

## **Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Course Selection**

**1. How are my student's placements determined in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign language?**

All incoming freshmen are required to take the CTP4 placement tests in December. Course and level placements are based on the results of these tests, input from eighth grade teachers, the Parent Profile of the Student, and the Student Self-Assessment.

**2. What is the typical class load for a freshman student?**

There is no definitive answer to this question. There are nine periods in the school day including lunch. Freshmen typically choose four core academic major courses and two elective courses or five core academic major courses and one elective course. Elective courses are generally taken for elective credit (0.5 credits per year), but for students who take four core academic major courses, they can take one elective course for major credit (1.0 credits per year). In addition, all students are required to take Kinetic Wellness. When choosing a program, parents need to be sensitive to the other demands on the student during the freshman year—athletic, extra-curricular, social, and emotional—the total school commitment. The choice needs to be a personal one.

**3. How is an elective credit course different from a major credit course?**

A passing grade in an elective credit course generally gives 0.5 credits per year. An elective credit course focuses on in-class exercises, activities and projects. Elective credit courses require some amount of preparation outside of class; however, the amount varies among courses and departments. While most elective credit courses meet every day, some meet fewer than five days a week or fewer than eighteen weeks a semester. In these cases, credit is prorated accordingly. Some elective credit courses may be taken for major credit which will demand more time outside of class. Additional information can be found in individual department and course descriptions.

**4. How much homework can my student expect each day?**

A course that receives major credit whether in a core academic or elective area, meets five or more periods per week and requires study and preparation outside of the class period. The amount of time that an individual student spends on homework varies by day and class; individual student characteristics and appropriate level placement also determine the amount of time spent on homework. For more information please refer to the Homework Section in the Program of Studies.

**5. If my student is a candidate for a 3 or 4 level program in English or History, should he/she select the combined English & History Team course or the two separate courses—English and World History?**

First, one needs to understand that the interdepartmental English-History course is no more difficult than English and World History at the 3 or 4 level. The combined English & History course is one which appeals to the type of student who takes the combined course as an independent learner, but one who feels comfortable doing collaborative work and participating in class discussions. Whatever the choice, these students need to possess an extensive breadth of vocabulary and have a strong foundation in reading and writing skills.

**6. If my student selects Freshman Jazz Ensemble as an elective course, is it true that they must also enroll in either Freshman Band or Orchestra concurrently?**

Yes. However, pianists and electric six-string guitar players are exempt from the requirements. Many of these musicians choose to enroll in Band and play other instruments. For more information log on to [www.ntjazz.com/8/default.htm](http://www.ntjazz.com/8/default.htm)

**7. Can a Modern and Classical Language class be taken for elective credit? May my student take more than one foreign language at a time? When is a good time to try a new language?**

All foreign language classes are offered only for major credit and have daily homework requirements. A student may take more than one language freshman year, but it limits other academic or elective choices. Freshman year is the time to take a new foreign language unless the student is willing to commute from the Winnetka campus to the Northfield campus during sophomore year.

**8. What factors should I consider when choosing a Science course?**

Please review the Frequently Asked Questions about Science document which is also in this Academic Life Packet.

**9. How do we learn about extra-curricular activities?**

On Monday, May 7, 2012 we host an evening session titled, "After the Academics" This is our athletics, activities and performing arts fair. The meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on the Northfield Campus in the F Building. There you will meet coaches, sponsors, and students involved in a variety of student activities. During the school year The Daily Bulletin (which is accessible on-line at [www.newtrier.k12.il.us](http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us)) announces all club and sport meeting times.

**10. What if I have questions about my student's level placements or course selection in English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Foreign Language, or Special Education?**

There will be three weeks in February during which a course selection voicemail hotline will be open. You will be able to leave a message and the best person to answer your questions will return your phone call.

Course Selection Hotline: 847-784-7540

Dates: 2/7-2/24

**11. How can I email a question regarding course selection?**

You may also submit a question to the Transition Coordinator, through the New Trier website (Go to [www.newtrier.k12.il.us](http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us), select the green square on the right side of page titled "Students", then select "Incoming Freshmen" on the left side of the page) This page also includes helpful information about the transition process and all mailings are available on this web page.

**12. Can you clarify core academic, elective, major credit and elective credit?**

These definitions will help:

- Core Academic Department- English, math, modern and classical language, science and social studies.
- Elective Department- Applied art, art, business, music, and speech/theatre.
- Major Credit (Core Academic or Elective)- 1.0 credits for a full year of work- significant demands on outside of class time.
- Elective Credit- 0.5 credits for a full year of work- limited demands outside on of class time