

STEVENSON

Eligibility Criteria for Students Returning to the Upper Division in 2026-2027

Eligibility criteria for various departments are given in this document on the following pages:

Arts -- placement is accomplished by the arts department teachers

[Computer Science & Engineering -- page 2](#)

[English -- page 4](#)

[History -- page 7](#)

[Math -- page 9](#)

[Science -- page 13](#)

[World Languages -- page 15](#)

Here are some other resources to help you plan your academic journey:

- [Curriculum Guide](#) - includes a description of each course
- [Course Map](#) - an image of the courses available in each grade
- [Four-Year Planning Worksheet](#), - a worksheet to help you map out your courses for the next four years, includes each department's requirements for graduation
- [Math Path](#) - an image of what paths you can take through our wide variety of math offerings
- [The Navigator \(the Student Handbook\)](#) contains detailed academic regulations. Some sections that are especially pertinent to course selection are:
 - [Honors and AP Courses](#)
 - [Academic Load Review](#)
 - [Summer Study](#)
- [Scheduling Process and Schedule Changes](#)
- You can also seek support from your teachers, your advisor, the college center, the department heads, and the registrar, Mrs. O'Hara.

Computer Science & Engineering Eligibility Criteria

COMPUTER SCIENCE COURSES

Creative Coding

- Open to all students.
- Students choosing this course must concurrently enroll in a year of lab science or have successfully completed three years of lab science.

AP Computer Science A

- To qualify a student should at the fall semester or the spring midterm have earned an A- or better in Introduction to Programming, or have the instructor's approval.
- Students choosing this course must concurrently enroll in a year of lab science or have successfully completed three years of lab science.

Advanced Programming

- To qualify a student must at the fall semester and the spring midterm have earned a B+ or better in AP Computer Science A, or have the instructor's approval.
- Students choosing this course must concurrently enroll in a year of lab science or have successfully completed three years of lab science.

ENGINEERING COURSES

Introduction to Engineering: Digital Fabrication

- Open to students in all grades.
- Students choosing this course must concurrently enroll in a year of lab science or have successfully completed three years of lab science.

Introduction to Engineering: Computer Simulation

- This course is open to students in all grades.
- Students choosing this course must concurrently enroll in Science 2 or Science 2 Honors
- To qualify a student should at the fall semester or the spring midterm have passed Digital Fabrication or have the permission of the instructor.

Disciplines in Engineering

- This course is open to grade 11 and 12 students only.
- Students choosing this course must concurrently enroll in a year of lab science or have successfully completed three years of lab science.
- To qualify a student should at the fall semester and the spring midterm have earned B- or better grades in their preceding year's science course(s) and in Intermediate Algebra or an AATP course and have successfully taken Digital Fabrication, or have the permission of the instructor.

Engineering Courses Continued on Next Page

Engineering Capstone / Engineering Capstone Honors

- This course is open to grade 12 students only.
- Students choosing this course must concurrently enroll in a year of lab science or have successfully completed three years of lab science.
- To qualify a student should have completed Disciplines in Engineering and have permission from the head of the Engineering department

English Eligibility Criteria

All grade 9 students take English 1 at Stevenson, and the majority of students continue with our regular courses, which focus on building students' ability to read and write with care, courage, and creativity. Students who are determined to be eligible for honors courses are equipped with comparatively advanced skills in literary analysis and a clear commitment to their English coursework, such that they can manage heftier assignments at a swifter pace. Honors classes aim to assign four hours of work (for the average honors student) per cycle.

The English Department recommends a student for an honors or AP course for the next year only if a student has demonstrated the skills and behavior outlined in the Criteria section below.

Process:

Grade 9: In February, teachers distribute this handout, and all students are assigned a placement reflection to ascertain whether they hope to be eligible for English 2 or English 2 Honors for their sophomore year.

A student who enrolls in English 2 Honors should feel confident they have the time, after considering their academic and co-curricular obligations, to double their homework load in English class; honors classes aim to assign 240 minutes of homework (for the average honors student).

