

Information Regarding GPA-Exempt Classes

Fort Bend ISD encourages all students to pursue their areas of special talents and interests in order to enrich their academic achievement. To foster continued student participation in these classes, FBISD allows juniors and seniors to participate in the third and fourth years of the following courses on a GPA-exempt basis:

- Advanced Journalism:
 - Yearbook
 - Newspaper
 - Individual Study in Journalism
- Athletics (Does not include PE)
- Band
- Cheerleading
- Choir
- Color Guard
- Dance Team
- Debate
- Future Farmers of America (FFA)
- JROTC
- Oral Interpretation
- Orchestra
- Theatre:
 - Theatre Arts
 - Technical Theatre
 - Theatre Production



FBISD

GPA-Exempt Courses 2016-2017



FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE YOUR TEACHER OR COUNSELOR.

**Fort Bend
Independent School District**
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Sugar Land Texas, 77479
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Who is eligible to take a course on a GPA-Exempt basis?

Beginning with the graduating Class of 2017, this option is available to juniors and seniors who wish to take courses from the approved list that are beyond the requirements for graduation. To qualify for the GPA exemption for the third or fourth year course, the students must have an overall B average in the prerequisite courses for the 3rd/4th year course for which he/she is seeking a waiver. He/she must also have already taken the first two years of this particular course (exception: Cheerleading and Dance Team) at the high school campus. All students must meet the prerequisites of each course and have parent, teacher, and counselor approval.

- Full year courses will be exempted for 1.0 credit only.
- Junior students may receive a GPA exemption for only one course during the junior year.
- Senior students who have not used any of the GPA exemptions during their junior year would qualify for two exemptions during their senior year as long as prerequisites are met.
- The option of securing exemptions for two classes in the same year is only available to seniors for whom no GPA exemptions have been used prior to the senior year.

NOTE: Students may take only two (2) full-year courses or four (4) half-year courses on a GPA-Exempt basis.

How are grades handled in a GPA-Exempt course?

Students who are eligible and choose to take one of these courses for a GPA-Exempt grade:

- Will receive a numerical grade all year on the report card.
- Will receive the actual numeric grade with a comment or label indicating "GPA-Exempt" on the Academic Achievement Record (transcript).
- Will have these courses excluded from the computation of GPA and class rank.

What are the performance standards for these courses?

- Students must complete all of the assigned work. The numerical grade earned will be reported on the report card.
- Students must take tests and final exams for the course unless exempt from finals.
- Students must maintain a passing semester grade average in order to

remain eligible for the GPA Exemption.

How will grades in a GPA-Exempt course affect eligibility for extra-curricular activities?

The numerical grades earned in a GPA-Exempt course will be used to determine eligibility for participation in all extra-curricular activities. Furthermore, numerical grades will also be used in determining: academic excellence; qualifying criteria used in the selection of students for various positions such as Dance Team officers, class officers, exam exemptions, etc.; and eligibility for academic awards, including admission to organizations such as the National Honor Society, etc.

How do students enroll in a GPA-Exempt course?

Students interested in taking one of the GPA-Exempt courses must discuss this option with the counselor promptly at the beginning of the course. If the student meets all of the criteria, he/she must:

1. Complete the appropriate form.
2. Have the form signed by the parent and teacher.
3. Return the form to the counselor no later than the end of the second (2nd) week of each semester. At this time, if all criteria are met, it will be approved and a course change will be made to reflect enrollment in a GPA-Exempt course.
4. Once a student signs up to take a course as GPA-exempt, the decision cannot be changed.
5. Students enrolled in full-year courses do not need to reapply during the second semester.
6. Students, including transfer students, who miss the deadline for application for the first semester, may apply for exemption for the second semester if they meet the criteria.

AN APPLICATION HAS TO BE FILLED OUT AND SIGNED BY THE STUDENT, THE PARENT AND THE TEACHER.

Can a student exempt Cheerleading as a junior or senior?

Yes. If the student was a cheerleader as a sophomore, he/she can exempt the junior year. If the student becomes a cheerleader as a junior, he/she can exempt the senior year as a cheerleader.

What are the requirements for the Dance Team waiver?

If the student was a dance team member as a sophomore, he/she can exempt the junior year. If the student becomes a dance team member as a junior, he/she can exempt the senior year of the course.

If a student exempts a course during the junior year, but does not enroll in the same course during the senior year, does he/she lose the exempt status for the junior year?

No. Each year will stand alone.

What if a student drops the exempt course?

Students are expected to complete a full year course for which a GPA exemption has been approved. In extenuating circumstances where a student is approved to drop a GPA-exempt course after the first semester is completed, the student receives the first semester credit as GPA-exempt. However, the remaining 0.5 GPA exemption cannot be applied to another course during the second semester or the following year. The requested 1.0 GPA exemption is considered to be fully expended.

