

SWEETWATER HIGH SCHOOL
COURSE HANDBOOK
2018-19



At the time of publication, listed courses/programs/fees were accurate, but are subject to change.

PURPOSE

Sweetwater High School provides a wide range of academic experiences for all students. This booklet will provide information to assist students and parents in planning an appropriate high school program that will allow academic goals to be reached.

Students and parents are encouraged to read the information included in this booklet carefully before choosing an endorsement and courses. Evidence has shown that students who plan their entire program early and review their progress frequently are more likely to graduate without difficulties. Wise planning and consulting with specially trained educators, such as the counselors, principals and teachers can be of great benefit. Students should enroll in classes that are academically challenging and will assure their being prepared for required state testing and post-secondary educational experiences.

GRADES

Chapter 75 of House Bill 246 mandates that students must master 70% of the Texas Essential Knowledge & Skills (TEKS) of each course for credit to be earned. Each semester grade below 70 may be averaged with the other semester grade in the respective subject. If the average of the two semesters is 70, credit will be awarded.

CLASSIFICATION

Students in grades 9-12 will be classified on the following basis. Classification is determined at the beginning of each school year based on the number of credits the student has earned as of that time.

Students will be required to earn 26 credits to graduate. Thirteen (13) of these credits will be derived from the four core subjects (4 English, 3 Math, 3 Science, 3 Social Studies), unless on the minimum plan.

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Credits Earned</u>
Grade 9 (Freshman)	Promoted from 8" grade
Grade 10 (Sophomore)	6-11 ^{1/2} credits
Grade 11 (Junior)	12-17 ^{1/2} credits
Grade 12 (Senior)	18+ credits

COURSES

Students at Sweetwater High School will attend on a full-day schedule. Juniors and seniors who are in a Career and Technical Education Career Preparation training program may have up to three periods off for work. Students who satisfactorily complete a course designated for grades 9-12 in grade eight will be eligible for the next level course. High school credit will be awarded to students who have successfully completed the requirements for high school courses in the eighth grade. High school credit will be awarded to students, who meet the score in accordance to district policy, on any credit by exam for acceleration test.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The graduation requirements for any student in the Sweetwater Independent School District are based on guidelines set by the Texas Education Agency for the year in which the student entered the ninth grade. Guidelines can be found in the TEA Toolkit. Changes, however, may be mandated by TEA.

Texas Education Agency Graduation Toolkit

Graduation Program – *Overview*

Foundation High School Program

A new, more flexible graduation program that allows students to pursue their interests will be in place for all students who enter high school, beginning in the 2014-2015 school year.

The program contains up to four parts:

- A 22-credit foundation program which is the core of the new Texas high school diploma
- Five endorsement* options that allow students to focus on a related series of courses
- A higher performance category called Distinguished Level of Achievement
- Performance Acknowledgments that note outstanding achievement

The Foundation requirements (22 credits) include:

English (4 credits) • English I • English II • English III • An advanced English course

Mathematics (3 credits) • Algebra I • Geometry • An advanced math course

Science (3 credits) • Biology • Integrated Physics & Chemistry or an advanced science course
• An advanced science course

Social Studies (3 credits) • World History or World Geography • U.S. History
• U.S. Government (one-half credit) • Economics (one-half credit)

Languages Other Than English (2 credits) • 2 credits in the same language or
• 2 credits from Computer Science I, II, III

Physical Education (1 credit) **Fine Arts (1 credit)** **Electives (5 credits)**

Speech: Demonstrated proficiency

Endorsements Total credits with endorsements 26

Enhancements

Additionally, a student may earn the Distinguished Level of Achievement and/or a Performance Acknowledgment for outstanding performance. The Distinguished Level of Achievement must be earned to be admitted to a Texas public university under the Top 10 percent automatic admission law.

Distinguished Level of Achievement

- Foundation Program requirements
- 4 credits in math including Algebra II
- 4 credits in science
- at least 1 endorsement

Performance Acknowledgments

- dual credit course
- bilingualism and biliteracy
- PSAT, ACT's Plan, SAT or ACT
- Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate exam
- earning a nationally or internationally recognized business or industry certification or license

*A student entering 9th grade must indicate an endorsement he or she plans to follow. A student may change or add an endorsement at any time.

A student may graduate without earning an endorsement if, after his or her sophomore year, the student's parent signs a form permitting the student to omit the endorsement requirement.

