



# O'FALLON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 203



## **OTHS Smiley Campus**

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October 12, 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian of the Class of 2023,

The course selection process for current 11th grade students will start October 18<sup>th</sup> and conclude on/before December 10<sup>th</sup>. Students will be called down during their advisory class or other non-core academic class to meet individually with a school counselor in the Guidance Office.

In advance of this meeting, we encourage students and parents to view the Senior Course Selection sheet as well as the OTHS Curriculum Guide on the Guidance Department website or by clicking [HERE](#). Course selection sheets contain a full listing of senior courses available to students for the 2022-2023 school year. A complete description of courses along with pre-requisite requirements may be found in the OTHS Curriculum Guide.

Recommendations for courses will be based on several factors including required graduation requirements, current grades, pre-requisite completion and teacher recommendations. However, it is ultimately up to the student and parent to decide on a student's course selections. As many juniors plan their senior year schedules, they often choose the path of least resistance. Yet, senior year should be a time for mastery, of exploration, and of rigor. Colleges want students who take their academics to the next level. We encourage you to go over the course selection options with your child and make sure they are taking courses that suit their interests and abilities, yet continue to demonstrate their academic talents and determination. Please help your son/daughter to plan their senior year wisely.

Here are some tips to guide your son/daughter through their course selection for senior year:

1. Do not take a light senior year schedule. Colleges worry about students who take easy senior years with only a few core classes and fewer activities.
2. Take at least four core classes, not including electives. Five core courses plus one elective is ideal and allows you to maintain your IHSA sanctioned eligibility for athletics and extracurricular activities.
3. Follow your interests. Senior year is often the only time in high school that you can take more than one elective. Step outside of your comfort zone and explore electives.
4. Pick classes in which you can do well. Do not overstretch yourself during your senior year but also don't underestimate your abilities. By this point in your high school academic career, you should have a firm grasp on how you learn, your academic strengths and your ability to manage coursework along with other commitments.
5. If you do elect to take a reduced schedule, then fill your time with a job, volunteer work, or internship. Dedicate the amount of time you would have been in class to an activity. Both colleges and employers want students who use their time productively.
6. Understand the minimum graduation requirements for O'Fallon Township High School and know where you stand in relation to those requirements. Requirements may be found on page 4 of the OTHS Curriculum Guide.

### **How are students placed into courses?**

Student placement into courses may depend upon successful completion of pre-requisite coursework and or grades in classes. A complete description of courses along with pre-requisite requirements may be found in the OTHS Curriculum Guide, located on the website under Course Catalog or by clicking [HERE](#). A student's confirmed placement into a course will not be determined until semester grades are finalized and posted.



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## What happens if my child fails a course?

If a student fails a course which is required to graduate, students will be re-enrolled in that course for the next year, if available. Starting second semester of a student's sophomore year, they may enroll in the District Credit Recovery program, PACE. Credit Recovery options, including summer school, must be discussed with the student's school counselor.

## What kinds of programs will be available to my student his/her 12th grade year?

- **Advanced Placement®**- students have the opportunity to potentially earn college credit by enrolling in the Advanced Placement® courses at OTHS. Students must meet academic criteria to enroll and are responsible for any fees associated with the class and exam.
- **Dual Credit**- available through Southwestern Illinois College and SLU 1818 Advanced College Credit Program, dual credit courses provide students the potential to earn both high school credit and college credit. A full listing of dual credit coursework may be found on the OTHS Guidance Department Webpage. Students may be required to meet academic criteria to enroll in specific dual credit courses and are responsible for any fees associated with the class.
- **Essential Study Skills**- ESS 12 is offered to a very select number of students who would benefit from additional support with their classes. Instruction focuses on basic study skills that students need for academic success. Students must be recommended by their school counselor and/or ESS instructors.
- **P.A.C.E**- the Panther Academy for Careers and Education is an online credit recovery program for a select number of students who have failed coursework, are deficient in credits required to graduate or have other extenuating circumstances which may affect his/her graduation status. Students must be recommended by their school counselor and approved by administration.
- **Cooperative Work Experience (Co-Op)** – senior students interested in pursuing careers have the option of enrolling in this elective course. Students may be released from school for their paid cooperative work experience and participate in a minimum of 200 minutes per week of related classroom instruction.

## Can students make changes to their course selections?

Yes, students may make changes to their course selections anytime during the school year and summer leading up to the first day of school in August 2022. Students may make an appointment to meet with their respective school counselor in order to make changes to their course selections. Requests to change a course will be dependent upon course availability at the time of the request.

We hope that you have found this information to be helpful. Should you have any questions related to the course selection process, please don't hesitate to reach out to your child's school counselor.

The OTHS Guidance Department

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