

Preparing High School Seniors for the Next Step

College Prep 101

A Curriculum Adapted for Newport News Public Schools Gear Up 12 Course

Table of Contents

I.	Rationale	Page 3
II.	List of Lessons	Page 4
III.	Course Sequence	Pages 5 – 16
IV.	Appendix I: Tips for Parents	Page 17
V.	Appendix II: Parent Letter	Page 18
VI.	Appendix III: Books & Materials	Page 19
VII.	Appendix IV: Graduation Requirements	Page 20 – 24
VIII.	Bibliography / Resources	Page 25

Rationale

High school students who are contemplating going on to college after graduation from high school should begin the process of exploring and narrowing their selection of possible schools during their junior and senior year. It is very important that the students obtain certain academic, scholarship and other financial information as early as possible. Many colleges require specific course work from high school in addition to performance requirements such as grade point average, rank-in-class, and/or standardized test scores such as ACT or SAT. While there is no substitute for high academic achievement in high school, some institutions may also require that the student prepare a portfolio or a resume containing honors and awards, potential for leadership, high school counselor recommendations, family financial situations, etc., while others may require essays or interviews as part of the selection criteria. It is very important that you know the admission requirements for each school you are considering as early as possible. In some instances schools may use all the above.

The purpose of this course is to facilitate the college preparatory process by guiding the student as they navigate their way in choosing an institution of higher education. The program will offer lesson plans, with discussions, activities, and information on the process. The course will include involvement from the student, instructor, parents, administrators, counselors, and Gear Up program supervisor. The goal of the course is to make sure that 100% of students have applied, been accepted, will attend, and have a plan for higher education beyond high school. This course is a guide and hand in the whole process ensuring success of each student.

Goals

To become prepared for the next steps after high school
To develop college readiness and lifelong learning skills

Lesson Format:

Introduction of lessons subject
Lesson
Additional comments (if necessary)
Questions for discussion

Lessons

LESSONS BY SUBJECT

Admission Standards

College Terminology

Recruiters

Recruitment Materials

Application Process

Choosing a College

Campus Visits

Standardized Tests

Financial Aid

Scholarships

Campus Living

Roommates

Motivation

Transition to College

For Parents

Study Skills

Choosing a Major

Multiculturalism

Stress Management

Personal Responsibility

Time Management

Extracurricular Activities

Available Technology

Random Thoughts

Honors Programs

Academic Expectations

Course Sequence

September

- Mark your calendar with registration, admissions, and financial aid deadlines and fees.
- Determine if the schools that interest you have online admission applications. If not, request them by mail now.
- Meet with school representatives who visit your high school.
- Look at virtual tours of college campuses online.
- If you haven't already taken the [SAT](#) and/or [ACT](#), register for the test(s).
- Attend college planning and/or financial aid information nights and college fairs.
- Ask employers, teachers, and guidance counselors for letters of recommendation to accompany your admissions applications.

Week One

Introductions & Procedures

Introduction to College Terminology

Research in-state schools

College Visit

Register for SAT/ACT

Week Two

Introduction to College Terminology (Cont'd)

Visit from College Representatives

SAT/ACT help

Develop Action Plan for College Search

Develop samples of talent for schools to apply to

Week Three

Explore information about Scholarships

Prepare Scholarship folder

College Visit

Receiving Recruitment Materials in the Mail

Week Four

College Visit

Choose two in-state schools to apply to

Finalize Community Service Project

Prepare college folder

October

- Take the [SAT](#) and/or [ACT](#).
- [Work on your admissions essays](#).
- If you haven't already done so, attend college planning and/or financial aid information nights and college fairs.
- Visit your top school choices. If possible, make appointments with faculty, staff, and students.
- Complete applications for every scholarship for which you may be eligible.
- Meet with your guidance counselor to develop a college admission and financial aid application plan.
- Make a folder for each of your college choices.
- Contact the schools' financial aid offices to determine which forms they require. Some schools may require special forms.
- Finalize portfolios, audition tapes, writing samples, or other evidence of talent if required for admission.

