

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Each year, all students currently enrolled at the secondary level of Alliance Academy International (AAI) are asked to fill out a registration form for the following school year. On the basis of choice of subjects, each student receives an individual schedule. Therefore, it is important that students fully understand what is involved if wise choices are to be made. The following information will assist students in selecting the classes that meet their particular needs and interests. All students are considered as if they are planning to graduate from AAI, even if they know they are going to complete their education in another location. Therefore, when constructing individual student schedules, students must comply with AAI's requirements for graduation and follow a plan that would allow successful completion of courses leading to an AAI graduation diploma.

To receive a graduation diploma from AAI, a student must earn a minimum of 20 academic credits in specified content areas. Credit is given for class attendance, course completion, and passing marks. One unit of credit requires a minimum of 130 clock hours of instruction per year per course. This is equivalent to 45 minutes of instruction, 5 days per week for 36 weeks. Students lacking one-and-half credits or less of the minimum requirements will be allowed to participate in graduation exercises, but no diploma will be issued until minimum requirements are met. Students lacking more than one-and-half credits are not allowed to participate in graduation exercises.

DIPLOMAS OFFERED

Three diplomas, the U.S. Basic Diploma, the U.S. General Diploma, and the U.S. College Preparatory Diploma, are offered to mark the culmination of studies at AAI. The course of studies leading to satisfactory completion of requirements for each of the three diplomas is accredited by AdvancED (formerly known as SACS CASI) and also by the Association of Christian Schools International. In order to graduate from AAI, all enrolled students must satisfactorily complete the requirements for one of the U.S. accredited diplomas.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Students who will attend a university in countries other than the United States may be allowed flexibility in the above requirements. A program of study that will better meet that student's needs may be designed in consultation with the Registrar and the Secondary Principal. This program must satisfy the basic degree requirements and be approved by the Academic Director.

Students desiring to remain in Ecuador to continue their university education can request to have their diploma certified by AAI's accrediting agency in order to meet requirements for entrance into an Ecuadorian university. Following issuance of the diploma at graduation, the process takes about six weeks to complete.

HOME SCHOOLING CREDIT

Home schooling credit will be granted only to students who have enrolled and have been accountable to an approved and accredited North American curriculum and course of study, such as A BEKA or the University of Nebraska.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Independent study for a particular course that is offered at AAI and uses AAI materials but requires AAI faculty oversight and/or part-time instruction outside of normally scheduled class time will be granted only to a student:

- who requires a particular course in order to graduate from AAI;
- whose schedule does not permit taking the course during the regularly scheduled period; and
- who has enough study periods to study effectively for the course.

Students who are pursuing an independent study course must receive permission in writing from a parent, the teacher who has agreed to oversee the independent study course, and the Secondary Principal. No exceptions will be made if a student prefers to graduate with a College Prep Diploma while meeting only the requirements of the General Diploma.

Students who block a portion of their daily schedule in order to provide time to focus on independent study courses must demonstrate regular progress throughout the associated AAI grading period. Grades or progress reports will be accepted at any time during a semester. At a very minimum, a semester grade or progress report will be required. The grade will be entered on the student transcript, incorporated into the calculation of the semester GPA for class ranking, and used to help determine eligibility for extra-curricular activities.

DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSES

Distance education courses must be from recognized and approved institutions. A statement demonstrating verification of enrollment in the course must be provided prior to the normal registration day for AAI classes. Any distance education courses must be completed by the end of fifth grading term to allow time for grades to be issued from the institution, received at AAI, and entered onto the AAI transcript. In order to receive credit for a course on the AAI transcript, any course proctors must be AAI staff or instructors. Courses offered at AAI must be completed through regular AAI classes, rather than by distance education, unless the course is required for graduation and it is impossible to fit the course into a workable class schedule.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Students who transfer to AAI from a non-North American institution or school that is not accredited by a regional or state/provincial accrediting agency may transfer only up to six Carnegie credits. The Secondary Registrar, in consultation with the Secondary Principal, will complete credit evaluations. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the integrity of AAI's diploma and accreditation requirements.

