

## Fall 2013 Academy Online Information

Academy Online Students and Families,

Thank you for your interest in Academy Online. All online courses are teacher-led, and you will have an opportunity to meet your teachers once you get into the course. If you have questions about any part of the course, please contact your teacher. They will have their contact information in their courses.

### Course Updates

- Updated 1<sup>st</sup> semester courses are available by going to the <http://www.asd20.org/aohs> page.
  - Please note we were unable to offer some courses because of low student enrollment. You should check the updated course listing by clicking Course Information on the left. If you have signed up for an Academy Online course that is not running, your counselor has been notified.
  - You can view your current schedule in Infinite Campus by clicking on the Schedule link once you verify you are in the 13-14 Academy Online HS school view on the upper left corner. Some courses may still be cancelled if not enough enrollments are received.
  - If you selected a course that is not on this list or does not appear on your schedule, you must contact your counselor immediately to request a different course.

### 1st Semester Coursework

- All students who have *never* taken courses with Academy Online will be required to complete the **Student Orientation Tutorial**. This will be available August 12, 2013 and will be accessible to all students.
- **The first day AOHS courses will be available is Monday, 8/19/12.** After then, your courses will be available anytime, even on weekends and district holidays.
  - You are expected to budget 70 minutes per class, per school day to work on your classes.
    - Not all of that time will necessarily be spent in the online course itself, but you may be doing outside work on class assignments. Some days the time you spend may be more, some days less. Either way budgeting 70 minutes per class, per school day is a good use of your time.
  - You do not have to be online at any particular time each day, but you should access your courses regularly and monitor your email daily.
    - Teachers will post their office hours where you can reach them via AdobeConnect, by phone, or in person.
- The Academy Online website to access your coursework is <http://www.asd20.org/online>.
  - Before logging on, click on the [System Check](#) link on the main page before logging in to verify your computer has all the required software.
  - Your User ID and Password are the same as your Infinite Campus login information. If you don't know your login information, you can contact the D20 helpdesk at 719.234.1777.
- Once you login, you will be directed to your home page. Once there please read the announcements. The [13-14 Student/Parent Handbook](#) and the [D20 Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) are there also. Be sure to read these as you are responsible for the information in them.
- After reading the announcements on your home page, you can view the courses in which you are currently enrolled under the light blue *My Courses* heading bar. If you are missing a course or have a course for which you didn't enroll, please contact your counselor immediately.
- Teachers will detail their availability inside each course. Many will hold virtual office hours where you can join them for live sessions.
  - Teachers are expected to return communications within 24 hours except on weekends and holidays.
- You also have access to the Academy Online computer lab at D20's Education & Administration Center (1110 Chapel Hills Drive 80920). The Academy Online computer lab is available if you would like to work through some of your course work or talk about your progress in person. It's not required, but is a service available to help you if you wish. If you plan on attending, please contact us by emailing or calling 719.234.1670.

- If you are having technical or course issues not specifically content/class related, you can contact the helpdesk at [help@asd20.org](mailto:help@asd20.org) or at 719.234.1777.
- The last day to drop online courses without a WF and \$250 per course dropped course fee is 8/30/13. This drop information must be received at the AOHS offices via email by 3:00 p.m. that day.
- Our school uses Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, etc.), but if you don't own this software, you can download a free, safe, compatible program from <http://download.openoffice.org/>. If you use this program, make sure you save the documents you complete for your classwork in the same file format as your teacher specifies.

## **Meet the Teacher Night**

- The Academy Online Meet the Teacher Night is Monday, September 9, 2013 from 3:30-6:30 p.m. in the atrium at the Education and Administration Center. (1110 Chapel Hills Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80920). Online students and their parents/guardians are invited to attend. Students who have never taken an online class should attend.
- We will begin in the atrium promptly at 3:30 p.m. Students will have an opportunity to visit their AOHS teachers in an open house format. Additionally, we'll have a computer lab where you can drop in and get an overview of the online system and your courses.

## **Standards-Based Teaching, Learning & Reporting**

All Academy Online courses have been designed and updated to align with the Colorado Academic Standards. This is the culmination of work that has been in process at Academy Online since the Colorado Legislature passed Senate Bill 08-212 in 2008. That bill required a revision of the academic standards, many of which had been in place since 1993. The State Board of Education adopted the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) in 2009. Later, in 2010, the State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in mathematics and English language arts in 2010.