Week One

Matching Interests to Majors

The College Essay

Choosing a College & Request Information

Week Two

Register for SAT/ACT

Mark Calendars for Deadlines

Develop Timeline for Application Submission

Develop list of accomplishments/awards

Career Match to Major for Colleges

Week Three

Research of Schools Out of State

Choose two state schools to apply to

Gather application materials

Begin writing essays

Draft due this week

Week Four

Finish essays/Finals due this week

Fill out sample college application

Review goals

Prepare letters/requests asking for recommendations

November

- Complete admissions applications by their deadlines.
- If you haven't already done so, attend college planning and/or financial aid information nights and college fairs.
- If necessary, register to retake the [SAT](#) and/or [ACT](#).
- Request financial aid forms and applications. Double check the deadlines for submission.
- Follow up to ensure your employers, teachers, and guidance counselors send letters of recommendation.

Week One

Research community colleges and/or trade schools

The Application Process

College Visit

Week Two

Choose one trade school/community college to apply to

Begin completing applications

Begin one on one interview with counselors and teacher about college plans

Week Three

Set up community service project

Visit from college representatives

Week Four (short week)

Apply to Colleges

Finalize scholarship research

Volunteer Experience in school

Register for SAT/ACT (If needed)

December

- [Sign up for a PIN](#), to complete your FAFSA online. (Also let your parents know that they will need a PIN.)
- Finalize admission applications.
- Urge your parents to file their taxes as soon as possible after January 1. This will ease the financial aid process.
- [Research and apply for other financial aid](#), including grants and scholarships.
- Watch for early admissions notices (they tend to arrive in December or January).

Week One**Begin Financial Research****Financial Aid Presentation****Look for Holiday Employment/Volunteer Experiences****Week Two****Request Financial Aid Pin****Checking and Savings account information****Open a Bank Account****Week Three****Fill Out Applications****Finances Information****Spending Simulation****Week Four****Financial Aid Seminar****Credit and Finances****Loan Information**

January

- As soon as possible after January 1 and when tax forms are complete (they don't have to be filed until April 15; you can use estimates), [complete your FAFSA online](#) (or go to www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov to download a PDF version of the FAFSA). Keep copies of all documents, including your PIN, in a file.
- If you can't attend financial aid nights, ask if you and your parents can borrow a video of an event from your counselor.
- Contact the U.S. Department of Education at 800-4-FEDAID for assistance completing the FAFSA and/or plan to [attend a College Goal Sunday event](#) (free FAFSA advice) near you.

Week One

Begin Filling out FAFSA

Explore all funding options for school

Financial Aid Refresher

Week Two

Multiculturalism in College

Extra Curricular Activities

Week Three

Choose scholarships to apply for

Week Four

Work Study

College Simulation

February

- Be mindful of deadlines. Always submit information on time.
- Research Advanced Placement (AP) or College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams.
- Watch for the e-mail notice indicating your [Student Aid Report \(SAR\)](#) is ready.
- Review your SAR for errors and make any corrections as indicated.
- Rank your top school choices.
- Attend a College Goal Sunday event.

Week One

Follow interviews with thank yous

Review SAR

Rank top school choices

Research AP and CLEP exams

Week Two

Study Skills

Stress Management

Time Management

Week Three

Begin Preparing Presentations for College

Honors Programs

Week Four

Prepare a Portfolio (Data)

Research PT jobs within Major

March

- Check with the financial aid offices to ensure your paperwork is complete. Submit tax forms if they request them.
- Narrow your school choices and make campus visits.
- Be on the lookout for acceptance letters.
- Start looking for summer jobs.