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COMPETENCY TESTING

The Texas Education Agency has mandated that beginning with the senior class of 2016, students must pass all five required End of Course (E.O.C.) tests in order to graduate: English I, Algebra I, English II, Biology, and U.S. History. Students who fail an EOC Exam must attend summer school in addition to taking a remediation course. Retesting opportunities are provided in the Fall, Spring, and Summer. Students must continue to attempt the respective E.O.C until they reach the passing standard. Seniors who do not pass all tests will receive only a certificate of completion which is not a diploma.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Students are expected to complete 1 credit of Physical Education in order to graduate.
2. The following courses will substitute for Physical Education: A. Band - Fall semester only - .5 credit. B. Students may earn PE credit off campus if it is approved by TEA and SISD. Information may be obtained at: www.tea.state.tx.us and search off campus P.E.
 - Any student who does not complete the required credits by substitution will be required to enroll in PE to complete the requirements.
3. Students may count 4 physical education credits or PE Equivalent Credits toward graduation.
4. Dual Credit and Honors grades are not considered in calculation for No Pass/No Play.

CAUTION

1. Because of scheduling conflicts, a student may not be able to register for every course planned during a particular semester. For this reason, students are requested to select alternative courses in case the first choice is not available.
2. All courses may not be offered every semester of every year.
3. Students have 10 days from the start of a semester to request a course change. The change must be within the student's endorsement area and program of study.
4. One Year Courses—Students who enroll in one-year courses are expected to complete the course. Example: A student may not begin the one-year course in Algebra II, then change at semester to Web Technologies. To receive 1 full credit, both semester A and semester B must be completed.

All SHS students must complete the foundation requirements plus the four additional endorsement credits for a total of 26 credits for graduation.

HIGH SCHOOL COURSE OFFERINGS AND COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Explanation of course names:

H Honors

D Dual Credit. Student receives both high school and college credit.

*Gifted and Talented (GT) students will be served in the Honors or Dual Credit classroom.

Local credit only. The state accreditation manual designates maximum credit that may be allowed for courses that are applicable to meeting the minimum state graduation requirement. Local school districts may allow additional credit beyond the state credit in certain courses, i.e. office aide. Local credit courses are not counted as state graduation requirements.

HIGH SCHOOL HONORS/DUAL CREDIT COURSES

Honors (H) and/or Dual (D) credit courses will be offered, but are subject to change, in the following subjects:

English

Honors English I

Honors English II

Honors English III (D)

Honors English IV (D)

Science

Honors Biology I

Honors Chemistry I

Honors Anatomy & Physiology I

Honors Physics

Foreign Language

Mathematics

Honors Algebra I

Honors Geometry

Honors Algebra II

College Algebra (D)

Pre-Calculus (D)

Calculus (D)

Spanish 3 (D)

Social Studies

Honors Geography

Honors World History

United States History (D)

United States Government (D)

Economics (D)

Professional Communication Speech (D)

Additional Dual Credit Courses include all courses from colleges that have partnered with SHS and taken at SHS.

All the above courses will be weighted for GPA and Class Rank purposes

PURPOSE OF ADVANCED COURSES

1. To offer enriched courses to students who have already mastered basic skills in the subject under consideration.
2. To offer students who have demonstrated ability an opportunity to master basic skills at a faster rate.
3. Freshman and sophomore level courses are designed to help students move to and be successful in dual credit during their Junior and Senior year.

ADMISSION TO HONORS or DUAL CREDIT COURSES

To be considered for Honors courses, a student must consult with their present teacher of the subject and have Course Recommendation Form completed to be considered for Honors placement. To be in an honors class the student must have passed the STAAR test for that subject. Students who are presently in an Honors course may continue in the Honors track by completing a new Course Recommendation Form for each Fall semester.

Students wishing to participate in Dual Credit courses must abide by the rules set forth in the Dual Credit Handbook

Students who enroll in an Honors or Dual Credit class are expected to remain in the class all year. Dropping the class requires the approval of the parent, teacher, and principal and will only be allowed at the within the first 10 days of the 1st semester or 2nd semester.

Dual Credit students and their parent(s) must sign a course contract at the beginning of the school year. Students who fail to adhere to the standards set forth in the Dual Credit Handbook will be placed on Academic Probation.

New Students

A student new to SHS who has been enrolled in/or approved for an Honors program or the equivalent in the previous school will be offered placement in the Sweetwater High School Program if it fits in the new student's schedule.

