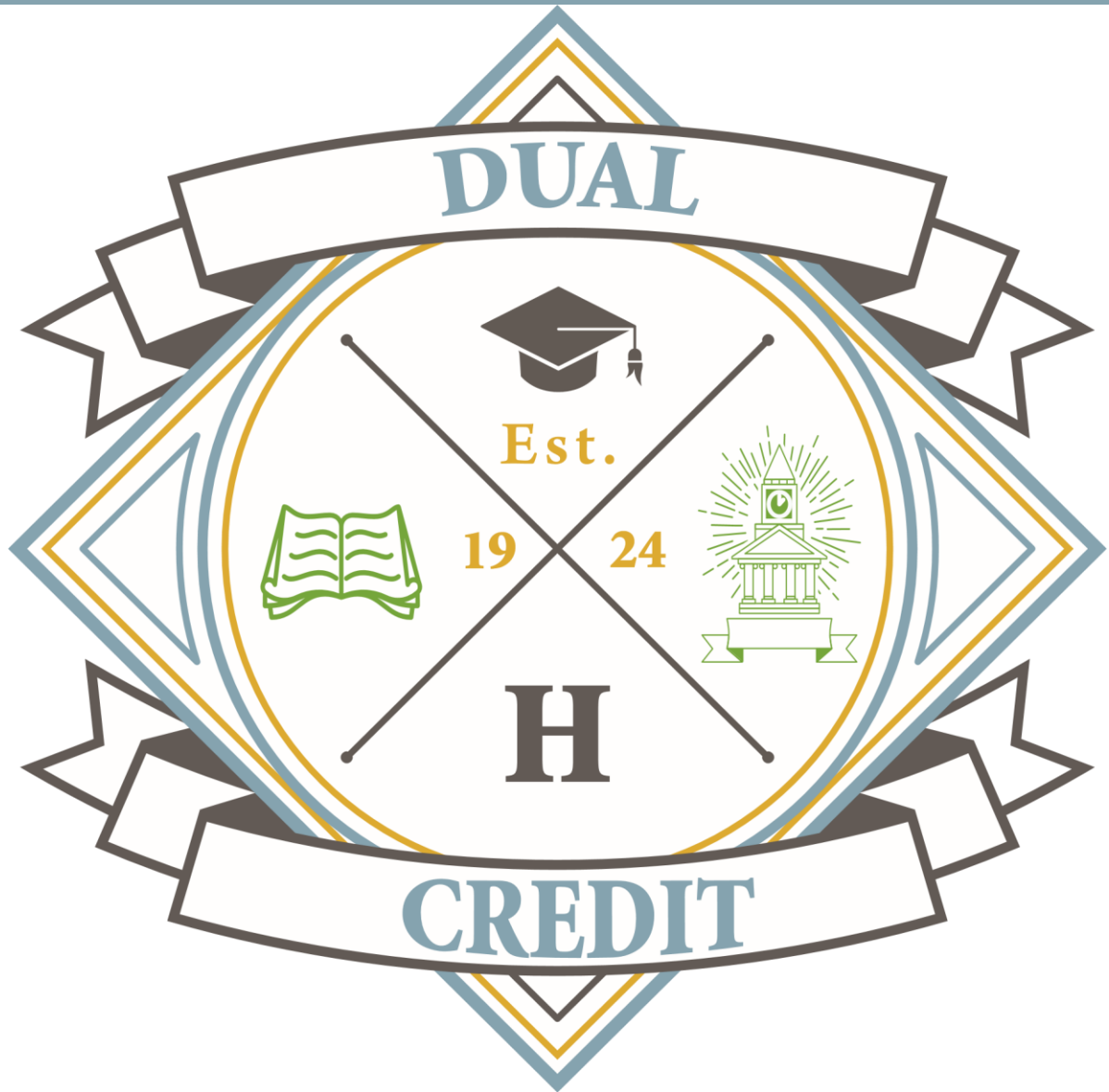


STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK



Dual Credit Student-Parent/Legal Guardian Agreement Form

Student ID# _____ Date _____ School _____ Grade Level _____

I, _____, the parent/guardian of _____,
Printed name of parent/legal guardian *Printed name of student*

understand that the **Houston Independent School District Dual Credit Division** has certain expectations that students must meet throughout the school year in order to be successful in dual credit courses.