Week One

Transition to College

Roommates

Personal Responsibility

Random Thoughts

Week Two

Academic Expectations

Motivation

The Acceptance Letters

Looking for a Summer Job

Week Three

Narrowing School Choices

Next Steps after acceptance

Week Four

Next Steps

Campus Visits

Preparation for Graduation

Week Five

College Contacts

Final Decisions

People Skills

Communicating Properly

April

- Compare financial aid award letters.
- Make your final school decision and mail deposits, as required.
- Check with the school you've chosen about returning financial aid award letters.
- Notify the schools you have chosen NOT to attend.
- Plan for registration, orientation, and housing, and mark your calendar with important dates.

Week One

The Award Letter

The Scholarship Award

What is needed for College?

Week Two

Notifying Schools NOT attending

The Proper Way to decline

My attitude about school

Week Three

My abilities and strengths

Fine tuning weaknesses into strengths

A Day in the life of a college student

May

- Be aware of any summer orientation sessions that you must attend at the school in which you will enroll, and make plans accordingly.
- Finalize your summer job plans, and make a plan for saving a portion of your summer earnings.
- Prepare a realistic [student budget](#).
- Follow up with your high school to ensure the counselor forwards your final school transcripts to the college.

Week One

Plan Summer Schedule

Prepare Student Budget

Final Job Plans

Week Two

Plan Summer Orientations

Compile End of Year Reflections (Data)

Week Three

Interviews with college students

Career Week / Job Shadowing

Week Four

Follow up with schools

Work on End of Year Report (Data)

June

- Plan for college transportation.
- Notify your high school guidance office of your college selection and any scholarships received.
- Follow up with the financial aid office to ensure all paperwork is complete.

Week One

Plan for Graduation

Finalize End of Year Reflections

APA/MLA Style for College

Week Two

Gear Up Graduation

Follow up with school and financial to make sure paperwork is complete

Week Three

Finalize Graduation Plans

Notify Guidance of plans for college

Dress for Success Lesson

July

- Save money from your summer job.
- Send “thank you notes” to everyone who helped you plan and prepare for college.
- Make copies of your financial aid forms, health forms, etc for your files to aid in resolving future issues.

Congratulations! It's time to get ready to start college.

Appendix I

Advice for parents (reproducible)

Yes, there are things you can do to help your senior prepare for continuing their education after high school.

- It is important to attend financial aid presentations and career day functions WITH your student. Many of these events will be held in the evenings and on weekends. If you don't know when they're scheduled, contact your son or daughter's high school counselor. (Attend these events even if you did so last year or with a different student - there is new information all the time!)
- Ask them monthly, "Have you been to the Mapping Your Future websites? What are you working on and what scholarships have you applied for?"
- Sit down with your student and prepare a list of what he/she is looking for in a college and then help him/her sort through the information they receive from the different institutions to decide which ones offer what's on the list.
- Complete applications with the student.
- In November, [register for a PIN](#) so you can assist your student with financial aid forms.
- In January or February, you will need to help your student complete the FAFSA. Your PIN will help speed up the process.
- In March, the award notices will start coming in. Look at the financing carefully and contact the schools with any questions. Make comparisons!
- Go on trips with your student to as many of his or her top school choices as possible. A visit to the campus is invaluable to making a decision.
- Hug them, send them on their way, BUT don't change the locks - they'll be back!

Appendix II

Parent Letter (for copy and distribution)

Dear Parent,

Welcome to what may be one of the most exciting year of your child's life. Where did the time go? And how fast will this time go by. This brings us to the purpose of College Prep 101. This course will help the student understand and finalize plans for college. As we go through the year, your child will receive a wealth of information, resources, and guidance in preparing and entering college.

As your child enters his/her senior year you as a parent may wonder what your place in their life may be. You may ask yourself: What role do I play in my child's senior year? When it comes to preparing him/her for college do I take an active role or allow my child to flourish? Am I important to my child's planning. The answers to these questions are simple and this course will actively serve as a great foundation in helping you and your child find their way in the process of entering higher education.