AWARDING CREDIT FOR HONORS COURSES

In computing grade average, 5 points are added to semester grades in Honors and Dual credit classes for class rank purposes only. Students who exit Honors or Dual credit courses after completing one semester, will receive honors credit for that semester only.

DETERMINING RANK IN CLASS

1. The grade average for class rank will be computed by averaging the semester grades. Grades to be used to determine the top ten students and honor graduates will include those earned in grade nine, ten, eleven and end with the fifth six weeks of grade twelve. Approved middle school classes will also be considered.

2. Grades, including summer school, credit by exam for acceleration, correspondence courses, college courses for high school credit, credit by examination, and credit earned in high school courses taken in grade 8 are counted in the grade point average.
3. In determining final rank in class, all graduating seniors who have earned twenty-six or more credits on the Distinguished Achievement plans are included.
4. Differential weighting for computing grade average is used. 5 points are added to semester grades in all Honors and dual credit courses only at the time ranking is computed.

Courses to be weighted for the purpose of determining class ranking at Sweetwater High School: ALL HONORS AND DUAL CREDIT COURSES TAKEN DURING ENROLLMENT AT SHS. HONORS COURSES TRANSFERRED IN WILL ONLY BE WEIGHTED IF SAID COURSE IS ALSO OFFERED AT SHS DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR THE COURSE WAS TAKEN.

To be considered for high-ranking recognition, (top 10 or SHS honor graduate) students must have met requirements for at least one endorsement. be on the Recommended or Distinguished Achievement Program. The top 10 graduates will be designated. Students with a GPA of 90 or higher will be listed as honor graduates on the commencement program.

SEMESTER TEST EXEMPTION POLICY

Semester test exemptions must follow the criteria set forth:

- 9th & 10th grade students must take all core subject semester exams, i.e. Math, Science, Social Studies, and English. This includes any remediation course.
- 11th & 12th grade students may be exempt from all exams except for those in which an EOC test must still be passed. This includes any remediation course.
- More than 3 excused or unexcused absences in any one class will forfeit any exemptions for all courses

A student CANNOT be exempt if:

- Class average below 85; 2 or more discipline referrals during semester; OCS or suspension from school during semester; library fine; outstanding balance in cafeteria

REQUESTS FOR TRANSCRIPTS

Seniors must send a transcript with their application for college admission. Additionally, a final transcript of all high school courses must be sent to the college at the end of the school year. Dual credit students will want to also send a final college transcript to verify college work completed in high school. SHS transcripts must be requested in counseling center. College transcripts showing credit from dual credit courses can be requested through the college's web site.

COLLEGE DAY FOR JUNIORS AND SENIORS

Any junior or senior may have one day excused absence each semester to visit a college campus for the purpose of making application for enrollment. This must be done prior to May 15. In order to receive this excused absence, a letter or statement from the college showing student's name, purpose and date of visit, and signed by the college registrar or other administrator must be brought to the principal's office.

NCAA INITIAL-ELIGIBILITY CLEARINGHOUSE GUIDE FOR THE COLLEGE-BOUND STUDENT-ATHLETE

Athletes are encouraged to check this website beginning their 10th grade year. Eligible students must maintain a 2.3 or higher high school equivalent GPA to enroll. To register, junior/senior prospective student-athletes should access the registration materials by visiting the clearinghouse Web site at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net. From the home page, the prospect should click on "Prospective Student-Athletes," which will link the student-athlete to the necessary information.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS TESTS

ACT/SAT - This test may be required for college admission. On-line registration at www.actstudent.org. SAT- This test may be required for college admission. On-line registration at www.collegeboard.com. TSI-This exam is a placement test for students who wish to study at certain technical schools, colleges, and universities in the United States. TSI testing includes general assessments. The testing assessment measures whether incoming freshman students have the necessary skills for college or university study.

TEXAS COMMON APPLICATION

This is an application form for admission to all 4 Year state supported colleges and universities in Texas. The same form may be used for various colleges by changing the school codes. (www.applytexas.org)

FAFSA

Assistance with the FAFSA, Free Application for Federal Student Aid, will be given to senior students and their parents. An evening meeting will be held in the fall to distribute and explain the FAFSA forms.

SCHOLARSHIP SCAMS

Do not participate in a scholarship program if that program has: A fee, "money back" guarantee, or requests for your credit card or bank account information.

