

COURSE SELECTION AND POST-GRADUATE PLANNING

As you think about what courses to choose each year, it may be helpful to know what colleges expect when students apply for admission. GSA's curriculum is designed to prepare students for a very broad range of colleges, from the most selective four-year institutions to two-year community colleges and programs that offer specialized training for particular careers. Following is a general guide to the recommendations of colleges in each category:

Most selective colleges

These schools typically accept fewer than 20% of those who apply, some as few as 6-8%. They include the Ivy League schools, elite liberal arts colleges such as Bowdoin, Colby, Colgate, Middlebury, Smith, and Williams, and prestigious public universities such as the University of Virginia, North Carolina, and Michigan. Applicants should pursue the most challenging courses in every subject area, including

- 4 years of English, including AP English Literature and AP English Language and Composition;
- 4 years of math, preferably including an AP course;
- 3-4 years of social studies, including AP U.S. history;
- 3-4 years of science, including honors or AP biology, chemistry, and physics;
- 3-4 years of the same foreign language at the honors level.

Very selective colleges

Colleges in this group admit fewer than 50% of their applicants. They include such popular schools as Boston University, Northeastern University, Skidmore College, and Connecticut College. Successful applicants pursue a challenging program of honors or AP courses in most subjects, including

- 4 years of English, including AP English Literature and AP English Language and Composition;
- 4 years of math, including honors pre-calculus (Advanced Algebra and Trigonometry);
- 3-4 years of social studies, including at least one honors or AP course;
- 3-4 years of science, including honors courses in biology and chemistry;
- 3 years of the same foreign language, preferably at the honors level.

Selective colleges

Many colleges popular with GSA students are in this group, including the University of Maine, Husson University, the University of Vermont, and Wentworth Institute of Technology. Students hoping to attend schools in this category should take the following, including honors or AP courses in some subjects:

- 4 years of English;
- 3 years of math, including two years of algebra and one of geometry;
- 3 years of social studies, including U.S. History;
- 2-3 years of science, including biology and chemistry;
- 2-3 years of the same foreign language.

Community colleges or certificate programs

Community colleges offer a broad range of two-year programs leading to an associate's degree or a certificate in a specific skill or profession. They typically require the following:

- 4 years of English;
- 3 years of math, including two years of algebra and one of geometry;
- 3 years of social studies;
- 2-3 years of science, preferably including biology and chemistry;
- 2 years of the same foreign language.

Keep in mind that these guidelines represent the basic academic requirements for colleges in each category. Students should also take courses in the arts and technology, and participate in a variety of extracurricular activities such as sports, theater, community service, or student government.