Some of the most common factors affecting the student's final selection include costs, financial support, proximity of school to home, availability of major and perceived quality of the institution. Accordingly, students are encouraged to obtain as much information as possible pertaining to tuition charges and their projected increases, scholarship opportunities, financial aid and the qualifications required.

We look forward to an exciting year and feel free to contact me at anytime with questions or concerns. Have a great year!

Appendix III

Recommended

Books & Materials for Students

Get It Together for College By the College Board \$14.95 ea. Can be purchased from :

<http://store.collegeboard.com/sto/productdetail.do?Itemkey=008297&category=315&categoryName=Financing+College&secondCategory=&secondCatName=&thirdLevelCategory=&thirdLevelCatName=>

College Prep 101 By Lance Mills \$12.95 ea. can be purchased from

http://www.collegeanswer.org/index.php?option=com_rokquickcart&view=rokquickcart&Itemid=62

Weekly/Monthly Planners

Pencils and Pens

Folders (for storing applications and professional materials)

1" Binders (for handouts)

College Rule Paper

*Writing Tablets

Books & Materials for Teacher

College Handbook 2011 (By The College Board)

Scholarship Handbook 2011 (By The College Board)

Counseling Sourcebook Sampler (By The College Board – has handouts)

Appendix IV

Graduation Requirements for Newport News Public Schools

Standard Diploma

1. To receive a Standard Diploma, students will earn standard units of credit described in the table below, and of the standard units of credit earned, students will earn the following number of verified units of credit: English-two; math-one; science-one; history/social science-one; and one additional verified unit of credit of the student's own choosing.

Students who complete the requirements for a standard diploma with a cumulative grade point average of 3.60 or better at the end of their senior year will receive a Board of Education Seal on the diploma.

Credits Required for Graduation: Standard Diploma

Discipline Area	Units of Credit	Number of These Required to be Verified
English	4	2
Mathematics ¹	3	1
Laboratory Science ^{2,6}	3	1
History and Social Sciences ^{3,6}	3	1
Health and Physical Education	2	
Fine Arts or Career & Technical Education	1	
Electives ⁴	6	
Student Selected Test		1
Total	22	6

¹Courses completed to satisfy this requirement will be at or above the level of Algebra and shall include at least two course selections from among Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, or other mathematics courses above the level of Algebra and Geometry.

²Courses completed to satisfy this requirement will include course selections from the following [at least two different science disciplines]: Earth Science[s], Biology, Chemistry, or Physics.

³Courses completed to satisfy the History and Social Sciences requirement will include World Geography or World History, U.S. and Virginia History, and U. S. and Virginia Government.

⁴Courses to satisfy the Electives requirement will include at least two sequential electives as required by the Standards of Quality.

⁵A student may utilize additional tests for earning verified credit in computer science, technology, career and technical education, or other areas as prescribed by the Virginia Department of Education Board in 8 VAC 20-131-110.

⁶Students who complete a career and technical education program sequence and pass an examination or occupational competency assessment in a career and technical education field that confers certification or an occupational competency credential from a recognized industry, or trade or professional association or acquires a professional license in a career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia may substitute the certification, competency credential, or license for (i) the student selected verified credit and (ii) either a science or history and social science verified credit when the certification, license, or credential confers more than one verified credit. The examination or occupational competency assessment must be approved by the Board of Education as an additional test to verify student achievement.

2. Sequential Electives

Beginning with the graduating class of 2003, at least two sequential electives are required for the Standard Diploma. Sequential electives may be in any discipline as long as the courses are not specifically required for graduation.

- Courses used to satisfy the one unit of credit in a fine arts or career and technical education course may be used to partially satisfy this requirement.
- An exploratory course followed by an introductory course may not be used to satisfy the requirement.
- An introductory course followed by another level of the same course of study may be used.
- Sequential electives do not have to be taken in consecutive years.

