

## **College Information Night** **March 8, 2010**

**College and Career Website** [http://www.1bcs.org/high\\_school/college\\_and\\_career.php](http://www.1bcs.org/high_school/college_and_career.php)

- College Information Handbook
- College Comparison Worksheet
- PSAT, SAT & ACT, THEA testing info & Test Prep info
- Local Scholarship Handbook for Seniors
- Internet Resources
- All forms pertaining to College are found on this link, not on the Forms link

### **PSAT**

- 9th-11th graders take the PSAT in October. In January I go over the test results with the students. I send an email to all 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grade students and parents in January with test results information. The “Improve Your Skills” section is the most effective way to improve SAT scores because it’s individualized for the student and it’s free.

### **SAT/ACT Tests**

- Difference between the SAT & ACT. There are no clear, widely accepted rules that determine whether a student would score higher on one test or the other.
  - To decide which to take, go on each website and do the sample questions. Sample tests are available in books, magazines, online, etc. Take both SAT/ACT practice tests.
  - There are 2 comparison documents on the College & Career website.
  - On the ACT, English, Math, Reading and Science count equally. Students who don’t do as well in Math or Writing may get a better overall score on ACT.
- How to add up the SAT/ACT scores. Even though total SAT is 2400, only count reading and math. Beginning in Fall 2012 the writing portion will be counted.
- College Comparison Worksheet. This is not meant to discourage. It is meant to help students in reality planning as opposed to fantasy planning which will discourage them.
- When to take & how often to take SAT/ACT? If student plans to attend a selective 4 year university, plan to take SAT/ACT in May or June of Soph year and then in the fall and spring of your Jr year.
  - Calendar for tests. Register 1 month in advance of test. Get scores back 1 month after test taken
  - Not penalized for taking it 3 times.
  - By taking it early you have opportunity to take a test prep course to raise score.

### **Challenging Courses & Good Grades**

- Even more importantly than SAT/ACT scores is to take challenging courses and get good grades. SAT/ACT scores are only one piece of the admission process.
- Choose competitive courses. Choose course work beyond required minimums.
- Beginning with this year’s freshmen (Class of 2013) 3 years of a foreign language is required, as opposed to 2 years. This will make students more competitive in the college admissions process.
- Be advised that once you choose a Math track, you cannot change it later in high school.
- BCS will be stricter in allowing students to take or not take PAP and/or AP courses. Students need to have demonstrated success in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. They can’t wait until the 11<sup>th</sup> grade to decide to take PAP/AP courses.
- The BCS Graduation requirements are available in the Student Handbook.

## Planning for College

As a parent you can help your child prepare for college by creating a checklist of deadlines and requirements. The student is in charge of the application process during their senior year. But you must help them in the planning process.

I plan backwards. So my advice is this:

In the summer prior to their Sr year, the student should have:

- narrowed their college choice to 2 or 3
- visited the 2-3 colleges of their choice
- taken the SAT/ACT and be satisfied with their score.
- Decide the major/college within the university they will put on application
- begin the application process online on August 1<sup>st</sup> of their Sr year (before school starts). Don't apply to 9 colleges. Don't apply to any college that you haven't visited.
- The most selective colleges may have the earliest deadlines. A&M closing date is Jan 15<sup>th</sup> of Sr yr, but if you want your choice of major you must apply before Thanksgiving.

Have your decisions made when your Sr year starts. So in order to take the pressure off your student and help them to be prepared the first day of their Sr year, I recommend the following:

### 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

1. Study skills
2. Responsibility for homework & assignments

### 9<sup>th</sup> Grade

1. Official high school transcript used for college admissions includes grades from 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>.
2. Begin resume. Include total hours in each category.
  - a. Extracurricular Activities
  - b. Community Service/Volunteer Work
  - c. Talents/Awards/Honors
  - d. Employment/Summer Activities

### 10<sup>th</sup> Grade

1. Update resume
2. Start looking at colleges. Remember that decisions regarding where you want to apply need to be made by the start of your Sr year, so that leaves 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> grades to check out colleges.
3. Take the SAT or ACT in May or June if you plan to attend a competitive university.

