

# Advanced Academics



## High School Counselors:

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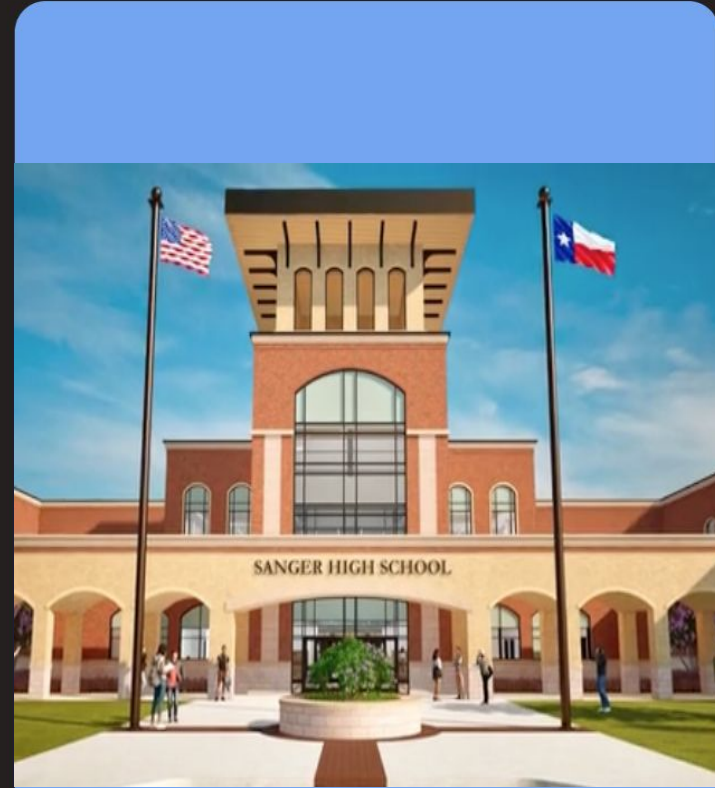
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Student Voices

## Advanced Academics at SHS

Dual Credit/ OnRamps/ AP courses are academically advanced courses designed to challenge motivated students AND provide them with the opportunity to earn college credit. Potential benefits include:

- Smoother transition to higher education
- Greater likelihood of earning a college degree
- Enhances skills required to be successful at the collegiate level: time management skills, critical thinking skills, study skills, and following directions and procedures
- Reduced cost of enrolling in higher education courses
  - Tuition (OnRamps and Dual Credit) is waived for students qualifying for free/reduced lunches. Sanger ISD will pay for books.



# Advanced Academics at SHS

Students whose career pathway requires a post-secondary education should consider taking advanced courses. Data shows that students who participate in dual enrollment in high school tend to do better in college. (Community College Research Center; NSWERS)

**1. Higher college enrollment rates** than students who did not take dual enrollment courses.

**2. College Persistence and Degree Completion:** Dual enrollment students who go to college *complete credentials at higher rates* than non-dual enrollment students and are *significantly more likely* to attain a *postsecondary credential*.

**3. Increased accumulation of college credits.** On average, dual enrollment students earn *12+ semester hours of college credit*—the equivalent of a full semester—before graduating high school.

# Courses Offered

## AP



AP English 4  
AP Calculus \*  
AP Environmental Systems  
AP Government / Economics  
AP Art 4  
AP Spanish  
AP Psychology

\*depending on # of interested students

## Dual Credit



English 4 (British Literature)  
College Algebra  
Biology for Science Majors  
Government / Economics  
Texas Government  
Art Appreciation  
Public Speaking  
Learning Frameworks

transferability is determined by individual colleges unless core complete at TX public universities

## On Ramps



OR Rhetoric (English 3)\*  
OR U.S. History  
OR Statistics  
OR Biology

Cost determined by # of credit hours

\*students must accept credit for Rhetoric to be eligible for dual credit English 4

# Advanced Placement (AP) Classes

Each college or university evaluates transfer credit based on its own policies, which vary by school, college, and institution.

