

TRANSCRIPTS AND THE HOME SCHOOLED STUDENT

A student's high school transcript is created to accurately portray what transpired, academically, during grades nine to twelve (9-12). It should reflect the student's courses, grades, credit, and grade point average for all courses in which the student was enrolled. In addition, the transcript should show where the courses were taken (for the home schooled student that can be many places, all of which should be referenced in the transcript).

For the home schooled student, the transcript can be quite involved and more complicated than it is for the traditional student. What follows are some guidelines to help the home school parent as he/she creates a transcript that is clear, concise, and descriptive of the high school years.

The Transcript, Warts and All

The transcript should be an honest document that perfectly reflects what happened during a specific course in a specific semester of a specific year. If the students did poorly, the transcript should reveal that. Please do not gloss over, change, or omit any grade your child earned, no matter the circumstances or the situation. If, with a college application, you feel the need to explain why grades were poor, a separate letter should accompany the college application with that explanation. Sometimes, a letter of recommendation can mitigate the effect of poor grades. Colleges appreciate knowing why an excellent student all of a sudden fails two or three classes, and they can be very understanding, especially if the circumstances were particularly difficult. Colleges have been known to forgive a poor semester for a traumatic event in a student's life if they can see that the student recovered and was subsequently successful.

Course Titles are Important

What you call the courses in your home school is important. For example, it is far better to call an English class, "English 9" than it is to call the course, "Communications." Colleges want to know that students have successfully completed an academically rigorous preparation that results in academic success in college. In general, this what colleges require for admission (as you can see it is very traditional):

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| English | Four years (4 credits) with an emphasis in writing during 11 th and 12 th grade

Colleges want to know that students studied World and American Literature, grammar, punctuation, mechanics, and college-prep expository writing. Creative writing is not considered sufficient writing preparation for college. |
| Math | Four years (4 credits) beginning with Algebra I or above. Colleges will not count any math course below Algebra I. If your child had Algebra I as a 7 th or 8 th grade student, do not include |

that on a high school transcript (do not include anything, in any area that occurred in middle school).

Social Studies Three years (3 credits) including World History, American History, and American Government, and, for those applying to CU-Boulder, Geography.

Science Three years (3 credits) with at least two of those 3 credits being lab sciences.

A word of caution here.....the science courses should be rigorous and college-prep in nature and, for lab sciences, should include a lab component at least once a week. Please do not give your student a watered down Biology, "Kitchen Chemistry", or physics that is not rooted in Algebra II level calculations. When you put a science class on the transcript, colleges are expecting the course to resemble the course descriptions below.

Physical Science

Physical science is an inquiry-oriented course involving principals and concepts concerning the physical world. Content areas explored include nature and behavior of matter, atomic theory, chemical and physical changes including bonding and reactions, mechanics, electricity and magnetism, light and sound, and energy. The course emphasizes the study and proper use of fundamental science tools including the metric system, periodic table, graphing techniques, and applied technologies. The laboratory experience is the foundation for this introductory physical science. Students will explore physical science topics while developing the skills necessary to become proficient in science. This course will emphasize math and critical reading skills. The scientific method will be emphasized along with data analysis and critical thinking skills.

Biology

In this class, students will explore relationships between structure and function in organisms and the interaction of cells and organisms with each other and their environments. Units of study will include: ecology, chemistry of life, cellular structure and function, genetics, evolution, classification, and human systems. Laboratory activities reinforce concepts and principals presented.

Chemistry

This course provides the opportunity to develop knowledge and understanding about the relationships between the structure and properties of matter and the interaction of mass and energy. Units of study include: matter and its changes, atomic structure, chemical composition, nomenclature, reactions, stoichiometry, gas laws, periodicity, bonding, molar geometry, and thermochemistry. Laboratory activities reinforce concepts and principles presented in this course.

Physics

In Physics, students will learn about waves, light, sound, electricity, and magnetism. Students will continue to perform more extensive laboratory work and develop data interpretation and graphical analysis skills. Students will learn about molecular structure, thermodynamics, acids and bases, and pH. Students should be proficient in moles and stoichiometry. Students will continue to perform more extensive laboratory work and develop data interpretation and graphical analysis skills. Algebra II skills are necessary for Physics.

World Languages complete level 2-3 of the same world language

Colleges expect that a student study a world language at a deep, rigorous level and that spelling, grammar, verb conjugation, vocabulary acquisition, conversational skills, and culture are all included in a world language course. Colleges do not view "Rosetta Stone", in and of itself, as sufficient preparation in a world language. "Rosetta Stone", however, may be a part of

a comprehensive study of a world language. On the student's transcript, keep it simple (Spanish I, French II, German III, etc.) Colorado colleges and universities accept American Sign Language (ASL) as a world language. If a student wishes to enroll in an out-of-state or private college/university, he/she should check on the specific policy regarding ASL.

Miscellaneous

Religious education is often a component of the home school student's education. A class entitled "The Bible as Literature" can be classified as an English course... "The History of the Bible" can be a Social Studies course. A course called "The Bible" can only count as elective credit. Be aware that colleges, even if they are religiously based, still want students to have a good background in classical literature (World and American), in expository writing, and in World and American History.

The Transcript Layout

While the layout of the transcript can vary, college admissions personnel appreciate an easily readable transcript. Below is an example for a fictitious student midway through her junior year. As you can see, the courses she takes at Options are identified with one asterisk and the courses she took at Front Range Community College are identified with two asterisks. Her college courses have been converted from Semester Credit Hours to Carnegie Units (the unit of measure used in high schools). The formula for conversion is 3 semester hours=.5 credit...4-5 semester hours =1.0 credits. If one "Googles" "Home School Transcripts," a number of web sites come up. These sites can help you with your transcript design, layout, and computation of yearly and cumulative grade point averages. Some of the sites that construct transcripts are free and some of the sites require a payment.

THE DOE HOME SCHOOL ACADEMY

<u>9th GRADE</u>	<u>Sem 1</u>	<u>Sem 2</u>	<u>Credit</u>	<u>11th GRADE</u>	<u>Sem 1</u>	<u>Sem 2</u>	<u>Credit</u>
English 9*	A	A	1.0	English 122**	A		.5
World History*	A-	A	1.0	Am. Lit 211**	A		.5
Algebra I	A	A-	1.0	Algebra II	A		.5
Biology*	A	A	1.0	Chemistry 101**	A		1.0
Spanish I	B+	A-	1.0	Spanish 211**	A		1.0
Mus. Theater	A	A	1.0	Piano	A		.5
Comp. Literacy	A		.5	Total Credits 11 th Grade			4.0
Art I		A	.5	11 th Grade GPA			4.0
Physical Ed.	B		.5				
Piano	A	A	1.0				
Total Credits 9 th Grade			8.5	Total Credit Earned		18.5	
9 th Grade GPA			3.88	Current cumulative GPA		3.92	

<u>10th GRADE</u>	<u>Sem 1</u>	<u>Sem 2</u>	<u>Credit</u>
English 10	A		.5
English 121**		A	.5
Amer. Hist*	A		.5
Hist 201**		A	.5
Geometry	A	A	1.0
Astron. 101**	B		.5
Env. Sci 101**		A	.5
Spanish II	A	A	1.0
Piano	A	A	1.0
Total Credits 10 th Grade			6.0
10 th Grade GPA			3.91

* Courses taken at Aurora Options

** Guarantee Transfer Courses Taken at Front Range Community College