

Academic Eligibility Basics

High School Students are Eligible So Long As They:

- are not high school graduates;
- are full-time day students;
- have attended classes since the 6th day of class of the present school year, or have been enrolled and in regular attendance for 15 or more calendar days before the contest;
- are eligible under no-pass, no play;
- have the required number of credits for eligibility;
- are enrolled in a four year program of high school courses;
- initially enrolled in the 9th grade not more than four years ago, or in the 10th grade not more than three years ago (students may apply for waivers);
- did not change schools for the purpose of participating in a UIL academic event;
- are not in violation of the awards rule.

Students are Considered High School Graduates If They:

- received a diploma or other certificate signifying successful completion from a high school or other institution of equal or higher rank;
- participated as graduates in graduation ceremonies;
- complied with the requirements for graduation during a normal 4-year program, regardless of whether or not they participated in graduation ceremonies.

GED Testing

- Students who receive GED certificates are not considered high school graduates if they remain in or return to school and have not otherwise met the requirements for high school graduation.

Full-Time Day Student

- Students must be enrolled in at least an average of four hours of instruction per day to be considered full-time students. The classes can be for local or state-approved credit. A college course can be counted among the classes necessary for a student to be considered as full-time provided:
 - the course is provided by an institution of higher learning that is accredited by a regional accrediting association; and
 - the student gets the principal's or designee's approval, and the course for which credit is awarded provided advanced academic instruction beyond or in greater depth than the essential elements established by the SBOE.
- **Note:** Students who are removed from class by a teacher may be prohibited from attending or participating in a school-sponsored or school-related activity under TEC 37.006 (g). Students who are removed from class and placed in an alternative education program must be prohibited from attending or participating in a school-sponsored or school-related activity under TEC 37.006 (g).

Four-Year Rule

- Students have four consecutive years of eligibility once they enter the ninth grade, or three consecutive years once they enter the 10th grade.
Example: A student may not compete as a freshman and sophomore, drop out for a year, return to school and compete as a junior and senior. Upon return, the student would have one year of UIL eligibility remaining. A student who missed a year due to inadvertent circumstances may apply for a waiver. See Section 463 of the [UIL Constitution and Contest Rules](#).

Credits

- Students must have the required number of credits for eligibility during the first six weeks of school (5 entering 10th; 10 entering 11th; 15 entering 12th). Grades are not applicable at the end of the school year because all students are academically eligible during the summer recess.

The number of credits earned or academic promotion from the previous grade level in grades nine and below determines UIL eligibility for the first six weeks of the next school year.

- **Physical Education:** Students can count only those PE classes that count toward graduation. Thus, no more than two PE credits.
- **Extra credits:** Extra credit or work turned in after the grading period or evaluation has ended may not be considered when determining a student's eligibility except in the case of an "incomplete."

Missing School Time

- Students may not miss other classes for the purpose of practice for extracurricular activities. This is true for elementary and jr. high students as well as high school.
- **Participation in district/regional/state contests.** Students may miss class to participate in competition that counts toward UIL standing.
- **Missing part of day.** Local policy determines whether a student is required to attend school all day or any portion of the day to compete in a contest. UIL has no rules on this.

Limitations on Practice

- For any given extracurricular activity, a student may not participate in more than one activity per school week, excluding holidays. Students are limited to no more than eight (8) hours of practice and rehearsal outside the school day per school week per activity.
- In-school practice class **DOES NOT** count toward the SBOE limits of eight hours per week of practice outside the school day.

Sunday Participation

- Sunday practices, workshops and festivals are allowed. Sunday competitions are not.
- Exception:
 - School district personnel may instruct high school students and accompany them to no more than two (2) school-sanctioned academic or fine arts competitions held on Sunday that do not count toward League standing.
 - The participation of the student, coach, sponsor and/or director must be approved by the superintendent or designee.
 - The contest must be sponsored by a college or university.
 - Students are considered to be representing their school if they are wearing and/or using school equipment, use school funding, or are being directed or transported by a school employee or a person on behalf of school personnel. See Section 900 (b) of the C&CR.

Amateur Rule

- There is no amateur rule for academics. For example, a student may work for a newspaper for pay and retain eligibility for UIL news writing. One-Act play students may be paid for performing in plays or movies. Speech students may accept cash prizes for winning non-League contests.

Awards Rule

- For competing in a contest that counts toward UIL standing, students may receive:
 - \$70 major award once during high school;
 - \$10 minor award per event per year. The \$10 minor award (a plaque, a patch, etc.) may be given to a student during same year that a major award is given;
 - A certificate, medal, trophy or other symbolic award if given by the school, school district, district executive committee or entity that organized the competition.
- Students may accept educational trips sponsored by the school.
- There are no limits on awards for competing in invitational contests.

T-Shirts, Gifts, and Other Valuable Consideration

- Students may not accept anything they can eat, wear or sell if given solely on the basis of their participation in a UIL contest that counts toward League standing. Schools may provide academic team t-shirts, which are considered team uniforms, to all competitors. These must be returned at

the end of the year or purchased by students for their value as used apparel. It is not a violation of the Awards rule to feed academic participants during rehearsals, practices or meets.

- Schools may purchase tickets for students to see (for example) State One-Act Play Contest or for admission to an art gallery. These are considered educational field trips sponsored by the school. UIL awards rule does not affect K-6. Local districts are free to determine their own awards policies for K-6 students.