## Course Structure

- \* In person at SHS
- \* Taught by a high school teacher
- \* Enroll during course selections

## Cost

- \* Course is free
- \* Exam costs \$103 (reduced cost for economically disadvantaged)
- \* Must register / pay for exam during the first weeks of class

## Benefits

- \* Could earn college credit by passing the exam at the end of the course
- \* +10 GPA points

## Challenges

- \* Passing the exam
- \* Colleges have their own policies regarding exam grades and credit awarded



# AP Classes

- Students receive high school grades throughout the year based on assignments, tests, and participation.
- In May, students may take the AP Exam, which is scored on a 1–5 scale by the College Board.
- Colleges *may* offer college credit or placement based on AP exam scores (policies vary by institution).
  - ◆ Students must contact the college/university they plan to attend to determine how advanced courses will transfer, if they will apply to a major or degree program, and if the grade will factor into the GPA.
- The AP exam is optional but strongly encouraged, and it is separate from the student's high school grade.
- Whether the class makes or not is determined by the # of students signing up during course registration.

# Dual Credit Classes (NCTC)

Each college or university evaluates transfer credit based on its own policies, which vary by school, college, and institution.

## Course Structure

- \* Online only with supervision except Math / Brit. Lit.
- \* Student owns academic record (FERPA)
- \* Strict application and enrollment deadlines

## Cost

- \* \$165/ 3-hour credit
- \* Textbook fees of \$24/semester credit hour (\$72)
- \* April / May payment deadlines

## Benefits

- \* Could earn college credit by passing the course w/ C or higher
- \* +10 GPA points
- \* Scholarships available

## Challenges

- \* Self-motivation, independence, organizational skills
- \* Grade earned is on college transcript
- \* Academic Dishonesty

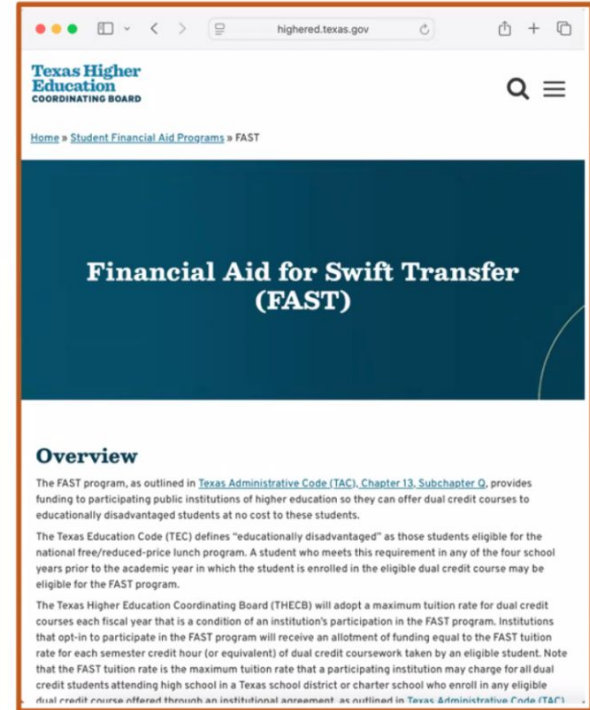
# Background: 2025-2026 FAST Eligibility Criteria

As of fall 2025, the eligibility requirements for FAST expanded to include students who are educationally disadvantaged in the **current academic year**.

Before that, students were eligible for FAST *only* if they were identified as educationally disadvantaged in any of the four prior school years.

FAST eligibility criteria also include:

- Enrollment in grades 9 through 12
- Enrollment in an eligible dual credit or dual enrollment course



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL [higher.ed.texas.gov](https://higher.ed.texas.gov). The page header includes the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board logo and a search icon. The main content area has a dark blue background with the title "Financial Aid for Swift Transfer (FAST)" in white. Below this is an "Overview" section with the following text:

**Overview**

The FAST program, as outlined in [Texas Administrative Code \(TAC\), Chapter 13, Subchapter D](#), provides funding to participating public institutions of higher education so they can offer dual credit courses to educationally disadvantaged students at no cost to these students.