### 11<sup>th</sup> Grade

1. Update resume
2. Plan to take SAT or ACT in the fall & possibly again in the spring. Take writing component even though it's not mandatory.
3. Visit Colleges. Students are allowed three college visitation days per year for their Junior and Senior years. College days must be pre approved by administration. Parent must fill out a "College Day Absence Request Form".
4. Colleges plan "event" weekends in the fall of the Jr Year.

## 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

1. Update resume
2. Do you need to take the SAT or ACT again? Some colleges require specific SAT/ACT scores for automatic acceptance.
3. "Apply Texas" the online college application for Texas colleges and universities is available online after August 1<sup>st</sup>. Lots more info about this in the College Info Handbook on the website. There are some deadlines the end of Nov and the first of December.
4. College application essays will be worked on in Sr English classes at the beginning of the Sr year.
5. Request high school transcript to be sent in with application. Give BCS five school days to mail the transcript. Check transcript for accuracy in advance.
6. Financial aid applications. College applications are available in the fall. FAFSA is available January 1<sup>st</sup>.
7. Attend an "event" weekend at the college of your choice.

## Choosing a College

- College Visitation Days (these are the days that you and your child can attend with prior permission if on a school day from the principal) are listed on the BCS College & Career webpage as well as on each college website. This info can be included in college applications if official college tours, not drive thrus.
- In addition to the special college visitation days that you need to attend with your student, I plan to take the 9<sup>th</sup> graders on college visit days to Houston/Galveston area colleges and the 10<sup>th</sup> grade on two separate college visitation days to colleges farther away. This should not replace the college visit days you and your student go on. BCS graciously allows me to do this. There is a cost involved to cover transportation.
- Students who wish to graduate from A&M or UT and aren't accepted for their freshman year still have options. See the "Admissions Information for Texas A&M or UT" handout on webpage.

## Choosing a Major

- New in 2009. Texas Legislature passed a 170 credit hour rule & 6 course drop limit at all public universities. Over that and TX public universities can charge out of state tuition. Important to have a career path lined up so you don't take classes not needed. Doesn't include dual credit courses taken during high school.
- **Career Direct Online Assessments.** BCS provides the *Career Direct* Guidance System for our high school students free of charge. *Career Direct* examines personality, interests, skills and values. The 10th graders take the test as part of their Bible curriculum. This online assessment is available to all BCS 10th-12th grade high school students. Current 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders that haven't taken the test are welcome to take the test. The assessment can be done online at home. After the assessment is completed, you will receive a comprehensive report that can be immediately viewed, printed and/or saved to your computer. *Career Direct* offers online resources to help the student identify potential careers and college majors that match their unique combination of God-given interests, personality, skills and values identified in the assessment. There is no charge for the first registration key. There is a \$15 fee for the second registration key if the first key is lost.

## **Advanced Placement (AP) Program**

The Advanced Placement (AP) Program is a cooperative educational endeavor between secondary schools, colleges, and universities. AP courses designate a differentiated curriculum in preparation for the AP College Board examination. The program allows high school students to undertake college-level academic learning in AP courses and gives them the opportunity to show they have mastered the advanced material by taking AP exams. AP and Pre-AP class grades are weighted to determine overall CNA and GPA. AP courses make substantial academic demands on students. The students are required to do considerable outside reading and other assignments and to demonstrate the analytical skills and writing ability expected of first-year students in a strong college program. Students learn study skills and habits that are valuable to a beginning college freshman. In some cases the students are required to purchase the textbooks for these classes. The cost of the textbook is in addition to regular tuition.

The students in Pre-AP and AP courses are expected to maintain a weighted grade of “B” or better. If the student’s grade drops below a “B”, the student may be moved to a regular class at the end of the semester unless the Head of School or Secondary Principal grants a special exception.

