

Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment Comparison

Students are able to earn college credit through Advanced Placement (AP) or Dual Enrollment (DE) courses. Both programs are designed to challenge students and provide an introduction to college-level work while in high school, but there are distinct differences between the programs, and students need to decide which option is best for them. The following chart compares some key characteristics of each program:

	ADVANCED PLACEMENT	DUAL ENROLLMENT
Credentialing Agency	College Board	The partner college/university
Required Teacher Credentials	Teachers must have completed AP training.	Teachers must have the same qualifications as any college/university faculty member and are considered “adjunct faculty.”
Curriculum Followed	College Board curriculum	College/university curriculum
Curriculum/Evaluation	Teachers must submit AP Curriculum Audit forms and syllabi for approval annually.	The college/university must approve book choice and the teacher’s syllabi. Each semester, the teacher is observed by a college mentor and is evaluated by the students in the class.
What types of courses are offered?	Generally, offerings include academic courses such as English, Math, Science and Social Studies, and a few electives such as World Languages, Computer Science, Psychology and Art History. See a list of AP courses offered at T.C. Williams High School.	Both academic and elective courses are available. Any course that is offered at the college/university could be offered to high school students. See a list of Dual Enrollment courses offered at T.C. Williams High School. Students can take courses at the college campus as well.
How do students enroll?	Open Enrollment; any student can enroll in the course.	Students must apply to the college/university and place at the required level on a college placement test or alternative exam. In general, students must be 16 years old and a high school junior. Waivers can be made for “exceptional” students.
Do students have to leave the school?	No, courses are offered at the high school.	No; the courses are taught at the high school. Students who want to take courses not offered at the high school would have to either take online courses or go to the campus.
Is the credit weighted?	Yes, 1 point.	Yes, 1 point.
How much does it cost?	Nothing; the course is free and the school district pays for the exam	The school division pays for courses offered at the high school. Students are responsible for the tuition for courses taken online or on campus.
How will dropping the course impact the student’s transcript?	When a student drops an AP course prior to the drop date, the course is dropped and is not reflected on the report card or transcript. For withdrawals after the drop date, a withdrawal pass (WP) or withdrawal fail (WF) for the course is reflected on the student’s transcript.	For the high school transcript, the DE policy mirrors the AP policy. For the college transcript, students need to be aware of earlier drop and withdrawal dates. If a student drops by the drop date, there is no record of the course on the college transcript. If the student withdraws by the withdrawal date, a W is listed on the transcript.
How do students earn college credit?	Credits are earned through scores on the end-of-year exam. Most colleges require a score of 4 or 5 on the exam to receive credit. The community college and some other colleges only require a 3 on the exam.	The students earn college grades based on the work they do during the course of the year. In general, the grade the student receives in high school is also what he or she receives on his or her college transcript. Students need to earn a grade of C or higher.
Do students need to take the AP exam?	Yes, students are required to take the course-related AP exam.	Students are strongly encouraged to take course-related AP exams.

Do students have a college transcript?	No	Yes
How do students transfer the credit to other colleges?	A request through the College Board to send official score reports to the college/university	A request through the college/university to have a transcript sent to the receiving college/university
Do colleges accept the credit?	More than 90 percent of U.S. colleges take some form of AP credit, however, the required score and the course equivalent varies by college. Students should refer to the college/university's website to see what credit they award and the required score. Most competitive colleges require a 4 or 5.	Generally, DE courses follow the same transfer guidelines as courses taken on the college campus. Students need to earn a grade of C or higher.