

GMCS

Gallup McKinley County Schools

AP[®]

CollegeBoard
Advanced Placement
Program

 **HONORS**

HANDBOOK

GMCS HONORS & AP PROGRAMS

The Gallup McKinley County School District's (GMCS) schools maintain comprehensive Honors and Advanced Placement programs to make it possible for academically talented and high achieving students to increase the challenge of their studies. GMCS is dedicated to helping students achieve and excel in their academic endeavors. Teachers in the GMCS Honors/AP programs are committed to preparing students to achieve academic excellence to ensure success in their college course work.

General Information about Honors Level Courses:

An Honors Level Course is more rigorous than regular courses. Teachers of Honors Courses cover curriculum at a faster pace and in greater depth while incorporating more complex analysis. Teachers are committed to preparing students to achieve academic excellence that will ensure superior preparation for college course work. At GMCS, Honors courses are not weighted.

General Information about AP Level Courses:

The Advanced Placement Program is sponsored by the College Board, a non-profit organization dedicated to preparing, inspiring and connecting students to college. The College Board writes and administers advanced tests and studies in almost 40 subjects from Art to Statistics. These tests, representative of freshman level college knowledge on that subject, form the basis of what we study in Advanced Placement Courses. Currently, GMCS offers Advanced Placement courses with the intent of challenging our students and to better prepare them for college. Each May, students take a national test that measures their knowledge in the areas they studied during the year. If a student's score is high enough, they may receive college credit at over 3000 institutions nationwide. While the amount and type of credit received depends upon the college to be attended, many will allow the student to skip basic courses with a score of 3, 4 or 5 earned on the AP Exam.

The curriculum for all Advanced Placement Courses offered throughout Gallup McKinley County School District must meet the approval of the College Board. College Board sends a Letter of Approval to individual teachers of Advance Placement Courses once the curriculum has been approved. These Letters of Approval are maintained in a file at Student Support Services to verify the authenticity of the Advanced Placement Course offering.

Why take an AP Course?

One advantage of taking an AP Course is that it allows the student to experience the rigors of a college level course in the more supportive high school environment. It allows the student to remain in the high school setting rather than commuting to a college campus. AP Courses can

ensure that a student is taking courses that are challenging and productive. College Admission Offices often look for this when making admissions decisions. Credits earned through the AP Program will also be less expensive than typical college tuition. AP Courses also provide students with an opportunity to build advanced study skills necessary for success at the college level. A student planning on attending a four year university should consider taking at least one AP Course in high school.

What is an appropriate course load?

Course loads should be determined on an individual basis as students have unique ability levels, outside commitments and motivation to complete a course which has a high degree of rigor. Consulting with teachers, parents and counselors can provide the most insight.

Indicators for Successful Placement:

Students may be enrolled in Honors/AP courses in a variety of ways:

- Teacher and/or Parents may recommend students to enroll in Honors/AP Courses
- Students may self-nominate to enroll in Honors/AP Courses
- When recommended, counselors will review PARCC and End of Year Course exam scores, as a factor in determining Honors/AP Course enrollment
- Teachers and Counselors will meet with the individual students on their potential in Honors/AP Courses
- Completing all prerequisite classes with a grade of B or higher and past performance as indicated by grades

Expectations:

In the GMCS Honors/AP Program, students are expected:

- To maintain A/B grades in all Honors/AP Courses
- To remain in the course(s) for the duration of the year. Student success is the goal of Gallup McKinley County Schools and students not succeeding in an Honors/AP Course will be handled on an individual basis.
- To maintain high standards of academic integrity
- To take the appropriate AP Exam in May.

How are AP grades weighted?

AP semester grades are weighted to reflect the increased levels of rigor, work load and expectations as compared to traditional high school classes.

Weighted Grade Score:**A=5.0****B=4.0****C=3.0****D=2.0****When are the AP Exams?**

Student mastery of course content is tested each May through the College Board Testing Program. Most tests consist of multiple choice questions and various free response essays. Results are released the following July and mailed to each student. They are scored on a scale of 1-5, with scores of 3 and higher considered passing in most post-secondary institutions.

