

What Classes Do I Need to Take?

Different colleges have different expectations of the courses you should take and many admissions offices prefer students who have taken more than just the minimum requirements. The NH Scholars Program (www.nhscholars.org) suggests the following:

- **English:** 4 years of college preparatory English composition and literature.
- **Math:** 3 years (4 is recommended), including algebra I, geometry, algebra II, or higher mathematics.
- **History and Social Science:** 3 and 1/2 years, including 1 year of US history and 1 year of social studies.
- **Laboratory Science:** 3 years, including 1 biological science and 1 physical science.
- **Foreign Language:** 2 years of the same language.
- **Visual and Performing Arts:** 1 year of dance, drama, theater, music, or visual art.
- **College Prep Elective:** 1 additional year of any college prep subject.

Remember: you want to keep up a good overall grade point average (GPA) by working to your potential in every class.

You will have plenty of time to complete these classes if you start planning early. Don't worry if you feel you are behind—check with your school counselor and she/he can help you.

What Skills Will Help Me to Succeed?

Reading, writing, math, and science form the foundation of your education. It is important to master the skills in these areas, as they will give you the tools you need to succeed in college and beyond.

- **Reading:** Reading—literature, fiction, and nonfiction—(and lots of it!) helps to improve vocabulary, verbal skills, and writing ability.
- **Writing:** Expressing yourself well is important in every field. Practice good research and writing techniques. Get feedback and give yourself plenty of time to rewrite and edit your assignments.
- **Making Calculations:** Having an understanding of math and science in today's technological world is a must. Progressing from basic math to algebra, geometry, calculus, and trigonometry will give you the tools to new ways of thinking and problem solving.

How Important Are Grades?

Your learning experience is the most important thing you can take away from high school. Grades indicate your mastery of core subjects and motivation to succeed. So better grades will provide you with more opportunities for education beyond high school. But your college application includes more than grades, and admissions offices will also consider your SAT or ACT scores if required, recommendations, and volunteer, extracurricular or leadership activities.

Grades and Classes Are Just Part of the Equation

Steps you can take outside the classroom at each grade level to get ready for college:

9th Grade

- Visit a school counselor in the guidance office to learn about resources for homework help, career exploration, and college planning.
- Work with your counselor to set up a four-year plan for your classes.
- Take challenging and fun courses that will satisfy USNH college/university admissions requirements.
- Do your best and don't put things off until the last minute. Take time for social stuff, but make time for school work as well.
- Look into extracurricular activities at school, as well as community service opportunities—You'll grow so much from the experience of getting involved. Plus, colleges like students who are active in and out of the classroom.

10th Grade

- Consider taking geometry or algebra II and college prep English—talk with your school counselor about your best course options.
- Begin thinking about the majors of study that most interest you. Visit the Center for College Planning at NHHEAF online at www.nhheaf.org for career exploration tips and tools.
- In October, take the PSAT, a practice exam for the SAT (www.collegeboard.com). You can use PSAT results to see where you are strong and where you may need to improve.
- Talk with your teachers and school counselor about taking an advanced placement (AP) or honors course as a junior.



GET READY NH!

for college

Tips for 9-12 Graders



A college education can help you reach your dreams!

You can make college happen by taking classes that challenge you and taking additional steps to reach your full potential. Of course it is best to start early, but it is never too late to get serious about getting ready for your future.

11th Grade

- Check with your school counselor to make sure you are taking classes that meet or exceed college admissions requirements, including algebra II or advanced math, and English.
- Aim for top grades - they are especially important during your junior and senior years.
- Register and take the PSAT, a practice exam for the SAT.
- Focus your energy on developing your academic record, but understand that colleges will look at what you do outside of the classroom as well.
- If taking advanced placement (AP) courses, register to take the AP exams in the spring. Scoring well on the tests will give you college credit for those courses!
- Start to think about taking college entrance exams, such as the SAT or ACT. Learn more about the ACT by visiting www.actstudent.org. You can register for the SAT at www.collegeboard.com. Your school counselor can provide more details as well.
- Prepare for the SAT, SAT II, or ACT by reviewing test preparation books with sample questions. Your guidance office may have free preparation booklets.
- Attend "Destination College," the free statewide college planning event held every March for high school juniors and their parents. Visit www.destinationcollege.org for details.
- Get to know the colleges you are considering. Think about how each college fits your strengths and interests, your values and expectations.

Brought to you by:

University System of New Hampshire

www.getreadynh.org

12th Grade

There are many things to accomplish this year, but each step gets you closer to your goal of going to college.

- Review class schedules with your school counselor to ensure you are meeting college prep and graduation requirements.
- If offered, consider taking advanced math such as trigonometry or analytic geometry/calculus, English, an additional year of a foreign language, and other courses required for college admission.
- Spend a day with a parent at work or look into other job-shadowing opportunities.
- Think about your college application essay. Write a practice essay and ask your school counselor or teacher to make suggestions for improvement. For free proofreading, e-mail them to NHHEAF at collegeplanning@gsmr.org.
- Visit the colleges/universities you are interested in attending.
- **Early September:** Register for the SAT, SAT II, or ACT.
See your school counselor for details or register online at www.collegeboard.com.
- Request written teacher recommendations to use as part of your college applications.
- **November:** Consider early admission. Review the college/university application process and be sure to check application deadlines.
- **December:** Attend a financial aid night, if your high school has one, to gather more information about college costs and financial aid.
- **January:** Work with your family to complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Check out www.fafsa.ed.gov for more information and an online application.
- **February:** Ask your school counselor about local scholarship opportunities. Visit www.nhcf.org, www.nh93.com, and www.fastweb.com to get free scholarship information.
- **May 1:** This is the date when all students must choose their college and reply to that college to confirm acceptance. Also in May, take advanced placement (AP) exams for any AP subjects you may have taken. Scoring well will give you college credit.

Another Path to a College Degree – New Hampshire's Community Colleges

As important as college is for personal and career development, not everyone is ready to jump from high school right into a traditional four-year program. Starting your college education at a community college and later transferring to a USNH college or university to complete your bachelor's degree is another option. New Hampshire's Community College System (www.ccsnh.edu) and USNH colleges/universities have agreements in place for easy transfer of credits. Visit www.NHTransfer.org for details.

USNH Admissions Offices

College admissions counselors are just that—counselors. They are available to answer your questions, even before you apply. Don't be afraid to contact an admissions counselor for advice on what you can do to better your chances of being accepted. Remember, they want you to succeed and are trained to help you get where you want to be. Be sure to check application deadlines at the University of New Hampshire, Plymouth State University, and Keene State College, as the dates may vary. Granite State College and the NH Community Colleges accept applications throughout the year.

USNH Admissions Offices

College/University	Web Address	Phone
Granite State College	www.granite.edu/admit	1-888-228-3000
Keene State College	www.keene.edu/admissions	1-800-572-1909
Plymouth State University	www.plymouth.edu/admit	1-800-842-6900
University of New Hampshire	www.unh.edu/admissions	603-862-1360

Other Important References

Community College System of NH	www.ccsnh.edu	603-271-2722
NH Higher Education Assistance Foundation	www.nhheaf.org	1-800-525-2577
NH College and University Council	www.nhcuc.org	603-225-4199
NH Scholars	www.nhscholars.org	603-225-4199, ext 300
NH School Counselor Association	www.nhschoolcounselor.org	
Fidelity 529 UNIQUE College Investing Plan	www.fidelity.com/unique	1-800-544-1722