



WHEATON ACADEMY

EARN COLLEGE CREDIT

Opportunities for the 2026-2027
School Year





Wheaton Academy is committed to helping students and families make thoughtful, well-informed decisions about earning college credit during high school. While there are multiple ways students may earn college credit, our goal is to help you understand your options so you can plan wisely and avoid surprises.

HOW TO EARN COLLEGE CREDIT AT WHEATON ACADEMY

At Wheaton Academy, we want you to fully maximize your high school experience and understand the college credit opportunities that could save your family thousands of dollars in future tuition.

This booklet explains the college credit options available for the 2026-2027 school year, how to earn credit, and key factors to consider when deciding whether an option is right for you.

Students can earn college credit in several ways while at Wheaton Academy:

Type of College Credit	How to Earn Credit	Fee
 Dual credit: Dual credit is a high school course that counts toward your Wheaton Academy transcript and is also recorded on a college transcript.	Enroll in a qualifying Wheaton Academy course. By registering for dual credit once the course begins, you earn transferable college credit simultaneously on a Colorado Christian University (CCU) transcript.	\$250/ course +\$50/lab
 AP (Advanced Placement): AP courses are designed to reflect college-level rigor, with the opportunity to earn college credit based on your standardized exam score.	Enroll in one our AP classes during the year and then take the College Board AP exam in May; colleges decide credit/placement based on your score.	\$110/ exam
 Project Lead The Way (PLTW): PLTW courses are high school science courses that some colleges recognize for credit, scholarships, or advanced standing.	Enroll in one of our PLTW courses and opt-in to take a PLTW exam.	\$0
 CLEP Testing: CLEP allows you to earn college credit by demonstrating college-level knowledge through a standardized exam, without taking a corresponding AP or college-level course.	Take a College Board CLEP test independently; colleges decide credit/placement based on your score.	\$97/ exam

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How can I know if the college credit I earn at Wheaton Academy will be accepted?

A: Colleges decide whether and how they accept credits. To learn how your credits may apply, review the credit-transfer and AP policies of the colleges you are considering. Tools like Transferology (for dual credit) and the College Board's AP credit search can also help you compare policies. Even when credit is not awarded, completing rigorous coursework can strengthen your college application.

Q: Once I register for a class that qualifies for dual credit, am I automatically enrolled to receive college credit?

A: No—you must opt into the dual credit option through Colorado Christian University (CCU). How it works:

- After the class begins, you will receive an email from our college counselors with instructions on how to enroll in the dual credit option.
- To receive college credit, you must complete the opt-in process by the specified deadline.
- When you opt in, you will pay a fee directly to CCU.
- You must earn a grade of C or higher to receive credit.
- You must request a transcript from CCU to be sent to your college to be evaluated for credit.

2026-2027 Courses:

Courses eligible for dual credit may change from year to year.

Science Courses

- Engineering Essentials (PLTW)*
- Principles of Engineering (PLTW)*
- Principles of Biomedical Science (PLTW)
- AP Environmental Science^
- Anatomy and Physiology^
- AP Chemistry^
- AP Biology^
- AP Physics C: Mechanics^ recommended co-requisite
- AP Physics C: Electricity & Magnetism^

Math Courses

- College Algebra
- Calculus
- AP Statistics
- AP Calculus AB
- AP Calculus BC

Business Courses

- Intro to Entrepreneurship*
- AP Economics

English Courses

- AP English Language and Composition
- AP English Literature and Composition
- AP Seminar*
- AP Research

Fine Arts Courses

- Band**
- Orchestra**
- AP Studio Art*
- AP Music Theory

Social Studies Courses

- AP Psychology
- AP Modern World History
- AP U.S. History
- AP United States/AP Comparative Government and Politics

World Language Courses

French

- French IV
- AP French

Spanish

- Spanish III (Adv)
- Spanish IV
- AP Spanish Literature and Culture
- AP Spanish Language and Culture

*indicates a semester-long class
^ course includes lab requirement

**Students may earn CCU credit for a single year of Band or Orchestra. Additional years of Band or Orchestra do not qualify for CCU credit.

Frequently Asked Questions

 **Q: If a course is eligible for credit through AP and CCU, which one should I choose?**

A: Some courses qualify for both AP and CCU dual credit, allowing you to pursue one or both options. Your college counselor may make a recommendation based on your academic goals and college plans. You do not need to choose either option until after the course has begun. Students who are comfortable with standardized testing may prefer the AP exam, while students who prefer credit based on course performance may find dual credit a better fit.












FINANCIAL BENEFITS

These charts show *potential* college tuition savings if the credit you earn during high school is accepted and applied toward degree requirements at the college or university you attend. Even if your credits are accepted, earning college credit does not automatically reduce the cost of college.



The savings calculations below include tuition costs only. Savings are most impactful when students are able to save on tuition, room, and board by graduating early.



Sample College Savings Scenarios

General AP Pathway















Course	Potential Credits
 AP Modern World History	3
  AP US History	3
 AP United States/AP Comparative Government and Politics	3
 College Algebra	3
  AP Calculus AB	4
 Orchestra	3
 AP English Language and Composition	3
  AP Environmental Science	4
Total over 4 years	26

This student could save up to \$33,030 in tuition by earning up to **26 college credits** through different combinations of AP and CCU credit.



Est. cost of 26 college credits* \$34,190
 Example 1:  2 CCU,  6 AP -\$1,160
 Est. college tuition savings: **\$33,030**



Est. cost of 26 college credits* \$34,190
 Example 2:  4 CCU,  4 AP -\$1,490
 Est. college tuition savings: **\$32,700**

Humanities Emphasis

Course	Potential Credits
 AP Modern World History	3
  AP US History	3
 AP United States/AP Comparative Government and Politics	3
 AP Psychology	3
  AP Economics	3
 Calculus	4
 AP English Language and Composition	3
 AP Seminar	3
  AP English Literature and Composition	3
 Band	3
 Spanish III (Adv)	3
Total over 4 years	34

This student could save up to \$43,080 in tuition by earning up to **34 college credits** through different combinations of AP and CCU credit.

