



Alternative Credits Toward Graduation Frequently Asked Questions

****Students planning to take any outside course need to receive prior approval before the course begins. Without prior approval, there is no guarantee the course will be placed on the OPUSD transcript. Please complete [OPHS Alternative Credits from Non-OPUSD Accredited Institutions](#) form to start the pre-approval process.****

****Students needing to remediate a course should discuss their options with their OPHS counselor, then fill out the [Non-OPUSD Course for Remediation](#) form.**

All courses taken outside OPUSD, whether during the summer or regular school year, will require submission of a separate non-OPUSD transcript to colleges or universities. Students should be prepared to explain on their college applications why the course was taken outside and not at their regular high school.

Planning to take a course outside the district? Please read the information below before enrolling in a non-OPUSD course.

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1. I would like to take a non-OPUSD course to free up room in my regular school year schedule. Can I do that?

Yes, students may take up to 40 outside credits from other accredited institutions for high school graduation credit, not exceeding 10 credits per academic year (June 1 - May 31). **All outside courses require prior approval.** Courses taken outside OPUSD for graduation credit will earn and be recorded on the OPUSD transcript as "Credit" or "No Credit", and will not be factored into the student's Grade Point Average (GPA) calculation. "Credit" will be placed on the transcript for letter grades of C- or higher. "No Credit" will be placed on the transcript for a letter grade lower than a C-.

2. Can I take any course I want?

Effective beginning summer 2024, students may take up to 10 credits in UC A-G Subjects A (History/Social Science), B (English), C (Mathematics), D (Laboratory Science), and F (Visual and Performing Arts) during their high school career. Once a student reaches the 10 credit limit in a subject area, they may not take another course in that area for graduation credit on the OPUSD high school transcript. *(If you are a 10-12th grader who has taken an outside course prior to summer 2024, your 10 credits in a subject area starts NOW. Previous–before summer 2024–outside courses will not contribute toward the 10 credit per subject area maximum.)*

For example, if a student successfully completes World Geography & Cultures over the summer between 8th and 9th grade, they would earn 5 credits in Subject A. If the same student wanted to take World History CP the following summer, their request would be denied. World History CP is a 10 credit course and would put the student over the 10 credit per subject area maximum. They could take another 5 credit Subject A course later to equal the 10 credit limit.

Please note, the ten credit subject matter limit does not apply to Subject G (College Preparatory Electives) and languages taken through outside Private Language Instruction. That means more than 10 credits may be taken for graduation credit during a student's high school career. While students may take more than 10 outside credits in Subject G, these credits still apply to the 40 outside credit limit (not to exceed 10 credits per academic year).

Please speak with your counselor about your outside credit plans. They will help you think through all the possible implications of taking a particular course.

3. How do I check UC A-G eligibility?

While outside courses and programs are not monitored or endorsed by OPUSD, students may use this [Step-by-Step Guide](#) to research and verify courses. Courses must be UC A-G approved, with the exception of PE.

It is important to verify that UC/CSU approves the non-OPUSD course.

4. How do I check NCAA eligibility?

NCAA eligibility is based on a student-athlete's academic readiness and amateur status. If you're thinking about playing college sports, it's crucial to know what this means – and it's best to start learning now. To check NCAA eligibility, please visit the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#).

5. What should I consider when taking an outside course?

While any graduation-required course may be taken outside, it is *strongly* recommended that courses taken in sequence (for example, Algebra 1 → Geometry → Algebra II) be taken at OPHS. OPUSD cannot guarantee that a course taken off campus will prepare you for the sequential class in the same way as taking the course at OPHS.

We have found that summer courses have not always yielded successful results for students in the following years. Learning a year's worth of curriculum in 3-6 weeks may not solidify your understanding of topics, as students do not receive sufficient time to develop key skills in cumulative subjects that require mastery of the previous material to be successful in future courses.

In addition, courses offered at OPHS may be taken over the summer to fulfill graduation requirements, to accelerate, or to meet a prerequisite for another class. Due to the compressed nature of summer school classes (a yearlong course condensed into six weeks or a semester course condensed into three weeks), however, students taking a class as a prerequisite for another course may be required to review concepts on their own in order to keep up with the fast pace of upper-level classes. We do not recommend taking such courses over the summer.

Please speak with your counselor about your outside credit plans. They will help you think through all the possible implications of taking a particular course.

6. Can I take more than one course in an academic year?

It depends on the course(s) you plan to take. Students may take up to 10 credits from non-OPUSD accredited institutions in an academic year (June 1 - May 31). Ten (10) credits equals a year-long course. Five (5) credits equals a semester-long course. So, students may take 1 year-long course outside OPUSD per academic year (summer school + regular school year), or 2 semester-long courses outside per academic year.

