

PRINCE Leadership MONTHLY

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Course Levels in High School

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Being a parent of high school student, seeing abbreviations such as AP, DE, and CP is probably becoming a more common occurrence. While these are discussed frequently here on campus and in class scheduling meetings, some parents earlier in the journey may be less familiar with the different course levels PACS offers.

PACS is a college preparatory (CP) school and our basic level of courses are taught at the college preparatory level. If a student is not taking an advanced level course, their coursework is college preparatory at PACS.

Honors level courses are designed to be an increased level of rigor to the CP course. Because of the increased rigor, 5 points are added to a student's passing semester grade for Honors classes. This is a common practice within the high school college preparatory community. Students that desire to enroll in an Honors course must earn an 88 or higher in the previous year's subject area course.

We are blessed at PACS to offer Dual Enrollment (DE) courses where students earn both high school course credit as well as college/university level course credit. Many schools offer DE coursework. Oftentimes, these courses are offered online or students take the course(s) on the actual campus of a local college or university. Prince, however, is blessed to have several faculty who meet the high level of qualifications to serve as both a PACS faculty member as well as an adjunct professor at the university level. Having these qualified teachers on our faculty allows Prince to offer DE courses on our campus in a traditional format where students are earning credit for both PACS and the college/university. There are several requirements for students to enroll in a DE course. Some of these include course pre-requisites, previous content course grade and a minimum overall GPA. While the original course grade is reported to the college/university, 10 points are added to each dual enrollment student's passing semester grade on their Prince Avenue transcript. One thing to consider when selecting what DE course to take is determining if the college or university your student plans to attend accepts the dual credit to fulfill a core or elective class requirement. Prince is

the only school, public or private, in the greater Athens area that offers DE credit on campus taught by its own teachers. If a student only takes 15 of the 33 dual enrollment credit hours currently offered by Prince, that is a savings of \$9,552 in college tuition based upon the current rates charged by the University of Georgia System.

While some colleges and universities view Dual Enrollment as equal rigor to any level of coursework, most competitive colleges and universities view Advanced Placement (AP) courses as the highest level of rigor that a high school student can take. The College Board states that, "85% of selective institutions report a student's AP experience favorably impacts admission decisions." At the conclusion of an Advance Placement course, students take a national exam where they will earn a score (1-5). This score will be used by the college or university the student attends to determine if they will grant the student course credit. Each college and university has different criteria for the AP score required to earn college credit. It is important to check with each college or university your child is interested in attending to see what AP exam score is required to earn course credit. Another good question to ask admissions offices at colleges and universities is how Advance Placement and Dual Enrollment coursework influences admission decisions.

Course selection over a high school student's four years can be a daunting task. It is our hope at PACS to provide as much information as possible to help each student make the best choices.