Students who transfer to AAI from a regionally accredited school usually will receive credit if grades for each course are passing grades. Credit is given at the discretion of the Secondary Registrar in consultation with the Secondary Principal. A grade conversion chart for use when converting transfer grades and credits from other systems (such as the Ecuadorian 10 or 20-point system) has been registered with the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education, and AAI is required to follow those guidelines when grade conversions are made.

TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Opportunity for students to serve as teacher assistants (TA) is provided at AAI. Grades are issued for TA work but are not included when calculating a student's cumulative GPA. If students take the initiative to contact a specific teacher to request the opportunity of being a TA, the individual schedules of both the student and instructor will be considered in attempting to create the requested match. If students do not take the initiative to seek out a specific teacher, they must be willing to accept the given assignment. Students may have a maximum of five TA periods per week, but the combined sum of TA and study hall periods cannot exceed eight periods per week.

GRADING SYSTEM FOR TERM AND SEMESTER GRADES

Letter Grade	Numeric Equivalent	Indicator
A	90-100	Mastery
B	80-89	Proficient
C	70-79	Emerging
D	60-69	Limited Evidence
F	50-59	No Evidence
I	0-49	Incomplete

CLASS RANK AND GRADE POINT AVERAGE

Course credit will be awarded on a semester basis, dependent upon receiving a passing grade (60 or higher) and based on the number of times each class meets each week, as follows:

- 5 - 8 class periods per week - 1/2 unit of credit
- 2 - 3 class periods per week - 1/4 unit of credit

The semester grades are the grades used to determine cumulative grade point averages (GPA). Each term grade will count as 25 percent, and the semester exam will count as 25 percent of the semester grade.

Class rank and grade point average are determined by the following quality point scale in grades 9-12 for semester grades, including Algebra I if taken in eighth grade:

- A - 4 D - 1
- B - 3 F - 0
- C - 2 P - Carries credit, indicates satisfactory achievement, but is not included in the GPA

Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Enrollment (DE) subjects have the following quality point scale:

- A - 5 D - 2
- B - 4 F - 0
- C - 3

All subjects are included in determining class rank and are computed based on the number of class hours per semester. All students in a grade level are ranked by their cumulative grade point average from highest to lowest. Students working as an office aide or teacher aide receive a grade; however, this grade is not calculated as part of the GPA, and these credits do not apply toward the required number of credits needed for graduation.

Honor Roll

The honor roll is not to be confused with "honor awards with diplomas." The following criteria are used to select students for the honor roll at the end of each grading term. The honor roll for students in grades 7-12 is based on a 3.50 GPA with no grade below a C. All courses (except office aide or teacher aide) are used in figuring the GPA and are computed by the number of class hours per semester.

Awards

Awards are a means of encouraging achievement and giving recognition to those students who have demonstrated their dedication, ability, and achievement in a given area. Awards are given to recognize all areas of a student's development.

The selection of salutatorian and valedictorian for diplomas is based upon all credits earned, starting with the first semester of grade nine up to and including the fifth grading term of the student's senior year. Salutatorians and valedictorians must have attended AAI for two complete years during grades 9-12.

The determination of junior marshals is also made at the end of the fifth grading term, and the honor is conferred upon the four juniors who have the highest cumulative GPA in the class and have attended AAI for two complete years in grades 9-11.

Ranking and determination of award categories for the Juramento a la Bandera are based upon grades earned starting with the first semester of grade 1 and ending with the second semester of grade 11. Ecuadorian regulations regarding citizenship also apply.

DIPLOMAS WITH HONOR AWARDS

Graduates' diplomas are given with "High Honors" or "Honors" according to the following standards:

I. High Honors

3.50 GPA

20 units of scholastic subjects which must include 4 English, 4 language, 4 math, 4 science, and 4 social studies. (Students must take and successfully complete the highest level course from one of the above subject areas.)

OR

3.75 GPA

16 units of scholastic subjects which must include 4 English, 3 language, 3 math, 3 science, and 3 social studies. (Students must take and successfully complete the highest level course from one of the above subject areas.)

