

## Minimum College Admission Standards An Overview for Students and Parents

Revised 2011

### College admission requirements set by the HECB

The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) has responsibility to "Establish minimum admission standards for four-year institutions, including a requirement that coursework in American sign language or an American Indian language shall satisfy any requirement for instruction in a language other than English that the Board or the institutions may establish as a general undergraduate admissions requirement" (RCW 27B.600.160).

The HECB and the State Board of Education met in 2010 and adopted changes to their respective requirements that will foster alignment between high school graduation requirements and four-year public college admission requirements.

College Academic Distribution Requirements (CADRs) refer to college admissions criteria established by the HECB. The term differs from high school graduation requirements that are determined by the State Board of Education and local school districts. Courses meeting CADR are determined by the school district and noted on the transcript with the "B" designation.

Students who plan to attend a four-year college or university should be aware of both sets of requirements.

### Freshmen Admission Policy

This overview of freshmen admission requirements applies to all applicants to the public four-year colleges who enter directly from high school and/or students who enter college with fewer than 40 credits of college-level coursework or equivalent.

Running Start and other dual-credit earning students, including those who have earned more than 40 quarter hours of college-level credit, who enter a public baccalaureate institution directly from high school, must meet minimum college admission standards:

- **CADR** (College Academic Distribution Requirements)
- **2.0 Minimum GPA**
- **Official SAT/ACT** test scores sent directly to the college or university (*Fee waivers for these tests are available - consult with your high school counselor*)

### Notes on CADR and Admission Standards

CADR reflect the minimum number of credits required in six subject areas that students must earn to be eligible for routine admission consideration by four-year public baccalaureate institutions.

Meeting the minimum college admission standards does not guarantee admission to a public baccalaureate institution.

Therefore, students are encouraged to go beyond meeting minimum college admission standards to improve their chances for gaining entry to a public baccalaureate institution. Students should obtain admission information from the institution they wish to attend.

### Comprehensive Review of Applications for Admission

Currently, each of the public baccalaureate institutions employs a comprehensive or holistic review process for at least a portion of their applicants. Holistic review is an additional means of ensuring student access. In cases where students do not meet the minimum college admission standards, the policy provides for alternative admission policies which may be more appropriate for certain students. Each student is encouraged to contact the admissions office of the institution they wish to attend if they have questions.

All K-12 and college personnel who advise students on admission to public four-year colleges and universities should obtain a copy of CADR guidelines and other related minimum college admission information at:  
[www.hecb.wa.gov/research/issues/admissions.asp](http://www.hecb.wa.gov/research/issues/admissions.asp)

*Students should consult with their local high school to obtain complete information about minimum college admission standards, and to be aware of which courses at their high school meet CADR guidelines, as determined by the local school district.*

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## For students entering a college or university Summer or Fall 2012

### College Academic Distribution Requirement (CADR) Coursework

Students are encouraged to take a minimum of three credits of CADR courses each year of high school, including senior year.

Students who take college-level coursework and complete 5 quarter credits or 3 semester credits will have earned the equivalent of one CADR credit. In addition, pre-college courses in English and math may be equivalent to CADR courses, provided they are designed to meet the same learning outcomes as the high school courses for which they substitute.

Students may meet high school requirements with courses taken in middle school, provided the courses are part of a sequence which is successfully continued in high school, or the courses are included on the high school transcript as high school-level courses.

*Previous minimum college admissions standards used the term 'year' to designate completion of what is now referred to as 'one credit' of high school coursework. The use of 'credit' recognizes that school districts may use alternative or block scheduling that permits students to earn a full credit in a given subject area in less than an academic year.*

**English – 4 credits** including 3 credits of college preparatory composition or literature. One credit may be satisfied by courses in drama as literature, public speaking, debate, journalistic writing, business English, English as a Second Language, or Learning Support English. Passing the state mandated high school assessment in Reading is equivalent to earning the first 2 CADR credits of high school English.

**Mathematics – 3 credits:** Algebra I, geometry, and Algebra II (intermediate algebra), or Integrated Math I, II, and III. Passing the state mandated high school assessment in math is equivalent to earning the first 2 CADR credits of high school math (Algebra I & Geometry or Integrated Math I and II).

*Note: Successful completion of math through pre-calculus meets the requirement for 3 credits of math and the senior-year math requirement (below).*

**Senior Year Math-Based Quantitative Course:** During the senior year of high school, students must earn a credit in a math-based quantitative course. This requirement may be met through enrollment in one of the three required math courses listed above; or by completing a math-based quantitative course like statistics, applied math, or appropriate career and technical courses; or by completing an algebra-based science course taken during the senior year that would satisfy this requirement and part of the science requirement below.

*Note: The senior-year math requirement does not mean a 4th credit of math is required, nor does it require a higher level of math; the intent is for seniors to take meaningful math.*

**Exception:** Completion of higher-level math prior to the senior year exempts students from the senior-year quantitative course requirement (e.g., pre-calculus, math analysis, or calculus).

**Science – 2 credits** of laboratory science are required for admission to public baccalaureate institutions beginning in the summer of 2010. One credit must be in an algebra-based science course as determined by the school district. One credit must be in biology, chemistry, or physics (this course may also meet the algebra-based requirement). Principles of technology courses taught in Washington High Schools may satisfy the laboratory science requirement.

*Note: Western Washington University specifies that one credit must be an algebra-based chemistry or physics course*

**World Languages – 2 credits** must be earned in the same World Language, Native American language, or American Sign Language. Schools may award credit based on a district approved competency assessment consistent with the State Board of Education policy and American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines. *Note: A World Language course taken in middle school may satisfy one credit of the requirement if the second year level course is completed in high school grades 9-12.*

**Social Science – 3 credits** of history or other social science (e.g. anthropology, contemporary world problems, economics, geography, government, political science, psychology)

**Arts – 1 credit** of fine, visual, or performing arts - or 1 additional credit in other CADR academic subject areas as defined above. Acceptable coursework in the fine, visual, or performing arts includes art appreciation, band, ceramics, choir, dance, dramatics performance and production, drawing, fiber arts, graphic arts, metal design, music appreciation, music theory, orchestra, painting, photography, print making, or sculpture.

*Note: The University of Washington and Western Washington University specify one-half credit in fine, visual, or performing arts. The other half may be in the arts or an academic elective.*

*Students should consult with their local high school to obtain complete information about minimum college admission standards, and to be aware of which courses at their high school meet CADR guidelines, as determined by the local school district.*