If a student drops a full-year course for which a GPA exemption has been approved during the first semester, per established guidelines, the student enters a new course with no GPA exemption. In this case, the GPA exemption is available for use the following semester/year, if requested and approved according to established guidelines.

If a one-season athlete does not have an athletic program to enter in the Spring semester of their senior year, may they exempt only one semester of the course?

Yes, in some cases the courses eligible for exemption are semester courses.

When do exemption requests have to be turned into the counselor?

Exemption requests, with all signatures affixed, have to be turned into the counselor by the end of the second (2nd) week of each semester.

Can a student take Art or Dance courses as GPA-Exempt courses?

No. Art or Dance courses (other than Dance Team) are not offered as GPA-exempt courses for juniors and seniors. A freshman or Junior Varsity Dance Team course can be used as a prerequisite for the Dance Team exemption in the junior and/or senior year.

District Guidelines for Award of Grade Points

- Grade points are awarded for any high school course successfully completed. Grade points are determined by the level at which the course is taken.
- All high school credit courses taken in Fort Bend ISD Summer School or Evening School receive regular/on-level points on the GPA scale with the exception of identified Pre AP/AP courses that may be offered.
- All high school credit courses taken in summer school programs outside of Fort Bend ISD receive regular/on-level points on the GPA scale unless otherwise designated by the sending program.
- Online learning course credit, credit by exam, and night school course credit receive regular/on-level points on the GPA scale unless otherwise designated.
- High school courses taken through credit by exam with no prior instruction are awarded credit and grade points. A student must earn a grade of 80 percent or more on each exam in a subject area to be awarded a .5 unit of credit and grade points.
- Off Campus Physical Education receives regular/on-level points on the GPA scale.

Grade Point Scale (Classes of 2017, 2018)

Grade	Pre AP/AP/Honors/Beyond AP	All Other Courses
A	6	5
B	5	4
C	4	3
D	3	2
F	0	0

The NEW 100 Point GPA Scale

(Class of 2019 and Beyond)

The new GPA system is referred to as a 100 Point Scale. With this system, the 100 point scale is calculated by adding all of the semester averages earned by a student and dividing by semesters attempted. The 100 point scale can be converted to the Four Point Scale which is the most common scale for college admissions, NCAA and scholarship applications. In addition, the weighted grade point system was also revised beginning with the Class of 2019. The changes are reflected in the chart:

Advanced Placement (AP)/Beyond AP Courses	Pre AP, Honors Courses, Dual Credit Courses	On Level Courses
Receives 10 point weight	Receives 5 point weight	Non-weighted

Example of a high school student's grades:

Physics (on level) 86 = 86 points
 English III AP 94 = 104 points
 US History Dual Credit 84 = 89 points
 Athletics 100 = 100 points
 Choir 100 = 100 points
 Pre-Cal Pre-AP 86 = 91
 Journalism 94 = 94
 Total points = 664 points divided by 7 = 94.8571429

Senior Class Rank

All courses recorded on the Academic Achievement Record (high school transcript) shall count toward Grade Point Average (GPA) and Rank in Class (RIC), using the grades received.

- RIC is determined by the grade point average (GPA) of all high school credit courses taken through the end of the eighth semester. Rank for honor graduation status is determined by the GPA through the end of the third 9 weeks of the senior year.
- Grade points for other courses taken for high school credit outside of the regular school day or earned through advanced placement exams will be determined according to District guidelines.
- To be eligible for valedictorian or salutatorian honors, students must be enrolled for their sixth and seventh semesters in a District high school, and graduate in no fewer than eight regular semesters.
- To be eligible for graduation with honors, a student shall:
 - complete the designated program for their cohort and
 - present grades for all required courses prior to the established date for calculating rank-in-class (RIC); and
 - be enrolled for their last two semesters in a District high school.

GPA-Exempt Courses

Fort Bend ISD encourages all students to pursue their areas of special skills and interests in order to enrich their academic achievement and to foster continued student participation in four-year, co-curricular programs. Starting with the class of 2017 (freshman during 2013-2014 year), FBISD will allow juniors and seniors to participate in the third and fourth years of the following courses on a GPA-exempt basis:

- Advanced Journalism/Individual Study in Journalism (Newspaper & Yearbook)
- Athletics (not PE)
- Band
- Cheerleading
- Choir
- Color Guard
- Debate/Oral Interpretation
- Dance Team
- JROTC
- Orchestra
- Theatre (Technical Theatre, Theatre Arts, Theatre Production)
- Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (Specific Jr. and Sr. level courses as approved by campus administration)

An application is required. See counselor for more information.

GPA-Exempt Courses Q&A

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