

Building a Competitive Transcript for College Can be Like Playing BINGO (Reviewed by a College Advisor specializing in STEM)

Satisfying graduation requirements and Washington college entrance requirements (CADR) in high school (sometimes middle school as well) is kind of like playing BINGO but with all the squares needing to be filled in. In some cases graduation requirements and CADR requirements overlap. And in some cases other states or colleges have additional requirements that must be met, like in California's UC system they are called the A-G requirements for college entrance eligibility. Imagine all of these on a Bingo card.

College-bound high school students check off these requirements and one way to do so is to make each year of high school (and some middle school years) *productive* - increasing their chances of not only meeting minimum requirements, but in many cases exceeding them with advanced coursework after foundational prerequisite courses have been completed successfully.

So unlike Bingo, there is value in exceeding the college minimum requirements - making it so that in the Bingo analogy some squares might be satisfied more than once, especially advanced coursework such as level 2, 3 and level 4 courses. ¹

For students wanting to go to college it is in their best interest to take classes that satisfy something *necessary*. This is why PE in 9th grade is valuable and why it's typical that 9th graders take PE - because not only is it a break in an academic-filled day - it also satisfies 1 (year long) graduation requirement. Same can be said for Fine Arts, Social Studies, Foreign Language, and Lab Sciences. For example, this year's incoming freshman class at UCLA had satisfied an average of 27 college entrance courses ², which means to do so and fit all that in, they had to take extra classes in zero period, community college courses and summer school. "Not only did this type of student fill out every Bingo square, they were starting on a second card," added a national college advisor in STEM education.

¹ <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/seind12/c1/c1s2.htm>

² http://www.admissions.ucla.edu/faq/FR_Not_Adm.htm