

ALTERNATE HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT GUIDELINES

INITIATION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

1. Requests for alternative learning opportunities must be submitted in writing to the building administrator for approval and before any course work is done.
2. Students, parents, or staff members may initiate the alternative learning opportunity requests.
3. Clear criteria for grading and a plan for periodic review of student progress must be clearly spelled out on the alternative credit form for each student.

INDIVIDUALS/COURSE MODIFICATION

Compacted courses refer to a modification or "streamlining" of the regular curriculum in order to eliminate repetition of previously mastered material and to provide time for other appropriate activities while ensuring mastery of basic skills. It may include, completing the equivalent of a one-year course of study in only one semester, or going directly into the second year of the foreign language class after completing the objectives/expectations for a foreign language class by written examination and oral testing.

When students complete the same objectives in a condensed or accelerated format as they would in a full time course, they may be granted alternative credit and may even be graded on a pass/fail basis. Concepts to be covered and expectations for levels of performance will be delineated cooperatively by department staff, the counselor, principal, and student and/or guardian. Students must be able to set goals, be highly motivated and able to work with a minimum of supervision.

Clear criteria for grading and a plan for periodic review of student progress must be clearly spelled out on the alternative credit form for each student. The high school principal must approve all compacted course requests before any course work is done.

MENTORSHIPS

Mentorship refers to programming which provides an opportunity for students to be paired with a teacher, parent or community volunteer in an area of expertise or interest on a one-to-one basis in order to develop a student's knowledge in the area and to develop a product from the experience. If mentorships are done for credit they must meet the following minimum requirements:

- a. The student is in grades 5-12.
- b. The mentorship experience is supervised by a certified high school teacher.
- c. State goals/objectives for the mentorship are established as compared to at least the minimum expectations in a related type of course in the high school curriculum.
- d. Periodic evaluations/discussions are held between the student, the supervising teacher, and the mentor.

INDEPENDENT STUDY GUIDELINES

Independent study courses are designed for the student who has completed all of the courses offered in a particular field or wants to continue an in-depth study of a special need/interest.

The independent study program is designed for the motivated student who has a desire to pursue and learn in an independent manner. Since independent study provides a great deal of flexibility, it requires students to possess considerable motivation, discipline, persistence, and good study habits. Independent study may be pursued in two different ways:

OPTION 1:

A student may enroll in a correspondence course via the University of Wisconsin Extension for independent study. Under this plan, students would receive all their material and work through the university system. Students would follow the practices set up by the university for course (i.e. assignments, tests sent in by given dates, university grades). Students would be reimbursed for the cost of the class if they receive the principal's permission and satisfactorily complete the course.

OPTION 2:

A student may initiate a request for an independent study which he/she develops to earn high school credit. The procedure for initiating an independent study is the same procedure the student uses to initiate a mentorship or compacted/condensed class. Procedure to initiate An Alternative Credit Class (Independent Study, Mentorship or Compacted/Condensed Class)

- a. The student should write a descriptive project proposal which he/she presents to the Alternative Credit Committee.
- b. A written request to meet with the Alternative Credit Committee must be given to the high school guidance counselor at least three weeks prior to the start of the semester in which the alternative credit will occur.
- c. The Committee will be comprised of a minimum of five members representing:
 1. secondary school administration
 2. high school counselor
 3. classroom teachers (fine arts, math, science, humanities, and vocational/technical)
 4. Student and/or Parents
- d. At the initial meeting, the Committee will either accept or reject the project proposal and offer suggestions for improvement of the project.
- e. When the Committee reconvenes to hear summarized results of the alternative credit, the final amount of credit and grade for the project will be determined. The Committee will make all decisions on the basis of majority rule.
- f. Students who prepare the alternative credit proposal should log all time spent on the project. Students should realize that a regular semester class involves approximately 90 hours of classroom instruction and at least an additional 45 hours of homework to earn one-half credit.
- g. A student may submit a written request to the Committee for a time extension stating reasons needed for the additional time. This request must be made at least three weeks prior to the completion of the project. Also, alternative credit may be given if the student has worked diligently on the project, fulfilling the spirit of the contract, but for unforeseen reasons is unable to bring it to fruition or closure. This will be determined when the Alternative Credit Committee reconvenes to hear summarized results of the independent study project.
- h. A student who has received approval for an independent study may drop the independent study without penalty.