# ADVANCED COURSES

## A Comparison

Many high school students choose advanced courses to challenge themselves, strengthen college applications, and sometimes earn college credit. Three common options are Honors, AP (Advanced Placement), and Dual Enrollment courses.



## Honors Courses

- Honors classes are advanced high school courses that move at a faster pace and go deeper into material than standard classes.
- Key Features
  - More challenging than regular classes
  - Taught by your high school teachers
  - Curriculum created by the school or district
  - Faster pace and higher expectations for assignments
  - Weighted higher in GPA than standard classes
- Good for students who:
  - Want a challenge but still want flexibility
  - Prefer smaller jumps in difficulty
  - Are building skills before taking AP classes
  - Want stronger preparation for college-level work

## AP (Advanced Placement) Courses

- AP classes are college-level courses created by the College Board that high school students can take.
- Key Features
  - Taught by your high school teachers
  - College-level curriculum
  - Standardized nationwide
  - End-of-year AP exam in May
  - Potential to earn college credit or placement depending on exam score
  - Typically more demanding workload than Honors classes
  - Weighted higher in GPA than standard classes
- AP Exam Scores range from 1-5. Many colleges give credit for scores of 3, 4, or 5, though policies vary.
- Best For Students Who:
  - Enjoy academic challenges
  - Want to demonstrate college-level ability
  - Are comfortable preparing for a cumulative exam
  - Plan to apply to highly competitive universities

## Dual Enrollment Courses

- Dual Enrollment allows high school students to take actual college courses through a local college while still in high school.
- Key Features
  - Students earn both high school credit (weighted GPA) and college credit at the same time
  - Courses follow a college syllabus and grading system
  - Classes may be taken at the high school, online, or on a college campus
  - Grades become part of a permanent college transcript
- Best For Students Who:
  - Are independent and responsible with deadlines
  - Want to start earning college credit early
  - Prefer coursework over a single high-stakes exam
- Benefits
  - Guaranteed college credit if you pass the course
  - Experience with real college expectations
  - Can reduce future college tuition costs
  - Builds confidence in a college environment
- Things to Consider
  - Grades follow you to college transcripts
  - Schedule flexibility may be required
  - May require transportation to a college campus
  - Requires transfer credits upon enrolling in another university after graduation

**Conclusion:**

Choosing between Honors, AP, and Dual Enrollment courses depends on your learning style, goals, and schedule. Honors classes are a great way to challenge yourself and build strong academic skills, while AP courses are ideal for students who want to experience college-level material and potentially earn credit through a national exam. Dual Enrollment works well for students who prefer a college classroom experience and want to earn guaranteed college credit by successfully completing the course. The best choice is the one that challenges you while still allowing you to balance your workload, activities, and overall well-being.