All AP courses are under review through a College Board audit for awarding AP credits. Some AP offerings could be replaced based on the audit results.

To be eligible for Pre-AP and AP classes, a student must meet all of the following requirements:

- be recommended by a teacher in the academic area of the course under consideration.
- be highly motivated, possess good study habits, and be self-disciplined.
- have received a grade of 90 or higher in previous academic class; or 85 (non-weighted) or higher in previous Pre-AP class; or 75 (non-weighted) or higher in previous AP class
- receive approval of the teacher of the Pre-AP or AP class and administration.

The AP College Board exams are administered at BCS in the spring according to the schedule set by the College Board. There is a charge for each test and the cost is the responsibility of the student. All students enrolled in AP classes are expected to take the AP exams unless the Secondary Principal makes an exception.

## **FAQ About AP Classes**

- How do AP classes prepare me for & help me get into college?
  - AP classes are college-level classes. The students are required to do considerable outside reading and demonstrate the analytical skills and writing ability expected of first-year students in a strong college program. Students learn study skills and habits that are valuable to a beginning college freshman.
  - As AP classes are weighted (CNA multiplier of 1.1 and 1 point above Academic classes on the GPA scale) student’s grades and therefore class rank are higher. As many colleges automatically admit only the top 10% or the top 25% of the graduating class, it helps the student in college admissions.
  - Depending upon the AP exam score, the student may earn college credit.
- How many BCS students pass the AP exam & earn college credit?
  - It’s not a matter of passing the exam. AP College Board exams are scored on a 1-5 scale. Most colleges and universities will accept grades of 3, 4, or 5 on the AP exam and allow students to “place out of” equivalent freshman courses in college, sometimes with credit and grade points. This is at the discretion of the university, and it is not guaranteed that all AP scores will be accepted and allow students to “place out of” course work.

## **BCS Online Academy**

BCS On-Line Academy offers more than 75 different Bible-centered on-line courses for a wide variety of applications and purposes. Students may consider BCS On-Line Academy courses for these reasons:

- Credit Recovery or Remediation to address students with academic deficiencies. Students needing summer school credits or needing to make up credits for timely graduation should consider BCS On-Line Academy classes to resolve these needs.
- Transfer Credit Recovery to allow students with scheduling difficulties to conform class schedules and graduate on time.
- Home School or Home-Bound Education
- Independent Study, Advanced Placement or Dual Credit Courses

AP classes will count toward GPA and the CNA and will be weighted on the high school transcript. Dual credit courses will count toward GPA and the CNA but will not be weighted on the high school transcript. BCS students may not enroll in on-line courses if the same course is taught on the BCS campus unless there is a scheduling issue. Tuition for on-line or AP classes which are required for graduation but are not accessible to on-campus students will be paid by the school; all other costs are the responsibility of the student's family. Participation in any on-line course by students attending BCS requires prior permission from the Head of School or Secondary Principal. For more information on BCS On-Line Academy, call the school or visit the BCS website.

## Dual Credit Courses and Concurrent College Courses

Concurrent enrollment college courses are taken to earn college credit and not taken to meet high school graduation requirements. Concurrent courses will not be reflected on the high school transcript and will not be figured in the GPA and the CNA. These courses earn college credit that may transfer to another college or university.

Dual credit college courses are taken to meet high school graduation requirements and earn college credit. Dual credit courses will count toward GPA and the CNA but will not be weighted on the high school transcript (unless it is an AP course). Students may take dual credit college courses through the BCS Online Academy or at local colleges. The student pays any cost related to the dual credit course.