Students must: **(Parent/Legal Guardian, please initial to indicate that you have read and agree.)**

- _____ Attend all summer, fall and spring sessions based on the requirements of the specific dual credit program
 - _____ Maintain a passing grade in all classes and dual credit courses
 - _____ **Understand that dual credit grades will be placed on your college transcripts and follow you throughout your academic career**
 - _____ Officially withdraw from the college course when deciding to withdraw from the HISD course; this includes withdrawing from or transferring to another HISD campus
 - _____ Attempt to earn industry certification in the area of study as prescribed by your program
 - _____ Must comply with HISD and partnering college attendance policy in order to avoid losing credit for the course
 - _____ Adhere to the HISD and partnering college Student Code of Conduct
 - _____ Meet other expectations as defined by the individual campus dual credit program and relevant to that specific academic or Career and Technical Education pathway
 - _____ Utilize his/her social security number to complete the partnering college application process.
- HISD may access my child's social security number for this purpose. (In the instance that your child

If a student earns a failing grade for any dual credit course then he/she may be subject to limited dual credit course enrollment or deemed ineligible to enroll in any further dual credit courses.

We agree to adhere to the program expectations and policies as outlined in this agreement. All signatures are required in order for students to be enrolled in a dual credit course.

By signing this form, you are giving permission to HISD and a partnering college to enroll your student in college courses for which he/she will begin an official, permanent college transcript.

Student Signature and Date

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature and Date

Dual Credit Leader/Counselor Signature and Date

Principal/Designee Signature and Date

Dear Students and Parents,

Houston Independent School District (HISD) is excited to provide high school students the opportunity to complete college-level courses through its no-cost dual credit program. This unique initiative requires a high level of commitment and responsibility from students, but the hard work can translate into a variety of benefits, such as:

- Students participating in HISD's dual credit program do not have to pay the tuition and textbook costs associated with their college classes. This policy can translate into significant savings for students in the long run.
- In some instances, students potentially can graduate from college before high school with a college credential (i.e., degree or certificate) that can position them for employment upon graduating from high school.
- HISD's dual credit program can expose students to various support services related to the college environment (e.g., tutoring, financial aid, library resources, career services).
- The dual credit program helps to establish habits that can lead to future success in the classroom and workplace – understanding and following a syllabus, displaying professional communication to a college instructor, and applying higher-level thinking skills.
- Dual credit courses within HISD carry the same grade point weighting associated with Advanced Placement (AP) classes. Therefore, these courses can translate into a higher Grade Point Average (GPA) that can benefit students applying to selective colleges.
- Students can receive performance recognition on their high school transcript after completing 12 hours of college credit with an overall GPA of at least a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

Eligibility

Students will need approval from a high school administrator to complete dual credit classes, which are aligned with HISD courses within a student's high school graduation plan. This approval process involves collaborating with college personnel to ensure the student meets the reading, writing, and math readiness requirements along with the course prerequisites for the class. Students should be

performing well in their high school courses before considering dual credit. They can complete classes as early as ninth grade, enrolling in multiple college courses if they have approval from campus administrators.

Students are not required to meet any reading, writing, and/or math score standards for community college classes linked to a Level I Certificate, which typically represents a 15-to-42 semester credit hour credential within a workforce program. All other dual credit classes require students to meet any of the following score standards.

College Placement Exam Requirements for Academic Dual Credit Courses

Type of Assessment	Minimum scores for Reading & Writing Based Academic Classes (ex., English/Hist./Gov.)	Minimum scores for Reading, Writing and Math-Based Academic Classes (ex., Economics)	Minimum scores for Math Based Academic Classes (Ex., College Algebra)
ACT	English 19 Composite 23	English 19, Math 19 Composite 23	Math 19 Composite 23
SAT	Critical Reading 500 Required Total Score (Critical Reading + Math) 1070	Critical Reading 500 Math 500 Required Total Score (Critical Reading + Math) 1070	Math 500 Required Total Score (Critical Reading + Math) 1070
STAAR EOC TEST <i>(only applicable to college classes completed in high school)</i>	STAAR English II 4000	STAAR English II 4000 STAAR Algebra I 4000 AND Grade of C or better in high school Algebra II course	STAAR Algebra I 4000 AND Grade of C or better in high school Algebra II course
TSI Assessment	Essay score of 5+ OR Essay score of 4 AND Multiple Choice score of 340+ Reading 351	Essay score of 5+ OR Essay score of 4 AND Multiple Choice score of 340+ Reading 351 Math 350 <i>Need passing score in all sections</i>	Math 350

Location

Dual credit classes can be taught at a high school, college campus, or online by an educator who mirrors the profile of a traditional college instructor (i.e., correct credentials, course rigor). The dual credit classroom should feature the same instructional materials and equipment that would be expected in a traditional college classroom. HISD will provide transportation to the college campus if the dual credit program has been constructed so that classes need to be completed outside of the high school.

