matter until the following school year. The administration is responsible for the final judgment in placement or removal of students from Honors/AP classes.

Please consider the following questions and comments carefully as you weigh the possibility of an AP or Honors course.

Why are you choosing an AP/honors course?

Do you want the intellectual stimulation? Do you want to learn more (and in more depth) than you would in a regular class? Motivation plays an important role in the selection process. Your intense desire to learn contributes to your success in a challenging course, sometimes even more than your ability. If you are interested in a course, you are receptive to everything that takes place in the class and are willing to accept demanding requirements. How motivated are you? How motivated should you be? If you need to change your attitude, do so now; it is worth

the effort! When you are focused and motivated to do well, you will enjoy what you are learning and deepen your understanding and insight for the subject.

Are you choosing an AP/Honors course only because it “looks good” on your transcript?

If this is the only reason you are enrolling, your decision may blind you to some important consequences and, eventually, disappoint and frustrate you.

Can you handle the accelerated pace, increased workload, and the additional time required by an AP or Honors course while at the same time pursuing other school activities and interests inside and outside CVCS?

When you choose an AP or Honors course, you commit yourself to hard work; you commit yourself to more work at a higher level than a regular course. Are you prepared to make that commitment? Look specifically at the requirements of the course, especially the amount of time and effort needed. After reviewing these requirements, ask yourself: “Is there enough time in my day for everything that I want?” While you may be able to handle one Honors course, will the cumulative effect of your choosing several courses overwhelm you with work and cause you to earn lower grades than you expected? Strength of program is important, but not at all costs. Your other courses and activities should not suffer because you have chosen an Honors course.

What is the expectation for grades in AP or Honors courses?

Our “normal” expectations for students in these courses is that they will earn A and B grades. However, it is possible for students to continue in an AP or Honors course with a C+ because we want to encourage students to seek academic challenges. Our concern with students who might earn a C+ grade is that the content of the course and the interaction among the students is too demanding for them. Please be realistic about your ability and your commitment.

Is it better to earn a B in an Honors course rather than an A in a “regular” course?

It is better to earn an A in an Honors course! After saying that we can make several observations: a) it does not follow that if students are earning B grades in honors courses they will earn A grades in “regular” courses; our experience often suggests that students will work for a B no matter what the course! b) colleges, both public and private, care about a student’s strength of program; a student’s earning a B in an Honors course contributes favorably toward strength of program and college admission; c) one grade in one course (no matter what the course) is not the deciding factor for determining future college options and eventual college admissions; a student’s entire record determines options and admission; d) for some colleges earning all A grades in regular courses would be better than earning A and B grades in Honors courses.

How many AP or Honors courses should I take?

While there is no blueprint for determining the precise number of AP or Honors courses to take or if you should take any at all, you can ask some helpful questions. When you are considering an Honors level courses in history or English, ask yourself: “How well and quickly do I read?” If your reading rate is low and you are expected to read 50 pages a night, will you be able to complete your reading for the Honors class and all your homework for your other courses? Another question to ask is, “How strong is my writing?” If you require many hours for each essay or writing assignment, will other assignments suffer?

When you are considering an Honors level courses in Mathematics or Science, ask yourself: “How quickly do I comprehend new concepts?” If you take a long time to grasp new concepts, when will you have enough time to devote to your other courses?

Honors Level Courses

CVCS offers a variety of Honors classes in various areas including English, Science, Social Studies, and Math. These classes exist to allow students who possess skills in a particular subject or subjects to excel through more in-depth study of that subject.

Advanced Placement Courses

CVCS offers various Advanced Placement courses. These are college level courses taught at the high school. These courses involve in-depth reading, writing, math, and reasoning. Assignments require students to possess excellent study and communication skills. Part of each course is a required three-hour exam, written by the College Board, and administered in May.

The Advanced Placement courses offered at CVCS during the 2020-2021 school year are

AP Calculus

AP Chemistry

AP English Language

AP English Literature

AP European History

AP Human Geography

AP Psychology

AP Statistics

AP US Government

AP US History

All CVCS students enrolled in an Advanced Placement course are required to sit for the AP examination in May.

Withdrawal From AP or Honors Level Courses

Since the master schedule is based upon information provided by all students at registration, students who drop AP or honors level courses within the first week of the semester understand that possible alternative selections may be closed (because they are now full) or unavailable (because they now conflict with other required courses).

The only valid reasons for your withdrawing from an AP or Honors course are: (1) medical excuses confirmed by a physician, (2) your receiving grades of "C" or below, or (3) the teacher of the course recommends the withdrawal.

Withdrawing from an AP or Honors level course does affect "strength of program". In some cases, the withdrawal can adversely affect the admission process for certain colleges. You should discuss the withdrawal and its impact on "strength of program" with your academic counselor.