AP Exams are administered the first two full weeks of May. Parents should be aware that this is a stressful time in their student's academic career. Students may find that commitments outside of school interfere with their ability to prepare for the exams. It is recommended that parents and students work together to manage the increased time to be successful on these tests.

Honors and AP Course Offerings throughout the GMCS District

GALLUP HIGH SCHOOL

Honors Course Offerings	AP Course Offerings
Algebra II	Calculus
Geometry	Physics
Anatomy and Physiology	Chemistry
Biology (Lab)	American History
Chemistry (Lab)	Government/Economy
Economics	Language/Composition
English I	Literature/Composition
English II	Music Theory
World History	
Government	
New Mexico History	
Senior Research	

MIYAMURA HIGH SCHOOL

Honors Course Offerings	AP Course Offerings
Algebra I	Calculus
Algebra II	Biology (Lab)
Geometry	Chemistry (Lab)
	Environmental Science
Anatomy/Physiology	Language/Composition
Biology (Lab)	Literature/Composition
Chemistry (Lab)	American History
English I	Government/Economy
English II	World History
English III	
English IV	
American History	
Government	
World History	
Art III	
Art IV	
Construction Trades	
German Language	
Spanish III	

THOREAU HIGH SCHOOL

Honors Course Offerings	AP Course Offerings
Chemistry	American History
English I	Government/Economy
English II	Language/Composition
World History	Literature/Composition
Senior Research	

CROWNPOINT HIGH SCHOOL

Honors Course Offerings	AP Course Offerings
Algebra II	Calculus
Biology (Lab)	Literature/Composition
Chemistry (Lab)	Art Studio
English II	
English III	

TSE YI GAI HIGH SCHOOL

Honors Course Offerings	AP Course Offerings
Biology (Lab)	Statistics
English II	Biology (Lab)
Geometry	English III
Senior Research	English IV
	American History
	Government/Economy
	World History

NAVAJO PINE HIGH SCHOOL

Honors Course Offerings	AP Course Offerings
Government	Calculus
Senior Research	

RAMAH HIGH SCHOOL

Honors Course Offerings	AP COURSE OFFERINGS
English III	
English IV	

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS OF AP COURSES

AP WORLD HISTORY

Course Description: AP World History is a college-level course that analyzes global patterns of historical development and exchange from roughly 10000 B.C.E. to the present. Through the use of primary and secondary sources, AP World History students will track historical change and continuity over the six period of study, paying close attention to unifying course themes and accompanying learning objectives. Great emphasis is placed on the honing of historical thinking skills, such as chronological reasoning, comparison, contextualization, argumentation, interpretation and synthesis.

AP US HISTORY

Course Description: U.S. History is a college level introductory course that examines the nation's political, diplomatic, intellectual, cultural, social and economic history from 1491 to the present. A variety of instructional approaches are employed and a college level textbook is supplemented by primary and secondary sources.

Themes of AP U.S. History:

- American and National Identity
- Politics and Power
- Work, Exchange and Technology
- Culture and Society
- Migration and Settlement
- Geography and the Environment
- American in the World

AP U.S. GOVERNMENT

Course Description: AP U.S. Government and Politics is a year-long, college level course designed to prepare students to take the AP Exam for United States Government and Politics. The course will examine political theories and every day practices that affect the policies and day to day operations of our government. Through intensive study, students will foster an understanding of the American political system, and their role within.

AP LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

Course Description: AP Literature and Composition is designed to be a college/university level course. Students engage in close analytical reading of important works of literary fiction. This course will provide students with the intellectual challenges and workload consistent with a typical undergraduate university English Literature/Humanities Course. The primary objective of this course is that students become lifelong lovers and critics of literature. Through reading and writing, students will explore worlds and ideas outside of their own, enabling them to develop empathy and critical understanding of the human experience. Literature is intimately involved in our quest to understand humanity and the societies we create.

AP LANGUAGE

Course Description: An AP Course in English Language and Composition engages students in becoming skilled reading of prose written in a variety of rhetorical contexts; becoming skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes. Students' writing and their reading skills should make them aware of the interactions among the writer's purposes, audience expectations and subjects, as well as, the way genre conventions and the resources of language contribute to effectiveness in writing.