Additionally, it is important to recognize that the grading standards of an honors class are different from that of a regular class. A student, for example, who regularly earns high grades on essays in English 1 should expect that it will be more difficult, at least initially, to earn equivalent grades in English 2 Honors.

Any student who wishes to make a shift from regular to honors must additionally do the following:

- a) Submit a multi-paragraph analytical essay (with grade and feedback) along with their reflection. Ideally, this essay is written early in the second semester.
- b) The teacher reads the placement reflection and reviews the essay; the student and teacher discuss course eligibility during a follow-up conversation by the end of January.
- c) Students who have expressed interest sit for a timed writing assignment (placement exercise) in early February. This exercise is one to two paragraphs in response to a short text: the response should reveal original assertions about the text and support claims with proper quotation integration and analysis of the text.

- 2) Grade 10: In late January, teachers distribute this handout, and all students are assigned a placement reflection. Any student who wishes to make a shift from a regular to an honors/AP class must additionally do the following:

- a) Submit a multi-paragraph analytical essay (with grade and feedback) along with their reflection to their current teacher.
 - b) The teacher reads the reflection and reviews the essay, the student and teacher discuss course eligibility during a follow-up conversation.
 - c) All eligible students send their multi-paragraph essay to the current teacher of the honors/AP course in which the student wishes to enroll; the current teacher of honors meets with the student.
 - d) Eligible students sit for a timed writing assignment (placement exercise) in early February. This exercise is one to two paragraphs in response to a short text: the response should reveal original assertions about the text and support claims with proper quotation integration and analysis of the text.
- 3) Grade 11: In late January, teachers distribute this handout, and all students are assigned a placement reflection. Any student who wishes to make a shift from a regular to an AP class must additionally do the following:
- a) Submit a multi-paragraph analytical essay (with grade and feedback) along with their reflection to their current teacher.
 - b) The teacher reads the reflection and reviews the essay, the student and teacher discuss course eligibility during a follow-up conversation.
 - c) All eligible students send their multi-paragraph essay to the current teacher of the AP course in which the student wishes to enroll; the current AP teacher meets with the student.

Criteria for honors/AP:

- 1) *Concise, clear, and organized writing in both prepared essays and in-class writing, especially in the analytical mode.* While a student's ability to craft essays will surely improve over the course of their studies, even the rising English 2 Honors student must be able to produce original assertions about the text and support claims with proper quotation integration and analysis of the text.
- 2) *Daily, active and purposeful engagement in class.* This student is eager to engage in class discussion, via dialogue with the student's classmates and teacher, active listening, note-taking, and/or notable participation in online discussion. The student habitually refers to the text for support and mostly avoids tangential remarks.
- 3) *Consistent preparation for class.* This student rarely, if ever, comes to class without having thoroughly completed the writing or reading assignment with annotations, and arrives ready to share her or his thoughts. The student is diligent in discovering what was missed in case of an absence.
- 4) *Comparatively strong reading ability.* This student is able to keep up with consistent and lengthy reading assignments, genially and with strong comprehension.
- 5) *A genuine enthusiasm for language and literature.* This enthusiasm could be expressed by reading during breaks and vacations, demonstrating a commitment to personal writing (through activities such as participation in *Vailima*), or engaging with course texts and topics beyond the assignments. This enthusiasm will also be expressed in class via steady interest in classroom texts.
- 6) *Consistently high grades in English, specifically on original drafts of analytical assignments (i.e., not rewrites) and in-class essays.* These essay marks generally fall in the A-/ A range for both non-honors and honors classes. *For example if a student is earning an A overall, but is averaging a B/B+ in their analytical writing, they will likely struggle in an honors/AP class and might not be eligible for the course.*

The decision to recommend a student to the honors or AP English program is based upon the evaluation of a student in accordance with these criteria, weighing more heavily their writing skills and interest in engaging with their peers and teacher in small and full-class discussions.