Est. cost of 34 college credits* \$44,710
 Example 1:  3 CCU,  8 AP -\$1,630
 Est. college tuition savings: **\$43,080**

Est. cost of 34 college credits* \$44,710
 Example 2:  6 CCU,  5 AP -\$2,050
 Est. college tuition savings: **\$42,660**

**Estimated cost of \$1,315 per credit reflects the average tuition per credit at colleges commonly attended by Wheaton Academy graduates, assuming a 16-credit semester.*

Frequently Asked Questions













Q: Do I need to get a particular score on my AP exam in order to receive credit?

A: Yes. Colleges set their own AP policies, including required exam scores. Many colleges award course credit for scores of 3 or higher, while others use AP scores for class placement rather than credit. If your score does not meet a college's credit threshold, the exam may result in placement into a higher-level course but not college credit.

Q: If earning college credit doesn't guarantee future cost savings, is it still worth it?



A: Depending on your goals, it can be. Even when college credit does not transfer directly, many highly selective schools expect students to take these kinds of rigorous courses. If you complete a full four-year degree, earned credits may also provide flexibility for electives, minors, or advanced coursework.

MASTER Emphasis

Course	Potential Credits
 Engineering Essentials (PLTW)	1
 Principles of Engineering (PLTW)	1
 AP Environmental Science	4
 Anatomy and Physiology	4
 AP Physics C: Mechanics	5
 AP Chemistry	3
 AP Psychology	3
 College Algebra	3
 Calculus	4
 AP Statistics	3
 AP US History	3
 AP English Literature and Composition	3
Total over 4 years	37

This student could save up to \$47,135 in tuition by earning up to **37 college credits** through different combinations of AP and CCU credit.

Est. cost of 37 college credits* \$48,655

Example 1:  3 CCU,  7 AP -\$1,520

Est. college tuition savings: **\$47,135**


Est. cost of 37 college credits* \$48,655


Example 2:  8 CCU,  2 AP -\$2,220

Est. college tuition savings: **\$46,435**

Key

 **Project Lead The Way (PLTW)**
\$0 per exam

 **Dual credit \$250 per course**
+\$50 per lab

 **AP (Advanced Placement)**
\$110 per exam

“Because of the college credit opportunities at Wheaton Academy, **our daughter was able to graduate from college in just three years, saving us \$50,000 in tuition!** The combination of dual credit courses through CCU, AP classes, and CLEP tests gave her a significant head start. We are so grateful for how Wheaton Academy equipped her for success beyond high school.”

- Parent of a Wheaton Academy Graduate



i COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS

“It’s too expensive.”

Reality: AP and dual-credit courses are discounted compared with regular college tuition.

AP exams cost \$110, and CCU charges \$250 for dual credit. These costs are almost always significantly discounted from the cost of tuition at college.



“You have to be a junior or senior to take these courses.”

Reality: While juniors and seniors often take AP and Dual Credit courses, there are college credit options for freshmen and sophomores.

The options tend to increase as students mature into college readiness, but there are options available as early as freshman year. Even if students are not earning college credit their freshman year, they can still choose courses that meet prerequisites for college credit earning courses later.

“I’ll have to go to CCU.”

Reality: Students who earn CCU credit at Wheaton Academy can attend any college they choose.

Credits are recorded on a CCU transcript that you can send to any college; acceptance and how the credit counts are up to the receiving school.



“These credits won’t transfer to my college.”

Reality: CCU is regionally accredited, which increases the likelihood of transfer, but each college makes its own decision. Illinois colleges are required to accept qualifying AP scores.

When in doubt, ask the registrar at your destination college and save syllabi.

“I need to know my college and major now.”

Reality: You don’t.

General-education courses (e.g., composition, statistics, U.S. history, psychology) tend to be the most transferable, though majors differ. Always check the target college’s transfer or AP policy.

“I must pick AP or CCU before I take the course.”

Reality: You have the option to opt-into the AP exam and/or CCU credit after the course begins. Many students do both (sit for the AP exam and transcript the course for CCU credit) to keep options open.

Colleges won’t double-count the same learning. You’ll receive credit once (via AP or transferred dual credit), whichever benefits you most at that school.



“This will hurt my GPA.”

Reality: At Wheaton Academy, we want you to take classes where you will be challenged.

Your GPA is only part of what colleges look at for admission. Your course load rigor is also an important factor in college admissions, and we encourage you to take classes at an appropriate level of challenge.

Additionally, transferred dual credit courses typically do not affect your college GPA. That said, policies vary by college, so it is always worth checking.

“It’ll be too much work.”

Reality: College-level courses are designed to be rigorous but manageable with planning. And registering for dual credit through CCU does not add any coursework to the class.

Although college-level courses can be more challenging, we are seeking to build your college readiness by planning a schedule that will help you manage the additional challenge with our supports in place. Often, we recommend starting with one dual-credit course in an area of strength or asking your current teachers for recommendations.

“I must be recommended to take these courses.”

Reality: Wheaton Academy teachers recommend courses that will likely provide the best level of challenge for students, but choosing courses is a collaborative process.

Accurate class placement is important for all students. Teacher recommendations are a critical part of that process, but there may be reasons why a particular course may be a good fit for you even when it is not recommended. We’re happy to discuss options with you when you feel like the best course is not one that you have been recommended for.

Still have questions?

Contact our College Counselors



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