7. Can I take more than one course in a department?

It depends on the course(s) you plan to take. Beginning summer 2024, students may take up to 10 credits per A-G subject area (excluding Subject G electives and languages taken through Private Language Instruction) total during their high school career. Ten (10) credits equals a year-long course. Five (5) credits equals a semester-long course. So, students may take 1 year-long course in a particular subject area, or 2 semester-long courses in that subject area during their high school career.

For example, if a student successfully completes World Geography & Cultures over the summer between 8th and 9th grade, they would earn 5 credits in Subject A. If the same student wanted to take World History CP the following summer, their request would be denied. World History CP is a 10 credit course and would put the student over the 10 credit per subject area maximum. They could take another 5 credit Subject A course later to equal the 10 credit limit.

Please note the 10 credit subject matter limit does not apply to Subject G (College Preparatory Electives) and languages taken through outside Private Language Instruction. That means more than 10 credits may be taken for graduation credit during a student's high school career. While students may take more than 10 outside credits in Subject G, these credits still apply to the 40 outside credit limit (not to exceed 10 credits per academic year).

If you are a 10-12th grader who has taken an outside course prior to summer 2024, your 10 credits in a subject area starts NOW. Previous–before summer 2024–outside courses will not be added toward the 10 credits per subject area maximum.

8. What courses are considered "outside"?

Courses considered outside include:

- **Concurrent enrollment** at a California Community College
- High school courses taken at **regionally accredited institutions**
- An advanced course **not offered** at Oak Park High School
- *Includes courses taken during the summer*

9. How do I get an outside course approved?

- a. Complete [this form](#) with all the required elements.
- b. Upon receipt of approval confirmation, enroll in the course at the specified outside institution.
- c. If you need to remediate a course, please see question #16 below for instructions.

10. How do I get an approved outside course on my OPUSD transcript?

- a. Upon completion of the outside course, the student is responsible for requesting an official transcript from the outside institution with their final class grade indicated.
- b. The official outside transcript should be sent directly from the outside institution to:
Oak Park High School
Attn: Registrar
899 Kanan Road
Oak Park, CA 91377
- c. A delay in submitting an official transcript may affect a student's school schedule and placement of the course on the OPUSD transcript.

11. Where can I take an outside course?

OPUSD has approved several institutions. While these institutions are pre-approved, students must still complete the [Alternative Credits from Non-OPUSD Institutions](#) approval form. The students also need to ensure the course they are taking is [A-G eligible](#). If the course does not have the A-G designation, you will need to select a different institution from which to take that course.

- a. Any California Community College (free)
- b. [APEX Learning](#) (fee-based)
- c. [BYU High School Courses](#) (fee-based)
- d. [Conejo Schools Foundation's Get Ahead Program](#) (fee-based)
- e. [Futures/FusionAcademy](#) (fee-based)
- f. [Mt. SAC High School Referral](#) (free)
- g. [Oak Park Education Foundation's Summer School Program](#) (fee-based)
- h. [River Oaks Summer Academy](#) (free)
- i. [Silicon Valley High School](#) (fee-based)
- j. [Stanford Online](#) (fee-based)

- k. [UC Scout on Demand](#) (fee-based)
- l. [Vista Real Charter/Mission Academy](#) (free)

Note: This list is neither an endorsement of nor a recommendation for any particular program or school.

If you need to remediate a course, please see question #16 below for instructions.

12. What is concurrent enrollment?

Concurrent enrollment is enrollment in a community college course while also enrolled in an OPUSD high school. Concurrent enrollment courses do not automatically earn OPUSD graduation credit unless prior approval is granted. Upon completion of the outside course, the student must provide the official community college transcript in order for the course to be added to the high school transcript as "Credit" or "No Credit". It is the student's responsibility to submit the transcripts for outside courses (taken during the school year and/or during the summer) when submitting college applications.

Students are responsible for checking the college transferability of courses taken at community colleges with their prospective colleges or universities. Not all courses are transferable. Each college or university makes its own transfer course determination. This is not an OPUSD decision.

Please note that all coursework taken through concurrent enrollment becomes part of the student's college academic history. Grades received, or excessive drops have implications for future status involving financial assistance, athletic eligibility, academic standing, etc.

13. If I take an outside class and have it added to my transcript, can it later be removed?

No. Once outside credits are placed on a transcript, they may not be removed.

14. What courses are not considered "outside"?

Courses not considered outside include:

- **Dual enrollment** community college courses taken at OPHS
- Courses offered at Oak Park High School that **cannot be accommodated** within a student's schedule in the current school year despite being requested in "Q" during course requests, or due to other limitations/circumstances beyond the student's control (provided appropriate for their grade and academic level).
- Courses taken for **credit recovery** (when a student has earned a grade lower than a C-)
- **Private world language instruction**

15. If I take a course not considered outside, will the grade I earn be placed on my OPUSD transcript?

Yes, with pre-approval, grades earned in courses not considered outside will be placed on the high school transcript and factored into the student's Grade Point Average (GPA) calculation.

