

Completing an Associate Degree While in High School

High School Concurrent Enrollment courses are \$5 per credit and a great opportunity for many students; however, they are not a good fit for everyone. All courses are placed on a permanent college transcript and cannot be taken lightly. Although a sibling or neighbor was able to get an Associate Degree while in high school, this does not mean that it is right for every student.

1. Understand Long-Term Educational Goals:

- It is important students have a clear idea of what Bachelor Degree they will pursue when deciding on earning an Associate Degree in high school. Unless the student has taken classes applicable to their bachelor program as part of Associate Degree electives, he or she will need more than 60 additional credits (2 years) to finish a Bachelor Degree. **A student who has earned an Associate Degree will have completed 2 years' worth of college credit but potentially have 3+ years to complete a Bachelor Degree.**
- Some Bachelor Degree programs incorporate the General Education courses into the schedule sequence to balance class-loads throughout the four-year degree. A student must maintain full-time status (12-18 credits) to maintain scholarships and Federal Financial Aid. This may be difficult to accomplish if all General Education requirements are complete.
- There is no guarantee that earning an Associate Degree while in high school will increase a student's chance to get accepted to competitive colleges. Students must familiarize themselves with the admissions process at the colleges or universities that interest them.
- College classes can affect high school grade point averages. If students' GPA begins to decline due to taking college courses, then pursuing a college degree while in high school may not be right for them. High school GPA is an important consideration in scholarships and admission purposes for most colleges.

2. Understand Other Factors Involved in Pursuing an Associate Degree:

- Due to the rigorous course work and additional workload required to receive both a high school diploma and an Associate Degree, students may miss out on normal high school activities and other social functions. It may be hard to juggle high school activities, sports, a job, etc. For some, it can be a major adjustment. **Free time and social time will often be exchanged for study time.**
- Other college and career preparation activities may not be given the attention they need. If a student is completely focused on earning an Associate Degree, he or she may not spend time on ACT prep, career exploration, scholarship searches, college and university planning, and more. Career exploration is essential as students will start right into major requirements once at college.
- Some classes required for an Associate Degree may deal with mature and sensitive issues. They may include class discussions that are uncomfortable for some students. These classes cannot be waived.
- There are pre-requisites for some courses offered through Concurrent Enrollment. It is the student's responsibility to know what these are and to complete them.
- Careful planning is required. Students must meet with both a high school counselor and a Concurrent Enrollment Academic Advisor. Careful planning will be required to meet both high school and college graduation requirements.

For more information, please visit www.uvu.edu/concurrent.