History Eligibility Criteria

The history department offers regular, honors, and AP courses for grades 10-12. While the majority of students enroll in regular courses that aim to build on the preceding year's historical thinking, reading, and writing skill development, some students are eligible for an honors or AP course. For students who enroll in an AP course, it is expected they will take the national AP examination sponsored by the College Board in the spring. AP Economics is open only to grade 12 students. The honors courses and AP Art History are open to grade 12 students and grade 11 students who have fulfilled or concurrently fulfill the US History requirement.

Entrepreneurship is open to grade 12 students who have fulfilled or concurrently fulfill the US History requirement. Additional criteria for eligibility for an advanced level course are outlined below.

Eligibility criteria for Honors or AP courses in grades 10-12:

The decision to recommend a student to an honors or AP course for grades 10 through 12 is based upon the teacher's assessment of a student's skills and behavior in accordance with the criteria outlined below. While grades are important, they are not the sole determinant of a student's eligibility:

- *Consistent preparation and engagement in class:* Each student proceeding to an honors or AP level course demonstrates consistent and thorough preparation for each class meeting, meets assignment and assessment deadlines (or communicates when extensions are necessary), and is diligent in communicating with their teacher and discovering what was missed in the case of absence. Each student demonstrates diligence and attention in class, contributes to the life of the class, and habitually refers to texts and documents to support their ideas in discussion.
- *Adaptable and independent learning:* Each student demonstrates the ability to adapt to a swift pace of learning and to work independently on longer and more rigorous homework assignments. Students demonstrate clear self-motivation and focus.
- *Reading and comprehension:* Each student demonstrates a clear ability to comprehend, summarize, contextualize, and articulate the main ideas of both primary and secondary documents. Students are able to discern main ideas apart from the details in each reading. Each student demonstrates the ability to analyze any document based on, for example, the document's author, intended audience, date, and significance. Finally, each student demonstrates an ability to draw connections between texts and between historical ideas and events.
- *Analytical writing:* Each student demonstrates a clear ability to develop a compelling and arguable thesis statement rooted in documentary evidence. In addition, students are able to select compelling textual evidence and provide analysis of that evidence in support of a thesis in cogent, organized, well crafted body paragraphs.
- *Consistent high grades and responsiveness to feedback in history classes:* Each student consistently receives course grades in the B+/A-/A range in an honors-level course or A-/A range in non-honors courses, and on major assessments and writing assignments. In addition, each student demonstrates an ability to receive, respond well to, and show improvement after receipt of teacher feedback.

Placement in AP Economics:

In addition to demonstrating advanced skills in historical thinking, preparation, adaptability, and grades outlined above, students who wish to be eligible for AP Economics in grade 12 must demonstrate strong mathematical reasoning skills and the ability to interpret and analyze data, graphs, and tables. Each student consistently receives course grades in A-/A range in non-honors junior year math course(s); B+/A-/A range for honors-level junior year math course(s). AP Economics is open only to grade 12 students.

Process:

As in other departments, decisions around course eligibility are made between individual students and their teachers. Stevenson history teachers recommend students for advanced level courses only if they demonstrate the skills and behavior in the criteria discussed above. For any student who wishes to be considered for an advanced level course but for whom the teacher does not recommend such placement, the student can initiate a more extensive process. That process will require a student to complete a personal reflection and a document analysis and/or writing assignment to gauge the student's ability to read, comprehend, analyze, and write at the requisite level for an advanced course. The assignment will be reviewed by a member of the succeeding year's honors or AP course teaching team and the department head; eligibility decisions will be made based upon the student's work.

Math Eligibility Criteria

Algebra students who earn the following grades for both the fall semester and spring midterm:

- 95% or better and have the recommendation of the Algebra teacher may take **Geometry Honors**
- C+ or better and have the recommendation of the Algebra teacher may take **Geometry** (a B+ or better is required for the summer course)
- C- to C range may take **Geometry A**
- D+ or below retake **Algebra**, unless they take a summer algebra 1 course

Algebra Honors students who earn the following grades for both the fall semester and spring midterm:

- B- or better and have the recommendation of the Algebra Honors teacher may take **Geometry Honors or Geometry**
- C- to B- range may take **Geometry** (a B or better is required for the summer course)
- D+ or below take **Algebra**, unless they take a summer algebra 1 course

Geometry A students who earn the following grades for both the fall semester and spring midterm:

- 95% or better and have the recommendation of the Geometry A teacher may take **Advanced Algebra / Trigonometry / Precalculus (AATP)**
- C- or better and have the recommendation of the Geometry A teacher may take **Intermediate Algebra**
- D+ or below retake **Geometry A**, unless they take a summer geometry course

Geometry students who earn the following grades for both the fall semester and spring midterm:

- 95% or better and have the recommendation of the Geometry teacher may take **Advanced Algebra / Trigonometry / Precalculus Honors (AATP Honors)**
- C+ or better and have the recommendation of the Geometry teacher may take **Advanced Algebra / Trigonometry / Precalculus (AATP)**
- C- to C+ range may take **Intermediate Algebra**
- D+ or below retake **Geometry** again or take **Geometry A**, unless they take a summer geometry course

Geometry Honors students who earn the following grades for both the fall semester and spring midterm:

- B or better and have the recommendation of the Geometry Honors teacher may take **Advanced Algebra / Trigonometry / Precalculus Honors (AATP Honors) or Advanced Algebra / Trigonometry / Precalculus (AATP)**
- C- to B- range may take **Advanced Algebra / Trigonometry / Precalculus (AATP)**
- D+ or below take **Geometry**, unless they take a summer geometry course

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Intermediate Algebra students who earn the following grades for both the fall semester and spring midterm:

- B- or better and have the recommendation of the Intermediate Algebra teacher may take **Advanced Algebra / Trigonometry / Precalculus (AATP)**
- C- to B- range and are going to be in grade 12 may take **Math 4: Statistics**, those going to a different grade should consult with the head of the math department
- D+ or below retake **Intermediate Algebra** again, unless they take summer algebra

Advanced Algebra / Trigonometry / Precalculus (AATP) students who earn the following grades for both the fall semester and spring midterm

- 95% or better and have the recommendation of the AATP teacher and pass an AP Calculus Readiness Exercise during the spring semester to take **AP Calculus AB**.
- A or better and have the recommendation of the AATP teacher may take **Statistics Honors**
- B or better and have the recommendation of the AATP teacher and pass a Calculus Readiness Exercise may take **Calculus**
- C- to B- may take **Advanced Concepts in Math**
- D+ or below retake **Advanced Algebra / Trigonometry / Precalculus (AATP)** again or take **Intermediate Algebra**, unless they take a summer algebra 2 course
- Any grade and are going to be in grade 12 may take **Math 4: Statistics**

Advanced Algebra / Trigonometry / Precalculus Honors (AATP Honors) students who earn the following grades for both the fall semester and spring midterm:

- B+ or better and have the recommendation of the AATP Honors teacher may take **Calculus, Statistics Honors, or AP Calculus AB**. Students wanting to take **AP Calculus AB** must successfully pass an AP Calculus Readiness Exercise during the spring semester.
- C+ to B range may take **Calculus**.
- C- or C may take **Advanced Concepts in Math**
- D+ or below take **Advanced Algebra / Trigonometry / Precalculus (AATP)** or **Intermediate Algebra**, unless they take a summer algebra 2 course
- Any grade and are going to be in grade 12 may take **Math 4: Statistics**

Advanced Concepts in Math students who earn the following grades for both the fall semester and spring midterm:

- 95% or better and have the recommendation of the Advanced Concepts in Math teacher and pass an AP Calculus Readiness Exercise during the spring semester to take **AP Calculus AB**.
- B or better and have the recommendation of the Advanced Concepts in Math teacher and pass a Calculus Readiness Exercise may take **Calculus**
- Any grade and are going to be in grade 12 may take **Math 4: Statistics**

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Calculus students who earn the following grades for both the fall semester and spring midterm:

- B or better and have the recommendation of the **Calculus** teacher may take **AP Calculus AB**.
- B+ or better and have the recommendation of the Calculus teacher may take **Statistics Honors**
- C- to B- range consult with the head of the math department and College Center to choose the most appropriate course
- D+ or below retake **Calculus** again unless they take a summer calculus course
- Any grade and are going to be in grade 12 may take **Math 4: Statistics**

AP Calculus AB students who earn the following grades for both the fall semester and spring midterm:

- B+ or better, earn a score of 4 or 5 and have the recommendation of the AP Calculus AB teacher may take **AP Calculus BC and Pure Math Honors** (students may not take Pure Math unless they are simultaneously taking or have previously taken AP Calculus BC)
- B- or better, earn a score of 4 or 5 and have the recommendation of the AP Calculus AB teacher may take **AP Calculus BC**
 - Students who do not meet the above criteria may petition for an exception if their AP exam score is 4 or 5
- C+ or better and have the recommendation of the AP Calculus AB teacher may take **Statistics Honors**
- Any grade and are going to be in grade 12 may take **Math 4: Statistics**

AP Calculus BC students who earn the following grades for both the fall semester and spring midterm:

- B+ or better, and have the recommendation of the AP Calculus BC teacher may take **Multivariable Calculus Honors or Pure Math Honors**
 - Students who do not meet the above requirements may petition for an exception if their AP exam score is 4 or 5
- C+ or better and have the recommendation of the AP Calculus BC teacher may take **Statistics Honors**
- Any grade and are going to be in grade 12 may take **Math 4: Statistics**

Multivariable Calculus Honors students who earn the following grades for both the fall semester and spring midterm:

- Any grade and are going to be in grade 12 may take **Math 4: Statistics**
- Any grade may take **Pure Math Honors**
- Any grade may take **Statistics Honors**

Pure Math Honors students who earn the following grades for both the fall semester and spring midterm:

- Any grade and haven't yet taken **Multivariable Calculus Honors**, math course eligibility is determined by their grades in their highest level Calculus
- Any grade may take **Statistics Honors**
- Any grade and are going to be in grade 12 may take **Math 4: Statistics**

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Statistics Honors students who earn the following grades for both the fall semester and spring midterm:

- Any grade and haven't yet taken **Multivariable Calculus Honors**, math course eligibility is determined by their grades in their highest level Calculus

Science Eligibility Criteria

Course eligibility for returning students is recommended by the current teacher in cooperation with the student, and ultimately confirmed by the science department.

Grade 10: All grade 10 students at Stevenson take Science 2 or Science 2 Honors. Most take our regular level course, which is Science 2, and a few take Science 2 Honors. Science 2 Honors is available to students who earned an A- or better average for the fall semester and spring midterm in Principles of Scientific Inquiry and performed well in their grade 9 math course. In addition, grade 10 students can choose a computer science or engineering course if they wish.

Grade 11 and 12: Most grade 11 and 12 students at Stevenson take science. Certain courses are available only by petition to students who have been successful in previous courses. In addition, grade 11 and 12 students can choose a computer science or engineering course if they wish. The offerings for grades 11 and 12 are:

a set of two Semester Science Courses

- Open to all grade 11 and grade 12 students

AP Biology

- To qualify a student should at the fall semester and the spring midterm have earned at least an average grade of A in Science 2, or A- in Science 2 Honors or Environmental Science Honors, or an A- in a Biology booster elective (the biology electives that are boosters are Brains & Behavior, Human Anatomy & Physiology, and Infectious Disease & Public Health), or a B or better in an AP science, and received permission from the science department.

AP Chemistry

- To qualify a student should at the fall semester and the spring midterm have earned at least an average grade of A in Science 2, or A- in Science 2 Honors or Environmental Science Honors, or an A- in a Chemistry booster elective (the chemistry elective that is a booster is Experimental Chemistry), or a B or better in an AP science, and received permission from the science department.

Environmental Science Honors

- To qualify a student should at the fall semester and the spring midterm have earned at least an average grade of A- or better in Science 2, or B+ or better from Science 2 Honors or junior year booster science elective (the electives that are boosters are Brains & Behavior, Human Anatomy & Physiology, Infectious Disease & Public Health, Experimental Chemistry, Physics: Mechanics & Kinematics, and Physics: Forces & Energy), or a B or better in an AP science, and received permission from the science department.