The Texas Education Code (TEC) defines "educationally disadvantaged" as those students eligible for the national free/reduced-price lunch program. A student who meets this requirement in any of the four school years prior to the academic year in which the student is enrolled in the eligible dual credit course may be eligible for the FAST program.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) will adopt a maximum tuition rate for dual credit courses each fiscal year that is a condition of an institution's participation in the FAST program. Institutions that opt-in to participate in the FAST program will receive an allotment of funding equal to the FAST tuition rate for each semester credit hour (or equivalent) of dual credit coursework taken by an eligible student. Note that the FAST tuition rate is the maximum tuition rate that a participating institution may charge for all dual credit students attending high school in a Texas school district or charter school who enroll in any eligible dual credit course offered through an institutional agreement as outlined in [Texas Administrative Code \(TAC\)](#).



## Dual Credit

- NCTC sends **mid-term** and **final** grade reports to high school counselors.
- The grade earned by the student will go on their high school report card AND their college transcript.
- If a student earns less than a “C”, they must take a break from dual credit coursework for one full semester.
- Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), rights belong to the parents with respect to high school records and belong to the student with respect to postsecondary records—regardless of the student's age.
- Students must contact the college/university they plan to attend to determine how advanced courses will transfer, if they will apply to a major or degree program, and if the grade will factor into the GPA.
- 504/Special Education support only through the Office for Students with Disabilities
- Free, online tutoring is available at [nctc.edu/tutoring](https://nctc.edu/tutoring).
  - ◆ Writing Center and Math Lab support
  - ◆ Upswing



## Dual Credit - Application Process

- Step 1: Attend a mandatory Advanced Academics Meeting.
- Step 2: Earn qualifying scores on the TSI or other college readiness exam.
  - ◆ Must pass math TSI if planning to take College Algebra
  - ◆ Must pass English TSI to take any other NCTC dual credit course
  - ◆ Next TSI Dates at SHS = Jan. 23 and Feb. 6
  - ◆ Passing standards on the SAT / ACT (not PSAT) will exempt you from the TSI requirement for dual credit courses.
- Step 3: Complete the online application through ApplyTexas.
  - ◆ Application drive at school on February 2
  - ◆ Mrs. Green submits transcripts / TSI scores to NCTC
  - ◆ NCTC sends welcome email to student with NCTC student ID and OneLogin Info.
- Step 4: Return completed NCTC Dual Credit Registration Form to Mrs. Green by the deadline (BEFORE Spring Break)

# OnRamps Classes (UT Austin)

Each college or university evaluates transfer credit based on its own policies, which vary by school, college, and institution.

## Course Structure

- \* In person at SHS w/ online component
- \* High school and college instructor
- \* Enroll during course selections

## Cost

- \* Course costs \$149 (Free for Economically Disadvantaged)
- \* No cost for books
- \* Summer payment deadlines

## Benefits

- \* No application process / TSI req.
- \* **Choose** to accept or decline college credit
- \* +10 GPA points
- \* UT Austin transcript

## Challenges

- \* Self-motivation, independence, organizational skills
- \* Academic Dishonesty
- \* Time management



# OnRamps

- No application / TSI requirement
  - ◆ Sign up during course selection (year long and semester long courses)
- Students who enroll in OnRamps are placed in two separate courses for which they earn two separate grades:
  - ◆ A high school course taught by an SHS teacher who receives yearlong, professional learning and development from UT Austin
  - ◆ A distance college course taught by a faculty member or instructor of record
- Work and grades for the high school and college courses are kept separate, and one does not affect the other. In both courses, students are challenged with rigorous content, encouraged to take ownership of their learning, and equipped with the skills they need to support their transition beyond high school.



# OnRamps

- OnRamps students with a **college** grade of D- or higher have the option to accept or decline the college credit.
  - ◆ This decision takes place a few weeks after the term has ended.
  - ◆ Instructors and students receive an email from UT Austin on the Monday when their decision window opens. The timing of the decision window varies by course, section, or Instructor.
  - ◆ Accepted credit appears on a UT Austin transcript.
  - ◆ Failing college grades and/or credit earned but denied does NOT appear on the college transcript.
  - ◆ When making the decision, students are strongly encouraged to research policies for all schools they might attend to find out how transfer credit impacts GPA, academic standing, and specific degree plans.