AP BIOLOGY

Course Description: This course is structured around the four big ideas and the enduring understandings identified in the Curriculum Framework. All essential knowledge will be taught and all learning objectives will be addressed in this curriculum. The course will focus on inquiry based laboratory work and the use of seven science practices in both lab and non-lab activities.

The Four Big Ideas are:

- Big Idea 1: The process of evolution drives the diversity and unity of life
- Big Idea 2: Biological systems utilize free energy and molecular building blocks to grow, to reproduce and to maintain dynamic homeostasis
- Big Idea 3: Living systems store, retrieve, transmit and respond to information essential to life processes
- Big Idea 4: Biological systems interact and these systems and their interactions possess complex properties

AP ENVIRONMENTAL: SCIENCE

Course Description: AP Environmental Science is a laboratory science course equivalent to one semester college course in environmental science. This is an advanced study of topics in environmental science and will encompass multiple disciplines from the scientific field such as Earth Science, Biology, Physical Science, Chemistry and Physics along with courses of study in Math, Geography, History, Government and Literature.

The goal of the AP Environmental Science course is to provide students with the scientific principles, concepts and methodologies required to understand the interrelationships of the natural world, to identify and analyze environmental problems both natural and human-made, to evaluate the relative risks associated with these problems and to examine alternative solutions for resolving or preventing them. Environmental Science is interdisciplinary; it embraces a wide variety of topics from different areas of study. Yet there are several major unifying constructs or themes that cut across many topics included in the study of environmental science.

AP CALCULUS

Course Description: Advanced Placement Calculus is a full year course designed to prepare students to take the AP Calculus Exam in the spring. In this calculus course, students focus on concepts, as well as, skills to help them prepare for whatever mathematical challenges they may face in the future. The goal is for students to learn how to apply calculus concepts to solve problems in a multitude of situations and to use calculus to describe mathematical relationships.

AP CHEMISTRY

Course Description: The purpose of this course is to give high school students an opportunity to seek college credit in a college level course and/or gain the correct placement in future chemistry courses. Since we will need to cover several concepts related to the AP Exam, there will be little time given to lectures and more time given to exploration in the laboratory, active learning rather than passive. This means that students will be engaged in hands-on laboratory work for more than 25% of the class time. Students will be able to own their textbooks and supplemental materials, so that homework can be completed at home, and learning isn't constrained to just the classroom.

ALGEBRA 2

Course Description: The purpose of this course is to satisfy Algebra 2 requirement of the Common Core Mathematics Standards as adopted by the State of New Mexico. It fits into an overall project based learning environment that supports development of basic skills in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). This course introduces students to key concepts and theories that provide a foundation for further study in mathematics and increases students' mathematics literacy, problem solving and critical thinking skill. The problem solving and critical thinking skills that students learn in Algebra 2 are valuable tools that can be used in and applied to other disciplines.

AP STATISTICS

Course Description: The purpose of the AP Statistics Course in Statistics is to introduce students to the major concepts and tools for collecting, analyzing and drawing conclusions from data. Students are exposed to four broad conceptual themes:

- Exploring Data: Describing patterns and departures from patterns
- Sampling and Experimentation: Planning and Conducting a study
- Anticipating Patterns: Exploring random phenomena using probability and simulation
- Statistical Inference: Estimating population parameters and testing hypotheses

AP STUDIO ART DRAWING and 2-D DESIGN

Course Description: AP Studio Art is a college level course taught in the high school. Students will study Drawing and 2-D Design. Students will have the opportunity to compile a portfolio of their best work for submission and review by the College Board. Students will submit this portfolio in the first week of May; submissions will be in the form of digital image uploads to the College Board and actual work. Students will decide whether to submit a Drawing that is two dimensional; the finer distinction between the two portfolios will be discussed in class. Students should be aware that the 2-D Design portfolio may include photography and digitally produced designs with an emphasis on compositional components, while drawing portfolio is limited to "mark making" techniques such as drawing, painting or printmaking.

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