Attendance

Students are expected to regularly attend all lecture classes and labs associated with their dual credit course(s). Dual credit students may be dropped from a college class if they miss more than 12.5% of the class time (e.g., six hours of class time for a three (3) credit hour course). If a student cannot avoid missing their dual credit class because of a high school function, it is their responsibility to notify the instructor of the conflict well in advance while also ensuring any work missed during that date(s) is completed. Ultimately, the dual credit instructor is the final authority in providing students an alternative option for completing an assignment or exam.

Grading

It can be difficult navigating the differences in how colleges and high schools record grades for dual credit classes. Each institution abides by a different policy and it is important to know those differences. This section will help you understand the different grading policies.

Calculating Your High School GPA

Letter Grade	College	High School	Traditional Grade Point Scale	Dual Credit Grade Point Scale
A	90-100	90-100	4	5
B	80-89	80-89	3	4
C	70-79	75-79	2	3
D	60-69	70-74	1	2
F	59 and below	69 and below	0	0

All dual credit courses yield an extra grade point beginning in the 2015-2016 school year.

College to High School Grade Conversion

Grades will be assigned based on the college's standard grading scale. Generally, the scale is:

Houston ISD Collegiate-to-High School Grade Conversion Scale	
A	No change
B	No change
C	70, 71 = 75 for high school grade 72, 73 = 76 for high school grade 74, 75 = 77 for high school grade 76, 77 = 78 for high school grade 78, 79 = 79 for high school grade
D	60, 61 = 70 for high school grade 62, 63 = 71 for high school grade 64, 65 = 72 for high school grade 66, 67 = 73 for high school grade 68, 69 = 74 for high school grade
F	59 = 69 for high school grade Below 59, add 10 points to get equivalent high school

To be awarded high school credit, a student must receive a grade of 70 or better. This rule applies even if the institution awarding college credit accepts a passing grade of 60 or better. Students have the option of withdrawing from the class and may be withdrawn by their instructor if they have excessive absences or accommodations cannot be met. Please work with your school counselor or dual credit leader to determine if withdrawing from a course is the best option for you.

Withdrawal/Incompletes/Failures

Students who opt to withdraw from a dual credit class will have a “W” permanently on their transcript for that college. Requests to withdraw after the college’s deadline typically will be rejected, meaning students will remain in the course and receive a letter grade based on the work completed throughout the duration of the semester. The dual credit leader and you should be familiar with these withdrawal deadlines. If a student receives an incomplete for a dual credit course, they likely did not complete the final exam and/or assignment(s) associated with the course. The college can determine if the student will be provided additional time to address the work that prompted the incomplete (“I”) grade. If the student does not complete the coursework within the allotted time, the “I” will be converted into a failing grade.

Students who fail a college class can be removed from dual credit for the following reasons:

- They did not pass the class (e.g., ENGL 1301) that represents the prerequisite for the next course in sequence (e.g., ENGL 1302).
- The college will not allow the student to continue with dual credit because of GPA concerns.
- High school administrators do not believe the student will be successful in future courses.

In some instances, students may be able to continue in dual credit after failing a course, but the number of courses will be reduced because the college has placed enrollment limitations on the student.

Workforce vs. Academic Courses

HISD students can complete academic and/or workforce courses for college credit. The differences between the two types of college courses are summarized in the following chart.

Academic Courses	Workforce Courses
Students must meet a reading, writing, and/or math score requirement to enroll in these classes.	Any community college workforce classes associated with a Level 1 Certificate do not require students to meet a reading, writing, and/or math score standard.
Most of these dual credit classes (e.g., ENGL 1301, GOVT 2305, HIST 1301, etc.) link to a Texas college common course number that will transfer to any Texas public college or university.	Community college workforce courses typically have limited transferability to a 4-year college unless a special agreement is in place between both institutions.
	Workforce programs at community colleges are designed to provide instruction that prepares students for immediate employment.
	These programs may feature classes aligned with a practicum or industry certification(s).

Students and parents are highly encouraged to review the college's online student handbook for other policies that are equally relevant to dual credit (e.g., course accommodations, student complaints, testing policies). Congratulations again on being part of this unique group. Good luck on your studies!