3. Locally Awarded Verified Credits for the Standard Diploma

Students may be awarded locally verified credits in science and social studies to fulfill the requirements for verified credits for the standard diploma. To be eligible for locally awarded verified credit, a student must:

- Pass the high school course but not pass the related Standards of Learning test or approved substitute;
- score within a 375-399 scale score range on any administration of the Standards of Learning test after taking the test at least twice;
- have earned fewer than four of the verified credits required for the standard diploma; and
- demonstrate achievement in the academic content through the appeal process that follows.

In the appeal process for the student, a review panel will be established at the school consisting of an administrator, the Guidance Director, and the Lead Teacher for the appropriate content area. The panel will review the student's record for the course in question and grant the verified credit if: (a) the student has made a grade "C" or better in the course each semester or (b) has passed the course each semester and received a minimum score of 385 on the corresponding SOL test.

No more than three verified credits may be awarded through this process. Students may not use locally awarded verified credits for the Advanced Studies Diploma.

Advance Studies Diploma

1. To receive an Advanced Studies Diploma, students will earn the standard credits outlined in the table below, and of the total credits earned, students shall earn the following number of verified units of credits: English-two; Mathematics-two; Science-two; History/Social Science-two; and one additional verified unit of credit of the student's own choosing.
2. Students who complete the requirements for an Advanced Studies Diploma with an average grade of 3.00 or better at the end of their senior year and successfully complete at least one Advanced Placement course (AP) or one college-level course for credit will receive a Governor's Seal on the diploma.

Beginning with the ninth grade class of 2006-2007, students must complete college-level coursework that will earn the student at least nine transferable credits in Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate (IB), or dual enrollment courses to receive the Governor's Seal.

Credits Required for Graduation: Advanced Studies Diploma

Discipline Area	Units of Credit	Number of These Required to be Verified
English	4	2
Mathematics ¹	4	2
Laboratory Science ²	4	2
History and Social Sciences ³	4	2
Health and Physical Education	2	
World Language ⁴	3	
Fine Arts or Career & Technical Education	1	
Electives	2	
Student Selected Test ⁵		1
Total	24	9

¹Courses completed to satisfy this requirement will be at or above the level of Algebra and shall include at least two course selections from among Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, or other mathematics courses above the level of Algebra and Geometry.

²Courses completed to satisfy the Laboratory Science requirement will include course selections from at least three different science disciplines from among Earth Science[s], Biology, Chemistry, or Physics or completion of the sequence of science courses required for the International Baccalaureate Diploma.

³Courses completed to satisfy the History and Social Sciences requirement will include World Geography, World History, U.S. and Virginia History, and U. S. and Virginia Government.

⁴Courses completed to satisfy the World Language requirement will include three years of one language or two years of two languages.

⁵A student may utilize additional tests for earning verified credit in computer science, technology, career or technical education, or other areas as prescribed by the Board in 8 VAC 20-131-110.

Bibliography

Bibliography / Resources

Mills, Lance. A Course to Help Students Prepare for College. Retrieved August 2010 from <http://www.empowermentzone.com/collprep.txt>

College Prep 101. 2007. Retrieved August 2010 from <http://www.empowermentzone.com/collprep.txt>

The College Board. 2010. Retrieved August 2010 from <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/k-12/planning/collegeed>

<http://campustours.com/> - guide to virtual campus tour for many colleges and universities.

The College Board – online and print resource for testing and college prep.

<http://www.actstudent.org/> - website of the ACT testing.

<http://www.fastweb.com/> - scholarship resource for students.

<http://www.collegeedge.org/> - resource for the college essay

<http://www.educationworld.com/> - lesson planning resource

TeacherPayTeachers.com – lesson planning resource. This site offers free and paid lesson plans by educators of a variety of subjects and grades.

<http://www.collegeview.com/index.jsp> - search engine for schools with a wealth of information on tuition, majors, career scope, etc.

<http://www.educationindex.com/> - reviews, ratings, and contact information for colleges.