The Colorado Academic Standards emphasize what students need to be postsecondary and workforce ready and have grade level expectations that express the concepts and skills every student should master at each grade level. 21st century information literacy, collaboration, critical thinking, self-direction, and invention skills are evident throughout the standards. Grade level expectations build toward the achievement of the prepared graduate competencies for each content area. It's important to note that the Colorado Academic Standards are written for mastery, meaning that academic fluency, application, and transfer of knowledge and skills comprise Colorado's definition of mastery. The Colorado Academic Standards reflect the importance of teaching the whole child (from [Introduction to the Colorado Academic Standards](#) by the Colorado Department of Education, March 2013).

The resulting changes in the Colorado Academic Standards with the Common Core State Standards demand a shift in instructional and reporting approaches to accurately determine the mastery level of the student at a given point in time. Students across all content areas can expect to understand and use complex texts that require close reading and utilize effective writing that draws upon evidence to support their ideas. Students will be expected to develop strong foundations in their coursework that helps them develop solid conceptual understandings that, in turn, help them effectively apply those skills in problem-solving, communicating ideas, and demonstrations of their mastery in the content areas.

Academy Online teachers have redesigned their courses with a focus on academic mastery. Ongoing through the year, students will be expected to consistently demonstrate their progress toward mastery of the concepts and skills in each class. Assignments and assessments given throughout a course are intended to provide feedback to teachers and students, during the course of learning, about the gap between students' current and desired performance so that action can be taken to close the gap. This provides information to students and teachers regarding the adaptations they might make to improve performance.

## **What You Can Expect from Standards-Based Teaching, Learning & Reporting**

- *Teacher expectations and consistent student demonstrations of mastery*
  - In a standards-based teaching and learning environment, teachers focus on moving students toward mastery of content knowledge and skills through ongoing demonstrations of student performance. To accomplish this, teachers will provide students clear learning targets and performance expectations and then provide feedback to them that is intended to modify their thinking or actions for the purpose of improving their learning. Students may be asked to develop learning goals, reflect on their progress

toward their goals, and identify what they still may need to do to accomplish those goals. Students may often be asked to redo assignments, making use of the feedback from the teacher to improve.

- *Use of a standards-based reporting system*
  - The focus in a standards-based teaching and learning environment is less on assignment completion and more on demonstrations of student learning as it progresses over time. As a result, the reporting (grading) system has been adjusted to provide a clearer understanding of a student's progress toward mastery of standards. Regardless of the system used, AOHS teachers' reporting/grading is a reflection of student progression toward and mastery of standards. In the systems teachers use, all final course grades will be translated back to a letter grade for posting to transcripts and GPA calculations. The general structure of our standards-based reporting scale is included below.

Score	Descriptor	Letter Grade Equivalent Ranges
4.00	<b><u>Advanced Learning Goal/Content</u></b> In addition to exhibiting level-3 performance, the student's responses/performance demonstrate in-depth inferences and applications that go beyond what was taught in class	A+
3.50-3.99	In addition to score 3 performance, partial success at score 4 goals/content	A
3.00-3.49	<b><u>Target Learning Goal/Content</u></b> The student's responses/performance demonstrate no major errors or omissions regarding any of the information and/or processes that were explicitly taught	A-
2.50-2.99	No major errors or omissions regarding score 2.0 content/goals, and partial success at score 3.0 content/goals	B+/B/B-
2.00-2.49	<b><u>Simpler Learning Goal/Content</u></b> The student's responses/performance indicate major errors or omissions regarding the more complex ideas and processes; however they do not indicate major errors or omissions relative to the simpler details and processes	C+/C/C-
1.50-1.99	Partial success at score 2.0 content/goals, but major errors of omissions regarding score 3.0 content/goals	D+/D/D-
1.00-1.49	<b><u>Partial Credit with Help</u></b> The student provides responses/performance that indicate a distinct lack of understanding of the knowledge. However, with help, the student demonstrates partial understanding of some of the knowledge	F
0.00-0.99	<b><u>Even with Help No Success</u></b> The student provides little or no response/performance. Even with help, the student does not exhibit a partial understanding of the knowledge	F
	<b><u>Incomplete</u></b> The student has not provided any or enough responses or demonstrations of performance in order to make an accurate assessment	F (if not remedied)

Thanks again for being here. If you have any comments or suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

With warmest regards,



Rick Tanski, Principal

Web: <http://www.asd20.org/aohs>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AcademyOnlineHS>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AcademyOnlineHS>

P.S. Additional sources for items used in the letter are available by emailing me.