II. Honors

3.25 GPA

20 units of scholastic subjects which must include 4 English, 4 language, 4 math, 4 science, and 4 social studies. (Students must take and successfully complete the highest level course from one of the above subject areas.)

OR

3.50 GPA

16 units of scholastic subjects which must include 4 English, 3 language, 3 math, 3 science, and 3 social studies. (Students must take and successfully complete the highest level course from one of the above subject areas.)

U.S. BASIC DIPLOMA

This diploma is designed for students at AAI who are preparing to enter a junior or community college upon graduation from high school. Students must be recommended by the Skills Center in order to be considered for a program leading to the Basic Diploma. Students working toward a Basic Diploma will have the assistance of support personnel who will provide support services beyond those provided in the regular classroom and the regular Guided Resource Center. This diploma is granted to students who complete a minimum of 20 units of credit and meet the following requirements:

<u>English</u>	4 units of credit required. Developmental English and Introduction to English are two of the courses required.
<u>Science</u>	2 units of credit required.
<u>Mathematics</u>	2 units of credit required. Pre-Algebra will be accepted as one of the two required credits.
<u>Social Studies</u>	2 units of credit required. All students are required to enroll in United States History and Senior Social Studies, regardless of other credits acquired in this category.
<u>Language</u>	2 units of credit in the same language are required. Students must be continuously enrolled in a Spanish course until they achieve proficiency, unless specified by an IEP or SEP.

Each student must earn credits to meet the following additional requirements:

<u>Bible</u>	1/2 unit of credit is required for each semester in attendance at AAI. Students must be continuously enrolled in Bible while in attendance at AAI.
<u>P.E. and Health</u>	1/2 unit of credit must be earned in P.E. for each year in attendance at AAI, unless waived by the Secondary Principal for health or scheduling problems. 1/2 unit of credit in Health is required and may be taken one time during grades 9-12. Students must be enrolled in either P.E. or Health each year while in attendance at AAI. During the year that students are enrolled in Health, they are not required to enroll in P.E.
<u>Manual & Fine Arts</u>	2 units must be earned from computer and/or the manual and fine arts. At least 1/2 unit of credit must be in Keyboarding / Word Processing or Introduction to Computer Applications.

U.S. GENERAL DIPLOMA

This diploma is granted to students who complete a minimum of 22 units of credit and meet the following requirements:

<u>English</u>	4 units of credit required.
<u>Science</u>	2 units of credit required. One unit of a life science and one unit of a physical science are required.
<u>Mathematics</u>	2 units of credit required, with one unit being Algebra I.
<u>Social Studies</u>	3 units of credit required. All students are required to enroll in United States History and Senior Social Studies, regardless of other credits acquired in this category.
<u>Language</u>	2 units of credit in the same language are required. Students must be continuously enrolled in a Spanish course until they achieve proficiency.

Each student must earn credits to meet the following additional requirements:

<u>Bible</u>	1/2 unit of credit is required for each semester in attendance at AAI. Students must be continuously enrolled in Bible while in attendance at AAI.
<u>P.E. and Health</u>	1/2 unit of credit must be earned in P.E. for each year in attendance at AAI, unless waived by the Secondary Principal for health or scheduling problems. 1/2 unit of credit in Health is required and may be taken one time during grades 9-12. Students must be enrolled in either P.E. or Health each year while in attendance at AAI. During the year that students are enrolled in Health, they are not required to enroll in P.E.
<u>Manual & Fine Arts</u>	2 units must be earned from computer and/or the manual and fine arts. At least 1/2 unit of credit must be in Keyboarding / Word Processing or Introduction to Computer Applications.

U.S. COLLEGE PREPARATORY DIPLOMA

This diploma is granted to students who earn a minimum of 24 units of credit and complete the requirements for an emphasis in two of the following areas. In the three areas not chosen for emphasis, they must complete the minimum requirements.