Students can earn dual credit toward high school graduation and college credit if they meet the following criteria:

- Student receives the approval of the Secondary Principal for each dual credit course (*TEA requirement*)
- Student must have successfully completed the 10<sup>th</sup> grade (*TEA requirement*)
- Student must demonstrate college readiness (*TEA requirement*). Therefore, student should have a weighted CNA of 80 or better and no failing or incomplete grades on their high school transcript
- Student is required to maintain four academic classes on the BCS campus (*TAPPS requirements state that the four classes cannot be dual credit off campus or online courses*)
- Student continues to comply with all policies included in the student handbook
- Student must meet the entrance requirements of the participating institution of higher learning (*TEA requirement*)
- High school students may not be enrolled in more than two courses for dual credit per semester. (*TEA requirement*)
- To receive high school credit for a dual credit course, a student must earn at least a numerical value of 70 or higher in the college course.

## FAQ About Dual Credit (DC) and Concurrent College Classes:

- Where will DC classes be offered? Classes offered through the BCS Online Academy may be taken on or off campus. Classes taken at a local college will be offered on that campus.
- If I'm interested in taking a college course that is not listed as a BCS High School Graduation Requirement, is that considered a DC class? No, that is considered a concurrent college course.
- Will the DC classes be supplemented with Biblical integration? DC classes through the BCS Online Academy will have Biblical integration. DC classes at local colleges do not have Biblical integration.
- Can I take a DC class if the same course is offered at BCS? Usually not, for the following reasons:
  - TAPPS requires that students take a minimum of 4 academic classes on campus. Due to that requirement, most approved DC courses will be electives or fine arts courses not offered at BCS.
  - BCS is accredited by ACSI (Association of Christian Schools International). Allowing classes that are not taught from a Biblical perspective is not within the spirit of ACSI accreditation guidelines.

- Are there any exceptions to the above rule? Yes. If the course must be taken either through the BCS Online Academy or at a local college to satisfy scheduling requirements. This generally applies to BCS high school transfer students.
- Will scheduling of DC courses be a problem?
  - BCS Online Academy courses can be taken at anytime, on or off campus.
  - DC off campus courses will most likely be taken in the evening or summertime because students are still required to take 4 academic classes on campus.
- Does BCS have a list of DC courses offered?
  - We will have a new list of DC courses offered through the BCS Online Academy available on the BCS website soon.
  - We hope to have a list of approved courses from Brazosport College soon. Students/parents are encouraged to pursue outside interests and find what DC courses they are interested in.
- What is the process if I want to take a DC or concurrent course at a local college?
  - If interested in a Brazosport College course, a Dual Credit/Concurrent Form will need four signatures: student, parent, BCS Counselor or Head of School and Brazosport College shared counselor, Jennifer Hedrick. The Dual Credit/Concurrent Forms will be located in the Secondary Office or from the BCS Counselor. The forms are not available online.
  - In order to take academic classes at a local college you must have either taken or be exempt from the THEA or Compass test. Information on the THEA test can be found on the BCS College & Career website or the Brazosport College website. Exemptions are determined by which DC or concurrent class you want to take. You may be exempt from the THEA test depending upon your ACT or SAT scores. The Brazosport College Counselor will need to advise you regarding scores needed for exemption depending upon the course you wish to take.
  - Brazosport College requires that all first time students attend New Student Orientation.
- Who is the Brazosport College Counselor serving BCS students? Jennifer Hedrick, 979-230-3238, [Jennifer.Hedrick@brazosport.edu](mailto:Jennifer.Hedrick@brazosport.edu)
- What are the upcoming deadlines? Dual Credit and concurrent course registration opens at Brazosport College on May 3<sup>rd</sup> for the first session of summer school.
- If I'm approved to take a DC course, will the course credit transfer to the university I plan to attend after high school graduation? If so, will it apply towards my major? It is the responsibility of the student to determine if the course will transfer and/or apply.
- What are the benefits of taking a college course for DC? The student may earn college credit prior to graduating from high school.
- Is there any disadvantage to taking a DC course? An academic DC course is not weighted (unless it is an AP course) and therefore the GPA and CNA may be affected (possibly lowered). This would affect the class rank, Valedictorian and Salutatorian status, top 10% of the class, etc. Electives and fine arts courses are not counted in the GPA and CNA so they won't affect class rank.