16. I need to remediate a course because I earned a D or F. What do I need to do?

- a. Talk to your OPHS counselor to discuss your various options for remediation.
- b. Complete the [Non-OPUSD Course for Remediation](#) form and return it to your OPHS counselor.
- c. If you plan to remediate through the OPUSD Remedial Summer School program, you do not need to complete the form as long as an OPHS counselor helps you enroll.

- d. Courses taken for remediation receive a letter grade on the OPHS transcript and are factored into the student's GPA. Both courses will appear on the student's transcript, but only the higher grade will be factored into the student's GPA.
- e. Remediation courses are not considered outside, and do not contribute to the student's 40 credits of outside courses during their high school career.

17. What is dual enrollment?

Dual enrollment is enrollment in a community college course held on the OPHS campus and taught by either a community college professor or an OPUSD teacher who is also an employee of the community college. Dual enrollment courses are listed on a student's OPHS schedule, earn OPUSD graduation credits and also earn community college credits. Students in dual enrollment courses will earn regular credit per course. For example, if a high school level course earns ten credits, the dual enrollment version of that course will earn ten credits. Upon completion of the course, grades will be weighted the same as an AP or Honors course in weighted GPA calculations if completed with a C or better.

Students are responsible for checking college transferability of courses taken at community colleges with their prospective colleges or universities. Not all courses are transferable. Each college or university makes its own transfer course determination. This is not an OPUSD decision.

Please note that all coursework taken through dual enrollment becomes part of the student's college academic history. Grades received, or excessive drops have implications for future status involving financial assistance, athletic eligibility, academic standing, etc.

18. What is an academic year?

The OPUSD academic year, including summer, begins June 1 and ends May 31. Students may only take 10 outside credits during this timeframe per year to get added to the transcript

19. I am a middle school student. Can I start taking outside courses to place on my high school transcript?

No. Students may not acquire high school credits until after the completion of 8th grade. Middle school students may not place off-campus classes on the OPUSD transcript. Any summer course (up to 10 credits) taken between 8th and 9th grade can be placed on the OPUSD transcript as Credit/No Credit.

20. I am applying to colleges and need to submit my transcripts. How do I do this for courses taken outside OPUSD?

Entering outside courses varies depending on the type of application you are completing. Students must contact the high school(s) and/or college(s) that they attended in order to request the transcript to be directly submitted to the colleges to which they apply. For example, students who took a class at Moorpark College will use [this link](#) to request a transcript to be submitted to their colleges.

The University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), and California Community Colleges (CCC) do not request a transcript to be submitted during the time of application. Courses and grades from each school the student has attended are self-reported on the UC, CSU, and CCC applications. If the student decides to enroll in a UC, CSU, or CCC, however, a transcript showing courses taken outside of OPHS should be submitted to their campus of choice the summer before enrollment.

On most other college applications (e.g. private colleges and out-of-state public colleges), students will report the outside classes on the college application and send an official transcript indicating their courses outside of OPHS to the colleges to which they apply.

It is the student's responsibility to research each college's application requirements and to request required documentation (i.e., transcripts) from OPHS and/or any outside institution where a course was taken during their high school career.

21. What if I want to take a course outside, like at a community college, but do not want it on my OPUSD transcript?

Students are welcome to take outside courses. If you would like the course applied to your OPUSD transcript, you need to receive prior approval by completing [this form](#) before the course starts. If you do not want the course applied to your OPUSD transcript, follow the institution's application and registration process.

22. Who will pay for me to take a course off-campus?

The student's parent/guardian is responsible for the costs associated with taking courses outside. OPUSD is not liable or responsible for fees and charges required by non-OPUSD programs voluntarily taken by students for alternative credits toward graduation.

23. Where can I find OPUSD Board Policies (BP) and Administrative Regulations (AR) related to alternative credits for graduation?

You can find all OPUSD Board Policies and Administrative Regulations on the Oak Park Unified School District's [website](#). Related Board Policies and Administrative Regulations are:

- [BP 6146.1 High school School Graduation Requirements](#)
- [BP 6146.11 Alternate Credits Toward Graduation](#)
- [AR 6146.11 Alternate Credits Toward Graduation](#)



NOTE: This list is neither an endorsement of nor a recommendation for any particular program or school. It is the student/parent/guardian's responsibility to determine if the program/school/course they choose is accredited/if a transcript, credits, and a grade or grades are going to be provided. It is also the responsibility of the student/parent/guardian to ensure that the final transcript from the program/school is provided to the OPUSD school upon completion (if the student/parent/guardian wants the grade on the transcript). OPUSD is not liable or responsible for fees and charges required by non-OPUSD programs voluntarily taken by students for alternative credits toward graduation. It is the responsibility of the student/parent/guardian to confirm that any program selected is WASC accredited (or its equivalent) and that any course completed meets the UC/CSU A-G and/or NCAA regulations and requirements for those courses to be applied to the high school transcript.