<u>English</u>	4 units of credit minimum (not including Developmental English). 5 units of credit, one of which must be either AP English Language & Composition or AP English Literature & Composition, or DE Introduction to English, if chosen as an area of emphasis.
<u>Science</u>	3 units of credit minimum. Course selections must include some combination that includes at least one physical science and one life science 4 units of credit if chosen as an area of emphasis.
<u>Mathematics</u>	3 units of credit minimum. Pre-Algebra and Business & Consumer Mathematics do not qualify as mathematics credits for this diploma. 4 units of credit if chosen as an area of emphasis.
<u>Social Studies</u>	3 units of credit minimum. All students are required to enroll in United States History and Senior Social Studies, regardless of other credits acquired in this category. 4 units of credit if chosen as an area of emphasis.
<u>Language</u>	3 units of credit minimum, 2 units of which must be of the same language. Students must be continuously enrolled in a Spanish course until they achieve proficiency. 4 units of credit if chosen as an area of emphasis.

Each student must earn credits to meet the following additional requirements:

<u>Bible</u>	1/2 unit of credit for each semester in attendance at AAI. Students must be continuously enrolled in Bible while in attendance at AAI.
<u>P.E. and Health</u>	1/2 unit of credit must be earned in P.E. for each year in attendance at AAI, unless waived by the Secondary Principal for health or scheduling problems. 1/2 unit of credit in Health is required and may be taken one time during grades 9-12. Students must be enrolled in either P.E. or Health each year while in attendance at AAI. During the year that students are enrolled in Health, they are not required to enroll in P.E.
<u>Manual & Fine Arts</u>	2 units must be earned from computer and/or the manual and fine arts. At least 1/2 unit of credit must be in Keyboarding / Word Processing or Introduction to Computer Applications.

COURSE SELECTION

- I. It is extremely important that students be careful in their selection of courses and that they fully understand the implications of their choices. With courses being offered at varying levels of difficulty, they should select the subjects that most interest them and best meet their level of abilities and needs. Numerous courses require a teacher's signature prior to registration. Students should carefully check all course prerequisites and consult with teachers in determining the appropriate course sequence. At the same time, each student should strive for the highest possible level of diploma, not only with respect to marks, but also with respect to the number and quality of credits. Subject to the approval of the Secondary Principal, final responsibility for the selection of courses lies with the students and their parents.

- II. The maximum number of class periods per week is 40. Students should select courses to fill NO LESS THAN 34 class periods per week. Students are advised to plan, as a part of their 40-period schedule, some time for supervised study (study hall). The services of the resource centers (library, audio/visual center, computer lab, and guidance center) will be available to students at times when they are not scheduled into regular classes. Where the student can show that additional time at a resource center is needed, time may be granted on an individual basis at the discretion of the administration.

- III. AAI uses the Advanced Placement (AP) program to provide the highest level courses in several departments of study. AP courses are taught at an advanced level comparable to university courses. Successful completion of an AP exam allows a student to earn university credit at most U.S. universities. AP courses are rigorous and enrolled students should expect to spend several hours each week outside of classroom time reading and analyzing subject material. Because of the anticipated time commitment, one extra study hall period per week is allowed for each AP course in which a student is enrolled. In order to demonstrate the academic competence required for AP courses, students are required to have a GPA of 3.5 or higher to enroll in more than two AP courses during the same semester.

- IV. In an effort to recognize achievement across the academic spectrum, the AP program provides an AP International Diploma to qualified students. To qualify, a student must take a minimum of five AP exams from four specified academic areas and score a 3 or higher on all exams. The four academic areas are as follows:
 1. Two exams from two different languages (one can be English)
 2. One from Sciences or Mathematics
 3. One from World History, Human Geography, or Comparative Governments
 4. One from those not listed aboveThe AP International Diploma is a certificate of recognition rather than a true diploma. It is provided by the AP program (and not by AAI) and does not replace or negate any requirements for any of the three graduation diplomas offered by AAI.

- V. College in the Schools Dual Enrollment (DE) is an additional format for earning college credit from courses taken during high school years. This program is made available to qualified students through an agreement with University of Northwestern (UNW) in Minnesota. College credits are recorded at UNW for future access. Qualifications imposed by UNW apply. While all AAI students with instructor approval are allowed to enroll in the DE courses, students must be either a junior or senior and have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher in order to earn college credits from UNW. Expenses related to registration apply and are in addition to normal AAI tuition. Because of the anticipated time commitment, one extra study hall period per week is allowed for each DE course in which a student is enrolled. In order to demonstrate the academic competence required for DE courses, students are required to have a GPA of 3.5 or higher to enroll in more than two DE / AP courses during the same semester.