# OnRamps

- College Records and Privacy - While parents may communicate with the high school teacher about students' high school grades, the college instructor of record may not communicate with parents regarding students' college grades. The college instructors of record will make every attempt to communicate with the student as this is an important maturation point for college students.
  - ◆ Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), rights belong to the parents with respect to high school records and belong to the student with respect to postsecondary records—regardless of the student's age.

# Courses Offered

## AP



AP English 4  
AP Calculus \*  
AP Environmental Systems  
AP Government / Economics  
AP Art 4  
AP Spanish  
AP Psychology

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## Dual Credit



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College Algebra  
Biology for Science Majors  
Government / Economics  
Texas Government  
Art Appreciation  
Public Speaking  
Learning Frameworks

transferability is determined by individual colleges unless core complete at TX public universities

## On Ramps



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OR Statistics  
OR Biology

Cost determined by # of credit hours

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# Pathway to Core Complete

**Core Complete** = 42 college credit hours

- Students complete the foundational courses required for undergraduate degrees.
- Completing the core curriculum at one **Texas** public college or university **guarantees** transfer of those credits to another **Texas** public college or university.
- Consists of about **14** DC classes
- All college credit must be transferred to NCTC by sending AP exam scores from College Board and official transcripts from UT so that NCTC can mark you Core Complete on your official transcript.

High School Course	Course for College Credit	NCTC Course ID # (if dual credit)	College Course Equivalence (if not dual credit)	Current Instructional Method	Prerequisite	Estimated Fee (tuition only)	College Credit Hours	High School Credit
<b>10th Grade</b>								
<b>College Transition</b> (one semester only: fall or spring or summer)	NCTC Learning Frameworks	EDUC 1300		Virtual	ELAR TSI	\$165	3	0.5
<b>Art</b> (fall semester)	NCTC Art Appreciation	ARTS 1301		Virtual	ELAR TSI	\$165	3	0.5
<b>Speech</b> (spring semester)	NCTC Public Speaking	SPCH 1315		Virtual	ELAR TSI	\$165	3	0.5
<b>11th Grade</b>								
<b>United States History</b> (full year)	On Ramps US History		HIST 1301 / HIST 1302	In person at high school	High school English 2 / World History	\$298	6	1
<b>English 3</b> (full year)	On Ramps English 3		ENGL 1301 / ENGL 1302	In person at high school	High school English 2	\$298	6	1
<b>Precalculus Honors</b> (full year) *Only the first semester is dual credit. The 2nd semester is high school precal honors. Must take both to earn the full math credit for the year. <b>*To be core complete, students need 3 college hours of math.</b>	NCTC College Algebra	MATH 1314		In person at high school	Math TSI and Algebra 2	\$165	3	0.5 (DC) + 0.5 (H)
<b>Special Topics in Social Studies</b> (one semester only: fall or spring or summer)	NCTC Texas Government	GOVT 2306		Virtual	ELAR TSI	\$165	3	0.5

# Pathway to Core Complete

12th Grade								
<b>Math (full year)</b> *To be core complete, students need 3 college hours of math.	On Ramps Statistics		MATH 1342	In person at high school	Algebra 2	\$149	3	1
	AP Calculus		MATH 2413	In person at high school	Precalculus	\$103	4	1
<b>Science</b> *Dependent on college / career path. *To be core complete, students need 6 college hours of science.	AP Environmental Science*		GEO 302P (UT)	In person at high school	None	\$103	3	1
	NCTC Biology for Science Majors I and II	BIOL 1406 / BIOL 1407		Virtual	ELAR TSI	\$330	8	1
	On Ramps Biology		BIOL 1306 + BIOL 1106	In person at high school	High school Biology and Chemistry	\$149	4	1
<b>English 4 (full year)</b>	NCTC British Literature I and II	ENGL 2322 / ENGL 2323		Virtual	On Ramps English 3 and ELAR TSI	\$330	6	1
	AP English 4*		E314T or E316P (UT - depending on score)	In person at high school	English 3	\$103	3	1
<b>Government (one semester: fall or spring)</b>	NCTC Federal Government	GOVT 2305		Virtual	ELAR TSI	\$165	3	0.5
	AP U.S. Government		GOVT 2305	In person at high school	High school U.S. History	\$103	3	0.5
<b>Economics (one semester: fall or spring)</b>	NCTC Macroeconomics	ECON 2301		Virtual	ELAR TSI	\$165	3	0.5
	AP Economics		ECON 2301		High school U.S. History	\$103	3	0.5

\*Students should contact the college/university they plan to attend to determine how advanced courses will transfer, if they will apply to a major or degree program, and if the grade will factor into the GPA.

