

Wittenberg-Birnamwood High School Laude System

Academic Excellence Recognition

The Laude System replaces the traditional class rank system. This started with the class of 2020. The Laude System is a point-based system utilizing a student's unweighted grade point average along with the number of semesters of advanced coursework (laude honors courses). To earn the highest honors, Summa Cum Laude, a student must earn both the indicated range of points in the Laude System as well as earn a composite score of 26 or higher on the ACT.

Students will earn one point per semester for designated Laude courses (as indicated on the following chart). Students must also successfully pass and complete a class to receive the designated honor points.

Students will be eligible for the Summa Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude, or Cum Laude recognition by ***multiplying their grade point average at the end of the second trimester senior year times the total number of Laude Course points earned during all four years of high school.***

*If a student fails a course during the 3rd trimester, they will lose that Laude point.

Example:

Semesters of Laude Honors Courses (total points): 23

Cumulative GPA: 3.67

Total: 84.41

Laude Recognition = Magna Cum Laude (great honor)

Levels of Honor/Distinction

- **Cum Laude** (with honor/distinction): 19.2 - 55.5 (Royal Blue Cords)
- **Magna Cum Laude** (with great honor/distinction): 56 - 87.4 (Silver Cords)
- **Summa Cum Laude** (with highest honor/distinction): 88 - 128, ACT Composite score 26 + (Gold Cords)

* If a student earns Summa Cum Laude standing but fails to meet the 26 ACT Composite cut score, he/she will be recognized with Magna Sum Laude Honor/Distinction

Laude Matrix:

		Grade Point Average									
	GPA	4	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.2	
Honor Points	32	128	124.8	121.6	118.4	115.2	112	108.8	105.6	102.4	
	31	124	120.9	117.8	114.7	111.6	108.5	105.4	102.3	99.2	
	30	120	117	114	111	108	105	102	99	96	
	29	116	113.1	110.2	107.3	104.4	101.5	98.6	95.7	92.8	
	28	112	109.2	106.4	103.6	100.8	98	95.2	92.4	89.6	
	27	108	105.3	102.6	99.9	97.2	94.5	91.8	89.1	86.4	
	26	104	101.4	98.8	96.2	93.6	91	88.4	85.8	83.2	
	25	100	97.5	95	92.5	90	89.5	85	82.5	80	
	24	96	93.6	91.2	88.8	86.4	84	81.6	79.2	79.2	
	23	92	89.7	87.4	85.1	82.8	80.5	78.2	75.9	73.6	
	22	88	85.8	83.6	81.4	79.2	77	74.8	72.6	70.4	
	21	84	81.9	79.8	77.7	75.6	73.5	71.4	69.3	67.2	
	20	80	78	76	74	72	70	68	66	64	
	19	76	74.1	72.2	70.3	68.4	66.5	64.6	62.7	60.8	
	18	72	70.2	68.4	66.6	64.8	63	61.2	59.4	57.6	
	17	68	66.3	64.6	62.9	61.2	59.5	57.8	56.1	54.4	
	16	64	62.4	60.8	59.2	59.6	56	54.4	52.8	51.2	
	15	60	58.5	57	55.5	54	52.5	51	49.5	48	
	14	56	54.6	53.2	51.8	50.4	49	47.6	46.2	44.8	
	13	52	50.7	49.4	48.1	46.8	45.5	44.2	42.9	41.6	
	12	48	46.8	45.6	44.4	43.2	42	40.8	39.6	38.4	
	11	44	42.9	41.8	40.7	39.6	38.5	37.4	36.3	35.2	
	10	40	39	38	37	36	35	34	33	32	
	9	36	35.1	34.2	33.3	32.4	31.5	30.6	29.7	28.8	
	8	32	31.2	30.4	29.6	28.8	28	27.2	26.4	25.6	
	7	28	27.3	26.6	25.9	25.2	24.5	23.8	23.1	22.4	
	6	24	23.4	22.8	22.2	21.6	21	20.4	19.8	19.2	
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Summa Cum Laude	88 - 128 Laude Points, ACT Composite 26+
Magna Cum Laude	56 - 87.4 Laude Points
Cum Laude	19.2 - 55.5 Laude Points

Laude Honors Courses 2020-2021: 1.0 laude point per semester for each course completed and passed. 2.0 laude points per year-long course completed and passed.

