

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CAN I FULFILL THE 85 ELECTIVE CREDITS REQUIRED FOR PUSD GRADUATION WITH ANY CLASSES OFFERED AT DEL NORTE?

Elective credits are met in many ways;

1. Completing classes which only fulfill elective credits such as AVID Senior Seminar, AP Psychology, or Teacher's Assistant.
2. Once the required credits have been met in a subject area, any other classes completed in that same subject area go toward fulfilling PUSD elective credits.

Example 1: PUSD requires 20 credits of math to graduate. Each trimester a student who earns a D or better will earn 5 credits. After four trimesters (end of trimester 1 of sophomore year for most students) the student will have completed the required 20 credits. Most students take math all four years at Del Norte and all math credits completed after the initial 20 then go toward fulfilling elective credits.

Example 2: PUSD requires 10 credits of physical science. Once a student completes one complete class, such as Chemistry 1-2, they have met this graduation requirement. When that student then completes an additional physical science class, such as Physics 1-2, those 10 credits would go toward PUSD required elective credits.

IF I TOOK ALGEBRA 1-2, GEOMETRY 1-2 OR SPANISH 1-2 IN 7TH/8TH GRADE WILL IT COUNT TOWARD THE A-G UC/CSU COLLEGE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENT?

Yes. If, for example, you successfully completed with a C or better Algebra 1-2 and Spanish 1-2 in 8th grade and then in 9th at Del Norte completed Geometry 1-2 and Spanish 3-4 you would have completed 2 years college prep math and 2 years foreign language. (Please note; students do not earn high school credit for any coursework completed in 7th/8th grade.)

IS FUNDAMENTALS OF PHYSICS & CHEMISTRY 1/CHEMISTRY 1-2 YEARLONG (3 TRIMESTERS)?

Yes. It is a great choice if you feel you could use more time to learn the content of Chemistry 1-2. The first trimester class, Fundamentals of Physics and Chemistry 1, will count as elective credit toward PUSD graduation and will meet the "G" elective category for UC/CSU college admissions. Chemistry 1-2 meets the PUSD physical science requirement and the "D" physical lab science UC/CSU requirement. Fundamentals of Physics & Chemistry 2/Physics 1-2 meet the same requirements.

WHEN I SEE "1 YEAR REQUIRED" DOES THAT EQUAL TWO TRIMESTERS AT DEL NORTE?

Yes, one year = two trimesters. For example if the requirement is 4 years of English that would mean that each year students will take two trimesters of English. An example of this would be English 1-2, English 3-4, American Literature 1-2 and World Literature 1-2. The exception to this would be an AP course, which at Del Norte is a yearlong 3 trimester commitment.

IN 9TH GRADE I TOOK ENS 1, 2 AND 3. DO I NEED MORE PE?

By completing ENS 1, 2 and 3 you have earned 5 health credits and 10 PE credits. You will need to complete an additional 10 PE credits sometime in 10th, 11th or 12th grade.

TO MEET THE UC/CSU A-G ENTRANCE REQUIREMENT FOR THE “F” CATEGORY ENTITLED “VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS” CAN I TAKE ONE TRIMESTER CLASS ONE YEAR AND THEN THE SECOND TRIMESTER ANOTHER YEAR?

Yes, you do not need to take both trimesters in the same school year. You will need to take two trimesters of the same course to meet this requirement (i.e. Concert Band 1-2, Drawing & Painting 1-2, and Photo 1-2).

IF I TAKE OFF-ROLL WILL COLLEGES THINK I TOOK AN “EASY TRIMESTER”?

No, when a student takes off-roll it is not noted on their transcript. Also, colleges look at the entire school year to see if a student completed courses in all academic areas. Due to our trimester schedule, if a student at Del Norte takes off-roll all three trimesters in a school year they are still able to complete 12 classes, which is the average high school load across the nation (students on a semester schedule such as RBHS and PHS complete 12 classes each year).

WHAT CLASSES SHOULD I TAKE TO MEET THE UC/CSU “G” ELECTIVE REQUIREMENT?

This category is met by taking one or more classes beyond the minimum in the A-F categories.

Example 1: When a student takes Algebra 1-2, Geometry 1-2, Algebra 3-4 and Advanced Function Analysis (AFA) 1-2, the first three classes meet the “C” Mathematics category and AFA 1-2 would meet the “G” elective category.