# Student Standards for Success

Current students recommend that you consider the number of extracurriculars and other responsibilities before choosing your courses!

Due to the rigorous content of Advanced Academics, these courses **will require significantly more work outside of class** than on-grade-level courses.

1. Complete and turn in assignments on time.
2. Maintain a high level of attendance, and turn in make-up work promptly.
3. Can follow directions well. (online, syllabus, enrollment and payment guidelines)
4. Self-motivation, self-discipline, higher levels of independence, strong organizational skills, and the ability to communicate with professors are necessary for student success.

# AP, Dual Credit & OnRamps classes are not for everyone.

Please consider the following:

- Your future goals
- Your obligations (job, sports, chores, extra-curriculars)
- Cost
- Your personal strengths and abilities



**01**

Strong work ethic

**02**

Ability to learn concepts quickly

**03**

Self-motivated, responsible and organized

**04**

Ability to work above grade level

**05**

Strong time-management skills: homework!

**06**

Typical test scores > 90 (common assessments, benchmarks, STAAR)

# Student Survey (91 student responses)

Before choosing to take an Advanced course, I wish I would have known...

- How much it cost
- Minimal # of days designated for college writing assignments
- How challenging and time-consuming it would be
- The learning styles of each class
- The amount of organization you must have
- The need to have good time management skills and to try my best because it will benefit you for college since the course is not as expensive
- About the challenging aspects of taking a college class
- The amount of work you have to do at home
- I knew what I needed to know

# Student Survey (91 student responses)

**Question:** Is there anything else you want to tell me about your experience?

It has been great! My OnRamps teacher is great. She has been an amazing rep as well and a great teacher overall!

OnRamps has been a very engaging experience so far and I have found it to be very efficient in conveying information.

It was difficult and I wish I would have known how strict the graders were.

Make it so students can only take 2 on ramps classes per school year.

I should've studied more this semester.

It has been pretty good so far. Most of my problems come from time management, which is up to me, and not the class.

I really like OnRamps statistics and I think that it is way better than AP. I like that you can earn the credit by finishing the class with a good grade, opposed to taking a big exam like the AP exam to ensure your credit. I also like that it is independent in a way.

I think that in some ways the classes are easy, but in others it was difficult. I felt very sad when I didn't get good grades even though I tried very hard.

AP classes have been extremely better in many different ways, including the in-person note taking/teacher paced. As well as retakes on quizzes/tests. I love how the credit comes from the end of the year test in AP (and that you are still allowed to reject/accept the credit!)

It is a bit challenging, and I don't really know if I should or should not take the credits. At first it was VERY overwhelming, but then you get used to it. I am a bit scared for my finals.

Don't overload yourself with work.

# Student Survey (91 student responses)

What advice would you give to a student taking Advanced classes for the first time?

- Stay on top of your work, and when the teacher teaches, pay attention.
- Time management is key to success.
- You will have a lot of homework but it can be really easy to manage if you take breaks.
- Be ready for the workload, it is going to be very hard if you have extracurriculars or a busy home life!
- Don't be worried just do your work.
- If you have the opportunity to take an OnRamps class next year, do it, but don't stuff all OnRamps in one year and stress yourself out even more.
- Make sure you are able to balance the extra school work you are taking on with the rest of what you already do.
- If they've never been in an AP or Honors class, expect to spend time doing work outside of school sometimes.
- Don't be worried, just do your work.

→

# Thank you!



## Questions?

Email your high school counselor:

Last names A-G = Mrs. Walters @ [christa.walters@sangerisd.net](mailto:christa.walters@sangerisd.net)

Last names H-O = Mrs. Green @ [tisha.green@sangerisd.net](mailto:tisha.green@sangerisd.net)

Last names P-Z = Mrs. Trahan @ [delia.trahan@sangerisd.net](mailto:delia.trahan@sangerisd.net)



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