Sincerely,

The HISD Dual Credit Team

DUAL CREDIT STUDENT BEST PRACTICES

Pre-Game: Before You Enroll

- Research what dual credit classes are offered at your high school and work with your high school counselor to determine the following:
 - Which class best fits into your college and career plans?
 - Will the class you picked transfer to the university you plan on attending?
 - What is the minimum grade you have to earn in order for the class to transfer?
 - What college-readiness standards do you have to meet in order to be eligible to enroll in the class or classes you have selected?
 - If you don't meet the standards based on your SAT or EOC scores, start preparing for the TSI (Download the TSI Study App: <https://store.collegeboard.org/sto/productdetail.do?Itemkey=120095191>)
- Work with your counselor to schedule a time to take the TSI exam.
 - You will most likely be able to take the exam at your high school campus.
- Complete an online application for the community college or post-secondary institution that will offer the dual credit classes.
- Make sure your Meningitis vaccination is up-to-date (received in the past five years) and submit your immunization record or waiver form to your school nurse or counselor.

Game Time: While You're Enrolled

- Get acquainted with your online student account provided to you by the college.
 - Many instructors post all course information, syllabi, and coursework on the college's online system and may require you to submit all your assignments on this platform.
 - Check to make sure you are enrolled in the correct dual credit courses
 - You can update your personal information, check your grades, and view your unofficial transcripts, etc.
- Make sure you review your course syllabus thoroughly and manage your time wisely to complete all the course assignments.
 - A college syllabus will include all your test dates, assignment due dates, how to calculate your grade, and the policies and expectations of the professor. The syllabus is a great tool to create a success plan and personal study calendar for yourself.
- Monitor your grades weekly. Speak with your instructor and counselor if you are having trouble in the course(s). □ Visit the college's website and find out what resources are available to help you succeed. Most colleges provide tutoring and other tools designed to help students succeed.
 - Find supportive environments – whether home, school, or other community space – that enable studying and completion of assignments.
 - Keep a copy of all returned tests and assignments until your final grade has been issued.
- *Attendance is important.* Colleges don't distinguish between excused and unexcused absences; an absence is an absence!
 - Be sure to attend all class times and log in daily or weekly for online courses.
 - Missing class just a few times may prevent you from receiving credit for the course.
 - The attendance policy can usually be found on the course syllabus – be sure to check it.
- Cultivate a healthy relationship with your professor – you may need him/her to write you a letter of recommendation in the future!

Post-Game: Class Completion

- Once the course is complete, be sure to log into your online account and verify your grade.
 - Pull your unofficial transcript through the college's online system and verify your grade and the class for which you received credit.
- Stay in touch with your professor and continue to build the relationship.
- Reflect on your experience.
 - Talk to your counselor, professor, or anyone in your support network about your experience and what you can do to improve your performance and be better prepared for your next dual credit class.
- Begin looking into the next dual credit class you will take using the best practices from the "Pre-Game" section!

DUAL CREDIT DEFINITIONS

Dual Credit Course – A college level course taught by Community College or University staff which can also be used for high school credit if approved by the school district and if the student receives a passing grade. Currently, HCC offers these courses tuition-free for HISD students, however, textbooks and other fees may apply.

Embedded Adjunct Instructor – An HISD teacher who is also an HCC adjunct instructor. It should be noted that an embedded adjunct instructor must follow all HCC policies and guidelines first, and then HISD policies and guidelines second.

Non-Embedded Adjunct Instructor – Some courses may be taught by an HCC Adjunct Instructor who is not an HISD employee. In this case, the teacher may be present only two or three days per week. A teacher of record needs to be assigned to days/times when the adjunct is not in class and to enter attendance and grades where appropriate. Generally, this may be the department head at the school for the subject being taught.

FERPA - The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that affords parents the right to have access to their children's education records, the right to seek to have the records amended, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the education records. When a student turns 18 years old, or enters a postsecondary institution at any age, the rights under FERPA transfer from the parents to the student ("eligible student"). The FERPA statute is found at 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and the FERPA regulations are found at 34 CFR Part 99. **However, under Sec. 99.31(a)(8), an educational agency or institution may disclose education records to an eligible student's parents if the student is a dependent as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.** Under Sec. 99.31(a)(8), neither the age of a student nor the parent's status as custodial parent is relevant to the determination whether disclosure of information from an eligible student's education records to that parent without written consent is permissible under FERPA. **If a student is claimed as a dependent for Federal income tax purposes by either parent, then under the regulations, either parent may have access to the student's education records without the student's consent.**