Coach Gifts or Awards

- Individuals who coach, direct or sponsor League activities in grades 9-12 may be suspended if:
 - They accept more than \$500 in money, product or service from any source (over and above the stipend paid by the school) in recognition of or appreciation for coaching, directing or sponsoring a UIL event. The \$500 is cumulative for a calendar year and is not specific to any one particular gift.
 - They accept money, products or services for entering a student in a UIL contest or activity.
 - This section includes but is not limited to money, gifts, use of cars, insurance, club privileges, and any funds tendered by booster clubs for other services.
- **Exceptions:**
 - Scholarships
 - Retirement
 - UIL Sponsor Excellence Awards

No Pass, No Play

- Students must be eligible under no-pass, no-play. Extracurricular activities include public performances, contests, demonstrations, displays and club activities. An activity would be considered extracurricular if:
 - the activity is competitive;
 - the activity is held in conjunction with another activity that is considered extracurricular;
 - the activity is held off campus, except in a case in which adequate facilities do not exist on campus;
 - the general public is invited;
 - an admission price is charged.
- Exception: If a student is enrolled in a state-approved course in which he or she must demonstrate mastery of the essential knowledge and skills in a public performance, then he or she may participate so long as the activity is not competitive, it is not held in conjunction with another activity that is competitive, and an admission price is not charged.

For example, a theatre student may participate in a non-competitive, free presentation of a one-act play in which the public is invited to attend.

Basics of No Pass, No Play

- **Must be passing all courses** (except identified advanced classes).
- Students lose eligibility for a three-week period, which is defined as 15 class days. Exception: one but only one of the three school weeks may consist of only three or four class days, provided the school has been dismissed for a scheduled holiday period. Two class days does not constitute a school week. Exception: Thanksgiving if schools are on holiday Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.
- School week begins at 12:01 a.m. on the first instructional day of the calendar week and ends at the close of instruction on the last instructional day of the calendar week (excluding holidays).
- Ineligible students must wait seven (7) calendar days after a three-week evaluation period and the grading period to regain eligibility.
- Students may regain eligibility an unlimited number of times throughout the school year. Passing means a minimum grade of 70 on all courses (except identified advanced classes).
- **Note: Spring break can't be part of the 3-week evaluation process.** All students are eligible during spring break.

Accelerated Classes

- When students are enrolled in accelerated classes, which grant them the opportunity to earn credit during nine school weeks and the school is using a nine-week grading period and considers the semester to be nine-weeks long, eligibility is determined by the cumulative report grade for the nine weeks since the nine weeks also constitutes a grading period.
- Schools must decide which method (6-week or 9-week accelerated block without final or 9-week accelerated block with final) they are going to use and apply it to eligibility for all students within that specific school.

Advanced and Honors Classes

- The following courses are identified as advanced and, as such, eligible for exemption as noted in section 33.081 of the Texas Education Code:
 - Any College Board Advanced Placement (AP) Course or International Baccalaureate (IB) Course. and;
 - Honors* and high school/college concurrent enrollment classes (that are included in Part One of the "Community College General Academic Course Guide Manual") in the subject areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Economics or language other than English.
- * Districts may identify honors courses only in the subject areas of English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, economics, or a language other than English as eligible for exemption. But districts must identify such courses prior to the semester in which any exemptions related to extracurricular activities occur.
- Districts are neither required to nor restricted from considering courses as honors for the purpose of grade point average calculation.
- It is important to remember that school districts may voluntarily impose stricter standards than those cited in this document.
- Honors courses do not have to be submitted to the University Interscholastic League, They should be maintained at the local school district level.
- Questions and/or requests for additional information should be directed to the UIL
Office: policy@uiltexas.org

Dropping an Honors Course

- Dropping an advanced class with a failing grade does not cause loss of eligibility. Local school districts may have more stringent rules than state law.
- A student may have more than one waiver per six weeks in honors classes. Thus, if a student fails two or three honors classes, he or she is still eligible, if local policy permits.

Dropping a Course With a Failing Grade

- A student who drops a class with a failing grade after the end of the fourth week is ineligible. A student may drop after the second or third week, or during the fourth week and retain eligibility.
- A student who drops a class with a failing grade at the end of a grading period is ineligible until seven calendar days after the end of the three-week evaluation period.

Changing Failing Grades

- A failing grade can be changed after it has been recorded if:
 - a mechanical error occurred in averaging or recording;
 - the teacher's grading procedure violated local policy, state law or SBOE rule and the student would have been eligible had policies or law been followed.
- Extra credit work or work turned in after the grading period or evaluation has ended may not be considered when determining a student's eligibility for extracurricular activities except in the case of an "incomplete" grade.

Incompletes

- A student with an incomplete grade is ineligible at the end of the seven-day grace period unless the "incomplete" is replaced with a passing grade prior to the end of the seven-day grace period. Students with "incomplete" past the seven-day grace period remain ineligible until work is made up in accordance with district policy.
- Extra work or work turned in after the grading period or evaluation has ended may not be considered when determining eligibility except in the case of "incomplete."

Spring Breaks & Holidays

- All students are eligible during a holiday of a full calendar week or more.
- A week of spring break or winter holiday CANNOT count as one week of the 3-week evaluation period.
- If a grading period or three-week evaluation period ends on the last class day prior to a school holiday of one week or more, the seven calendar day grace period to lose eligibility and the seven calendar day period to regain eligibility begin the first day that classes resume.
- For specific date examples, see the current UIL/TEA Side-by-Side at <http://www.uil-texas.org/policy/tea-uil-side-by-side>