- VI. Colleges and universities practice differing policies regarding AP and DE credits. Students should contact the college of their choice to understand the institution's individual policy regarding transfer of credits prior to enrollment in any AP or DE courses.
- VII. Recent US court rulings have deemed student test scores to be private information. Therefore, AAI no longer submits test scores normally associated with university entrance to the universities where students make application. Students desiring that a particular university receive results for exams such as the PSAT, SAT, ACT, or AP exams must take the initiative to personally submit the scores to those universities.
- VII. In order for a class to be offered, a minimum of seven students must be scheduled for the class (a minimum of five students for an AP or DE class) unless a decision is made by the administration to waive this requirement.
- VIII. Not all of the courses listed in this Course Description Guide will be offered every year. Please check with the Secondary Registrar or Secondary Principal for information concerning specific courses that will not be offered.
- IX. **WARNING: AN AAI GRADUATION DIPLOMA DOES NOT GUARANTEE ADMISSION TO FURTHER EDUCATION OR A JOB!**

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING REGISTRATION FORMS

Students planning to return to Alliance Academy International (AAI) next school year must fill out and return a completed schedule form to the Secondary Registrar's office by the announced deadline in order to reserve a place. Students who do not turn in their forms by the deadline will not have a reserved place in the scheduling process. This may result in students being unable to schedule the classes that they desire.

Follow carefully the steps outlined below in making your course selection:

1. Read the general information and course descriptions before attempting to fill out the course selection form.
2. Registration forms must be filled out and returned to the Secondary Registrar's office by the announced deadline. Students need to file an updated four-year planning guide with their registration form.
3. Make sure that you have checked the appropriate box to indicate the diploma you are working toward.
4. Register for courses that total no less than 34 periods per week and no more than 40 periods per week.
5. Be sure that you sign up for Bible, and for P.E. or Health. Students are required to be enrolled in Bible each semester of attendance at AAI. You are required to take Health once during your secondary years and must be enrolled in PE each of the other years. Health should be taken during ninth or tenth grade for scheduling purposes. It is also recommended that all students register for English each semester in order to schedule the required four credits in this area without the necessity of taking two English courses some semesters.
6. Students are required to earn a unit of Spanish for each year in attendance, unless they have attained proficiency in usage of the language. (For further details concerning the Spanish proficiency requirements and other language options, refer to the language section of this publication.)
7. Students who are currently enrolled in language classes should select a language course that they have not previously taken and at a level not lower than their current class. Spanish history and literature classes are taught at the same level of difficulty and require Spanish IV / Civic Education or successful completion of the Spanish Proficiency Exam as a prerequisite. New students enrolling at AAI for the first time will be interviewed and/or given a placement test to determine a proficiency level.
8. For all course choices, please list both first and second alternatives. Exceptions to this are courses assigned by grade level. You will be placed in the desired courses, if at all possible.
9. For all courses, be sure to select those that you have not had previously. **DUPLICATE CREDIT CANNOT BE GIVEN FOR THE SAME COURSE.** (Exceptions: Choir, Vocal Ensemble, Band, Yearbook, and P.E.).
10. Schedule changes will be made only by the Secondary Registrar in consultation with your parents and/or teachers, and/or the Secondary Principal.
11. A student has up to eight school days to change his/her schedule if necessary. The Secondary Principal can authorize exceptions only in extenuating circumstances after this time.
12. **THE SIGNATURE OF YOUR PARENT OR GUARDIAN IS REQUIRED** and is an indication that the schedule form and class selections have been discussed and meet parental approval.
13. The Secondary Registrar will make every effort to ensure each student fulfills his/her requirements; **HOWEVER, THE ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY BELONGS TO THE STUDENT AND HIS/HER PARENTS.**

(revised 12/13/13)