

GRADE POINT AVERAGE COMPUTATION

As mentioned earlier in this manual, the Academic Decathlon[®] program is unique in its division of teams into three categories: Honor, Scholastic, and Varsity, according to GPA. This allows members of each category to compete for awards and scholarships only against those competitors in their respective group.

Coaches must be acutely aware of structuring and preparing a team based on these GPA requirements established by USAD[®]. A successful team must have competitors in all three categories. Coaches therefore should classify students early according to their categories. Initially, this can be done by having the students prepare an accurate accounting of coursework and their grades and by having them calculate their “Academic Decathlon[®] GPA” (not the same as their school GPA, as noted below).

In the formal registration process, however, coaches must verify grades through official transcripts. It is helpful to complete this verification process early in the year to make certain that the preliminary placement of team members in their respective categories is accurate. The official USAD[®] guidelines are as follows:

The focus semesters for GPA computation go back two years prior to the present grade level of the student. In calculating GPAs, the following time periods are to be used

Twelfth Grade Students: All of tenth grade, all of eleventh grade, plus summer sessions between tenth and eleventh and between eleventh and twelfth

Eleventh Grade Students: All of ninth grade, all of tenth grade, plus summer sessions between ninth and tenth and between tenth and eleventh

Tenth Grade Students: All of eighth grade, all of ninth grade, plus summer sessions between eighth and ninth and between ninth and tenth

Ninth Grade Students: All of seventh grade, all of eighth grade, plus summer sessions between seventh and eighth and between eighth and ninth

Courses to Include/Exclude

Grades for courses shall be used in GPA computations for Academic Decathlon[®], competition purposes if the nature of the course is based on theoretical skills and the assessments are objective in nature. Grades for courses that directly deal with the theoretical content covered in the Academic Decathlon[®] curriculum and competitive events should be included in GPA computations. However, a grade for a course focused specifically on the Academic Decathlon[®] should **not** be included in GPA computations.

For example, only grades earned in the following academic subjects (Grades 7-11) are to be used in computing the GPA:

- Art: art appreciation, art history
- Business (non-skill classes)
- Computer science
- English/language arts (including humanities, journalism, and speech)
- Foreign language
- Mathematics: algebra, geometry, trigonometry, calculus, etc.
- Music: theory, appreciation, history
- Science
- Social Science (including economics, humanities)

Grades for courses shall **not** be used in GPA computations for Academic Decathlon[®], competition purposes if the nature of the course is performance-based. The skills that are developed in these courses tend to be more technical/vocational or hands-on, and the majority of student's grade in these courses is performance-based and/or subjective in nature.

For example, grades earned in the following subjects are **not** to be used in computing the GPA:

- Academic Decathlon[®] class or equivalent class used to prepare a Decathlon team
- Physical Education or authorized substitute class
- Service, tutoring, peer counseling
- Skills classes in business, homemaking, industrial education
- Crafts
- Health

Inquiries regarding borderline courses should be referred to the State Director, who will make the determination based on the academic nature of the course, and who will then implement the decision uniformly throughout the state. The decision of the State Academic Decathlon[®] organization and/or the State Director with regard to which course grades are applied to the Academic Decathlon[®] GPA tabulation is final. Questions regarding specific courses at a school should be directed to the local Academic Decathlon[®] Competition Manager and/or the State Director.

Computation Guidelines

For alpha grades, the following scale is to be used:

A = 4

B = 3

C = 2

D = 1

Fail = 0

- All courses whether they are advanced placement, honors, regular, or remedial count the same in the GPA calculation. There is no weighting of grades for Decathlon computation of GPA even if weighting is the local district policy.
- Numerical grades appearing on transcripts in place of alpha grades must be converted to alpha grades according to the official conversion scale that appears on the school's official transcript or in the school's official profile.
- A Fail grade received during the focus semesters in a course that is not repeated is to be included in the GPA.
- For repeated courses, both grades, if they both occur during the focus semesters, are to be used in computing the GPA. If the original grade appears prior to the focus semesters, only the repeated mark is counted.
- Incomplete or pass/fail marks are not counted in computing the GPA unless the student received a fail, which appears on the transcript. Once a grade is given to remove an Incomplete, that grade must be included in the Decathlon GPA. If a school only assigns pass/fail grades, the State Director, in consultation with the USAD[®] Administrator, will determine an evaluation scale.
- College courses (academic subjects only) are included in the GPA only if high school credit is given and the grades are recorded on a student's official high school transcript.

Special Student Classifications

- Home-schooled Students: Eligible to participate if a school allows a home-schooled student to participate in other extracurricular activities. Authorization needs to be secured from the State Director to allow a home-schooled student to participate in the Decathlon at the school he/she would attend if not home-schooled. The academic category for competition for a home-schooled student would automatically be Honor.
- Foreign Students: Eligible to participate. A foreign student who does not possess a valid transcript would participate as an Honor student. Any exceptions to this classification would need to be addressed by the State Director in consultation with the USAD[®] Administrator.

Verification of Eligibility

To verify eligibility of team members, generally official copies of students' transcripts will be requested by the local Academic Decathlon[®] Competition Manager. For participation in any state or national competition, official student records will be required.

SAMPLE GPA COMPUTATION
12th Grade Student - Fall 2007

10th Grade (Fall 2005)		10th Grade (Spring 2006)		Summer School (2006)	
Honors English 10A	A	Honors English 10B	A	Art History	B
World History A	Fail	World History B	C	World History A	B
Algebra 2A	A	Algebra 2B	A		
Biology A	B	Biology B	B		
Spanish 2A	C	Spanish 2B	B		
Basketball	A	Track	A		
2 As		2 As		2 Bs	
1 B		2 Bs			
1 C		1 C			
1 Fail					

11th Grade (Fall 2006)		11th Grade (Spring 2007)		Summer School (2007)	
Honors American Lit	A	Honors Composition	A	Economics	B
AP American History	A	AP American History	A	Intro. to Business	B
Trigonometry	A	Math Analysis	A		
Chemistry A	B	Chemistry B	B		
Spanish 3A	B	Spanish 3B	B		
School Service	A	Academic Decathlon	A		
3 As		3 As		2 Bs	
2 Bs		2 Bs			
AP = Advanced Placement					
10 As		@ 4 points		= 40	
11 Bs		@ 3 points		= 33	
2 Cs		@ 2 points		= 4	
1 Fail		@ 0 points			
Total Courses	24			77 Total grade points	
Divide: Total grade points				= 3.208 = 3.21 Scholastic	
<u>77</u>				Student	
Total courses					
24					