Example 2: If a student completes Spanish 1-6 then Spanish 1-4 would meet the “E” Language Other Than English category and Spanish 5-6 would meet the “G” Elective category.

This category can also be met by completing specific courses which only fulfill the “G” requirement. These courses include Psychology, AP Psychology, AVID Senior Seminar, Fundamentals of Physics and Chemistry, and Economics.

IF I GET A LETTER GRADE OF A C IN A COLLEGE PREP CLASS CAN I TAKE IT OVER FOR A BETTER GRADE?

UC schools do not take a repeat grade if the first grade was a C or better. CSU’s along with many other colleges across the nation will take your best grade, even if the first grade was a C or better.

WHAT IS AN ATHLETIC EXEMPTION?

Students who participate in a CIF sanctioned sport may request an athletic exemption through Del Norte Athletics Department. This exemption allows students to waive 5 physical education (PE) credits. Waiving PE credits does not reduce the total of 230 credits required for graduation. It allows students to take an elective course instead of a PE course. Students are required to request an Athletic Exemption form within the first two weeks of their sports season. Only upon successful completion of the season and completion of the Athletic Exemption Form will 5 PE credits be waived from the PE subject requirement and added to the elective requirement. Students enrolled in any PE class are not concurrently eligible for a PE waiver (Fall Sport-Trimester 1, Winter Sport–Trimester 2, Spring Sport-Trimester 3). Freshmen are not eligible for a PE waiver. Seniors are not eligible for a PE waiver trimester 3 of senior year.

CAN I TAKE A CLASS FOR PASS/FAIL GRADE, INSTEAD OF A LETTER GRADE?

Yes, non UC/CSU college preparatory courses can be taken pass/fail. One class per trimester can be taken pass/fail. The student must get a permission form completed and signed within the first five days of the trimester he/she is requesting to take a class pass/fail.

QUESTIONS REGARDING HONORS AND ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) COURSES:

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF ENROLLING IN ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES (AP) WHILE IN HIGH SCHOOL?

The student who completes one or more AP courses and the end of year AP exam is sending a powerful message to colleges and universities that this student is ready for college. It very often assists the student in gaining admission, getting college credit and enabling the student to start off at college taking more advanced courses.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN AP COURSE AND AN HONORS COURSE?

AP courses are designed and updated every year to reflect what is being taught in leading-edge college/university courses. Students receive an external evaluation - the AP exam - which is scored by college faculty from around the world who verifies that the student has mastered college-level studies. For some colleges, AP course grades are weighted on a 5.0 scale, in other words a student who gets an A in an AP course is given 5 points in their GPA calculation, versus a student who gets an A in a standard course receives 4 points. This is how many students are able to achieve better than a 4.0 GPA. Honors courses offered at Del Norte are not weighted on a 5.0 scale. Honors and AP courses are more difficult and comprehensive than standard high school courses; the subject matter in these courses extends beyond the standard curriculum and is approved by the University of California system.

DOES THE STUDENT HAVE TO TAKE THE AP EXAM AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR?

A student enrolled in an AP course is expected and highly encouraged to take the AP exam. Many colleges and universities grant students admission, college credit and advanced placement based on the AP Exam grades, not on the AP course grades. The AP Exam grade is viewed as a national standard. "Students who have prepared for and taken the AP Exams adapt more easily to taking college essay exams, and are especially skilled in introducing a thesis and a well developed argument" stated Robert Blackey, Professor of History CSUSB.

WHAT IS THE AP EXAM AND WHAT DO THE TEST SCORES (1 TO 5) MEAN?

Each May, participating schools administer AP exams. With one exception, the exam combines multiple-choice questions with a free-response section in either essay or problem-solving form. The exception is Studio Art where the exam is replaced by a portfolio assessment. Each June the free-response sections and the Studio Art portfolios are scored by the above mentioned college faculty from around the world. The scores are combined with the results of computer-scored multiple-choice questions and converted into a grade on the AP's five-point scale.

5: Extremely well qualified

4: Well qualified

3: Qualified

2: Possibly qualified

1: No recommendation

WHAT AP COURSES ARE AVAILABLE AT DEL NORTE HIGH SCHOOL?

Del Norte High School strives to offer a broad range of AP courses that address student's interests. AP courses at Del Norte are yearlong, three trimester courses.

The following courses are offered in 2012-13: AP European History, AP US History, AP Government & Politics, AP English Language, AP English Literature, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, AP Statistics, AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Physics C: Mechanics, AP Chinese Language, AP Psychology.