AP Physics 1

- To qualify a student should at the fall semester and the spring midterm have earned at least an average grade of A in Science 2, or A- in Science 2 Honors or Environmental Science Honors, or an A- in Physics: Mechanics & Kinematics, or a B or better in an AP science, and received permission from the science department.

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AP Physics 2

- To qualify a student should at the fall semester and the spring midterm have earned at least an average grade of A in Science 2, or A- in Science 2 Honors or Environmental Science Honors, or an A- in Physics: Forces & Energy, or a B or better in an AP science, and received permission from the science department.
- Note: AP Physics 1 is **not** a prerequisite for AP Physics 2.

Independent Science Research Lab

- To qualify a student should at the fall semester and the spring midterm have earned at least an average grade of A in their current year's science, or an A- in a current AP science course, and received permission from the science department.

World Language Eligibility Criteria

Students coming from a Stevenson Level 1 language course:

- Earning an A- or better in the fall semester with evidence from the fall term of novice-mid proficiency and the recommendation of their Level 1 teacher may take Level 2 Honors
- Earning a C- or better may take Level 2
- Earning less than a C- should repeat Level 1.

Students coming from a Stevenson Level 2 language course:

- Earning a C- or better in the fall semester may take Level 3
- Earning less than a C- should repeat Level 2.
- Students from a Stevenson Level 2 regular class who wish to take 3 Honors the following year must earn an A- or better in the fall semester, have evidence from the fall term of at least novice-high proficiency, and have the recommendation of the level 2 teacher which may carry a requirement for successful completion of [Stevenson's Summer Spanish Enrichment course](#) or other summer studies pre-approved by the head of the World Languages department.

Students coming from a Stevenson Level 2 Honors language course:

- Earning an B+ or better in the fall semester in conjunction with the recommendation of their Level 2 Honors teacher may take Level 3 Honors.
- Earning a B or below will have their eligibility determined by their teacher.

Students coming from a Stevenson Level 3 language course:

- Earning a C- or better in the fall semester may take Level 4 for Japanese, Latin, or Spanish, or Advanced French.
- Earning less than a C- should repeat Level 3.
- Students from a Stevenson Level 3 regular class who wish to take the AP Language course* the following year must earn an A- or better in the fall semester, have evidence from the fall term of at least intermediate-low proficiency, and have the recommendation of the level 3 teacher which may carry a requirement for successful completion of [Stevenson's Summer Spanish Enrichment course](#) or other summer studies pre-approved by the head of the World Languages department. Note that the AP Spanish Language & Culture course has a summer work assignment.

Students coming from a Stevenson Level 3 Honors language course:

- Earning an B+ or better in the fall semester in conjunction with the recommendation of their Level 3 Honors teacher may take the AP Language course. Note that the AP Spanish Language & Culture course has a summer work assignment.
- Earning a B or below will have their eligibility determined by their teacher.

Students coming from a Stevenson Level 4 language course:

- Earning a C- or better in the fall semester may take Advanced (if offered)
- Earning less than a C- should repeat Level 4.
- Students from a Stevenson Level 4 regular class who wish to take the AP Language course the following year must earn an A- or better in the fall semester, have evidence from the fall term of at least intermediate-mid proficiency, and have the recommendation of the level 4 teacher which may carry a requirement for successful completion of [Stevenson's Summer Spanish Enrichment course](#) or other summer studies pre-approved by the head of the World Languages department. Note that the AP Spanish Language & Culture course has a summer work assignment.

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Students coming from a Stevenson AP Language course:

- Earning a C- or better in the fall semester may take Level 5 or Advanced (if offered)
- Earning an B+ or better in the fall semester may take the AP Literature course (if offered). Note that the AP Spanish Literature & Culture course has a summer work assignment.
- Earning a B or below will have their eligibility determined by their teacher.