NOTIFICATION OF AUTOMATIC ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with Texas Education Code (TEC), §51.803, a student is eligible for automatic admission to a college or university as an undergraduate student if the applicant earned a grade point average in the top 10 percent of the student's high school graduating class or in the percentage of qualified applicants that are anticipated to be offered admission to the University of Texas at Austin*, and the applicant:

- (1) successfully completed the requirements for the Recommended High School Program (RHSP) or the Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP);
- (2) earned the distinguished level of achievement under the Foundation High School Program; or
- (3) satisfied ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks on the ACT assessment or earned on the SAT assessment a score of at least 1,500 out of 2,400 or the equivalent.

High school rank for students seeking automatic admission to a general academic teaching institution is determined and reported as follows.

- (1) Class rank shall be based on the end of the 11th grade, middle of the 12th grade, or at high school graduation, whichever is most recent at the application deadline.
- (2) The top 10 percent of a high school class shall not contain more than 10 percent of the total class size.
- (3) The student's rank shall be reported by the applicant's high school or school district as a specific number out of a specific number total class size.
- (4) Class rank shall be determined by the school or school district from which the student graduated or is expected to graduate. (TAC §5.5(e))

A student is considered to have satisfied the course requirements if the student completed the portion of the RHSP, DAP, or the distinguished level of achievement under the Foundation High School Program that was available to the student but was unable to complete the remainder of the coursework because courses were unavailable as a result of circumstances not within the student's control. To qualify for automatic admission an applicant must:

- (1) submit an application before the deadline established by the college or university to which the student seeks admission; and
- (2) provide a high school transcript or diploma that indicates whether the student has satisfied or is on schedule to satisfy the requirements of the RHSP, DAP, or the distinguished level of achievement under the Foundation High School Program or the portion of the requirements that was available to the student.

Colleges and universities are required to admit an applicant for admission as an undergraduate student if the applicant is the child of a public servant who was killed or sustained a fatal injury in the line of duty and meets the minimum requirements, if any, established by the governing board of the college or university for high school or prior college level grade point average and performance on standardized tests.

* The University of Texas at Austin (UT) is not required to automatically admit applicants in excess of 75% of its enrollment capacity for first-time resident undergraduate students. Should the number of applicants who qualify for automatic admission exceed 75% of enrollment capacity, UT shall provide notice of the percentage of qualified applicants that are anticipated to be offered admission.

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

Division of Career and Technical Education

(Public Notification of Non-Discrimination In Career and Technical Education Programs)

Sweetwater Independent School District offers career and technical education programs in Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources, Business, Management and Administration, Education and Training, Finance, Health & Medical Services, Human Services, Information Technology, Manufacturing, Marketing, Sales and Services, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

It is the policy of Sweetwater Independent School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap or age in its vocational programs, services, or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act 1973, as amended.

The Sweetwater Independent School District will take steps to assure the lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

For information about your rights or grievance procedures, contact the Title LX Coordinator, George McFarland, at: 207 Musgrove, Sweetwater, TX 79556, (325)235-8601 and/or the Section 504 Coordinator, Melissa Howard, at: 207 Musgrove, Sweetwater, TX 79556, (325) 235-8601.

(Notificaci' on Publica de Ninguna Discriminaci' on en Programas de Carrera y Educaci' on Tecnologia)

Sweetwater Independent School District ofrece programas de Carrera y educaci' on technical en agricultura, alimentaci' on y recursos naturales, negocios, administraci' on, educaci' on, entrenamiento, finanzas, salud y servicios m' edicos, servicios humanos, inform' atica, fabricaci' on, comercializci' on, ventas y servicios, ciencias, tecnologia, ingenieria y matem' aticas.

Es norma de Sweetwater Independent School District no discriminar por motivos de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo 0 impedimento, en sus programas, servicios 0 actividades vocacionales, tal como lo requieren el Titulo V de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964, segun enmienda; el Titulo IX de las Enmiendas en la Educaci' on, de 1972, y la Secci' on 504 de la Ley de Rehabilitaci' on de 1973, segun enmienda.

Sweetwater Independent School District tomara las medidas necesarias para asegurar que la falta de habilidad en el uso de la lengua ingles no sea un obstaculo para la admisi' on y participaci' on en todos los programas educativos y vocacionales.

Para informaci' on sobre sus derechos o procedimetas para quejas, comuniquese con el Coordinador del Titulo IX, George McFarland, at: 207 Musgrove, Sweetwater TX 79556, (325)235-8601, y/o el Coordinador de la Secci' on 504, Melissa Howard, at: 207 Musgrove, Sweetwater TX 79556, (325) 235-8601.