Department	Laude Courses
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agronomy (1) • Ag II: Animal Science (1) • Greenhouse Management (1) <i>2024-25 school year on</i>
Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced Independent Art (1 per trimester)
Business/Information Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intro to Business (1) • Accounting 1 (2) • Accounting 2 (1) • Quickbooks (1) • Microsoft Office (1) • I.T. Development and Design Fundamentals (1) • Web Design 1 A, B, C (1 each)
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English 11 CP (2) • Written Communications (1) • Communications 133 (1) • Writing Foundations 100 (1)
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College Algebra (2) • Precalculus (2) • (AP) Statistics (2) • (AP) Calculus (2)
Music (Band/Choir)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd year (2 for all year) • 4th year (2 for all year) • <i>1 point for 1 trimester 3rd and 4th years</i>
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physics (1 point/trimester) • Human Anatomy and Physiology (2) • AP Biology (2)
Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Psychology (2) • AP United States History (2) • AP Government and Politics (2)
Technology Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanical Drafting 1 (1 each) • Architectural Drafting 1 (1 each) • Recreational and Small Vehicle (1) • Furniture Manufacturing 3 (1) • Intro to Manufacturing (1) <i>2024-25 school year on</i> • Manufacturing Processes (1) <i>2024-25 school year on</i>
World Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spanish III (2) • AP Spanish/Spanish 202 (2)
Other (Start College Now, ECCP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Technical Diploma (2) • Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Certification (2) • Intro to First Nation Studies (1)

Note: The Laude honors courses will be reviewed yearly by the Learning Council upon completion of the schedule. Courses may be added to the list or taken off the list based on yearly offerings.

Grading Scale:

To ensure a consistent grading scale in all academic areas, the Wittenberg-Birnamwood High School will adopt a common grading scale for all courses starting fall of 2016.

Letter Grade	Percent Grade
A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	60-66
F	Below 60

FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions):

How will students with Laude Honor/Distinction be recognized?

Upon graduation (based on completion of the 7th semester) students will be recognized for earning Laude standing in the following manner:

- **Cum Laude:** Royal Blue Honors Cords
- **Magna Cum Laude:** Silver Honors Cords
- **Summa Cum Laude:** Gold Honors Cords, Academic Honors Medallion

Will colleges accept this system?

Yes – Colleges do recognize the Laude System; however, they also consider the following: rigor of curriculum, test scores, recommendations, high school record, talents and activities, personal essays,

and other mitigating factors. Based on the information we have gathered from other schools who have moved away from class rank, the resounding answer is that it will help. This system will allow colleges to look beyond class rank and take a closer look at a student's full body of work. Schools using this system have observed a higher acceptance rate to colleges and especially to the more competitive colleges.

How will graduation speakers be decided?

With the change in this academic excellence recognition system, we no longer use the valedictorian or salutatorian awards. The class president has one speech. Students earning the Summa Cum Laude distinction qualify for the remaining two graduation speaker positions. This group of students will be asked if they are interested in speaking. If they are and there are more than two interested, they will be placed on a ballot and voted on by the high school faculty.

Can I earn honor points for courses I completed at another school?

Transfer students will receive honor points toward the Laude System for Advanced Placement courses passed and completed at their previous school. Due to the varying nature of how honors classes are designated in other schools, honors classes besides Advanced Placement will not be granted to transfer students for honor points toward the Laude System. Any dual credit courses will be granted points with proof of credit received. If a student fails to produce evidence of credit received, they will not receive Laude points for those courses. Any disagreements are subject to the standard appeal process through the chain of command up to the Board of Education.

Why the change?

Class rank compares a student's performance to that of his or her peers. Since not every student takes identical classes during their high school career, the validity of class rank is inaccurate.

With class rank, a student is not in control of his or her own recognition for their performance. Rather, a student's ranking is dependent upon others' academic performance in courses that may not be as competitive as others.

Our students are compromising their learning and experiences based on the competitive nature of the 4.0 class ranking system. Rather than taking courses that best meet their post secondary plan, they choose courses less rigorous in fear of compromising the 4.0. The Laude System honors rigor and academic success making the risk less impactful on the previous system.

This system will provide incentive for students to challenge themselves to participate in high-level courses and better prepare themselves for post-secondary educational opportunities.

What about scholarships? Most scholarships emphasize class rank.

We have informed our scholarship benefactors of the change and have educated and worked with them so they can make the proper adjustments to scholarship criteria in an effort to honor this academic recognition change.

Who will keep track of these points?

Students and their families are responsible for keeping track of their own points so that each student is clear on the number of Laude courses they have taken and plan to take in the future in order to reach

their desired goal. They have the option of using the Laude Points Worksheet to help them. Nearing graduation, our staff calculates each student's level of honor to distribute the correct color cords. Course lists will be updated yearly based on offerings within and outside our school.