

Jan. 22, 2016

Dear Mercy Families,

The time to request courses for the 2016-2017 school year is almost here!

Course requests for all current freshmen, sophomores, and juniors will be available online via [PowerSchool](#) from Feb. 8 to March 4. Families that have completed re-registration via School Admin may begin this process. Students and parents/guardians will not be able to access their PowerSchool accounts until their re-registration is complete.

Please contact Lynn Beal at (650) 762-1101 if you have any questions regarding the re-registration process.

[Click here for 2016-2017 Course Request Instructions.](#)

Please take the time to review the [2016-2017 Course Catalog](#) with your daughter before requesting courses via PowerSchool. Counselors will meet with each student to review and finalize course requests during the months of February and March. *Course requests are finalized on March 4.*

It is important that both parents and students read the course descriptions and the prerequisites. Students should discuss course choices with their parents. Students will be required to take the classes that they select unless the student does not meet the prerequisites, the class is not offered due to low enrollment, or an irresolvable scheduling conflict exists.

Developing a course of study for a student incorporates the student's wishes as indicated in her course requests in [PowerSchool](#), and the ability of the school to meet these requests as well as those of other students. If an irresolvable scheduling conflict exists, alternate courses may be substituted without student notification. Therefore, it is necessary that alternate choices be selected with the same care as first choice courses.

Below, you will see a timeline for re-registration and course requests, a set of FAQs, and the graduation requirements.

There are some changes to the course request process that you should be aware of:

- **We've extended the course request period** in order to offer students more time to plan. Please take advantage of this longer window and have all requests set by March 4.
- **This year we are requiring all students who request an AP class to complete an AP Contract.** The contract gives students an overview of our AP program, the details of our AP policies, and an opportunity to audit her time/schedule.
- **Students will not be able to drop a 2016-2017 AP course after May 28, 2016.** Any requests after that date compromise the master schedule and teacher hiring and training. AP classes are particularly difficult to schedule. Any requests to drop an AP class after May 28 will be denied.
- **All other course change requests made after June 1, 2016 will incur a \$30 fee.**

If you have any questions regarding course eligibility, please contact your daughter's teacher(s) directly.

If you have any questions regarding Tri-School offerings, please contact Lauren Conklin via email (lconklin@mercyhsb.com) or at 650-762-1102.

If you have any questions regarding School Admin, please contact Lynn Beal via email (lbeal@mercyhsb.com) or at 650-762-1101.

If you have any questions regarding PowerSchool, please contact Stephanie Montoya via email (smontoya@mercyhsb.com) or at 650-762-1111.

Timeline for 2016-17 Re-registration and Course Requests

- Jan. 27: Curriculum Presentation to students in Advisory classrooms
- Feb. 3: School Admin-generated email will be sent to families with registration information
- Feb. 8: **AP Contracts due** to Mrs. Morello for any student requesting an AP class
- Feb 8: Course requests open at 10 a.m. for students on Powerschool for families who have registered with School Admin
- Feb. 8 - March 4: Counselors will arrange one-on-one meetings with each student during their religion class. Parents who wish to participate in the scheduled meeting should contact her counselor before Feb. 8.
- Feb. 19: \$600.00 re-registration fee drawn by FACTS
- March 4: Close course requests for students
- March 4 - March 18: Two weeks of audit and review by the counselors and Assistant Head of School for Academics
- May 20: Course lists sent out to families by Registrar
- May 23 - 27: Core course conflict meetings with counselors
- May 27: Close of any change requests
- June 1: Course change request fee: \$30

Frequently Asked Questions about Re-registration and Course Requests

How does the school determine which classes are offered?

We build the master schedule *after* we receive course requests from students. So, unlike colleges that set class times ahead of time, we determine class times by looking at a matrix of requests and conflicts. We schedule classes in a way that ensures the most amount of students can take a class that they request. For this reason, late class request changes are often difficult to make, and will not always fit into a student's schedule. We also have a minimum class size of 8, so we will not schedule a class with a lower enrollment.

A note about scheduling:

The school determines which classes to run based on course requests. Hiring decisions, room use, scheduling, and teacher selections are all based on these requests. When a student changes her request after the schedule is made, she impacts more than just her own schedule.

Do I need to request courses early?

It's best if you speak with your parents and counselors as early as possible, so we can make recommendations that are most appropriate for you. However, we do not determine who gets into a class based on when you make your course requests. As long as your requests are completed by March 4, we will do our best to make sure that all students who are qualified for a course have a place in that course.

How do I determine an appropriate course load?

We encourage students to examine their previous performance, extracurricular commitments, and college goals when choosing their courses for the upcoming school year. If a student has experienced great academic success in a particular subject the year before, it is often a good idea for them to think about taking on an honors or AP level course during the next year. It is important to consider the extra time required for homework in a more rigorous class so students should think about the time they have available with extracurriculars and family commitments. Students requesting an AP class are required to fill out the AP Contract by Feb. 8.

How do I learn about Advanced Placement (AP) courses?

Please speak to the current teacher of that course, and take a look at our "What to Expect in AP Classes" guide.

How do I know if I'm eligible for an AP course?

Your current teacher can tell you, or you can check PowerSchool to see which courses are available to you. Only the classes you are eligible for will appear as a choice in PowerSchool.

What if I want to make a course change after I've selected my courses on PowerSchool?

The procedure for dropping a class is different based on when you make that request.

Before March 4: Talk with your counselor and change your request on PowerSchool. This is the best time to make a change and assure that you will have your first choice of classes.

March 5 to June 1: Fill out the Add/Drop Form and hand in to your counselor, who will need to approve the drop.

After June 1: Download the Add/Drop Form online and email it to [Stephanie Montoya](#). A \$30 fee will apply, and your request may not be honored.

AP classes after June 1: Students may not drop an AP class after June 1.

After school starts in August: Students have one week to drop a course and add a new course after school starts. A \$30 fee will apply.

Aug. 30 to Sept. 5: Students may drop a course, but not add a course. A \$30 fee will apply.

Course Request Information:

- [Click here to view the 2016-2017 Course Catalog](#)
- [Click here for graduation requirements](#)
- [Click here for course request instructions](#)

- [Click here for the AP Contract](#)
- [Click here for the Summer School Request Form](#)

Graduation Requirements

Updated Jan. 2016

Students must earn a minimum of 270 semester units of credit in order to graduate.

Requirements for graduation must be fulfilled during the regular school year at Mercy High School. Courses taken elsewhere at the high school or college level must have prior approval of the counselor and the Assistant Head of School for Academics.

Total Credits Required for Graduation 280	
Required Semesters/Credits	
Religion	4 years / 40 credits <i>Religion must be taken each semester</i>
English	4 years / 40 credits <i>English must be taken each semester</i>
Social Studies	3 years / 30 credits* <i>*Classes of 2017 and 2018 require 3.5 credits</i>
Mathematics	3 years / 30 credits <i>Including one year of Geometry</i>
Science	3 years / 30 credits <i>One year of physical science, one year of biological science*</i>
World Language	2 years / 20 credits <i>Two consecutive years of the same language, three recommended</i>
Health and Wellness	.5 year / 5 credits* <i>*Classes of 2017 and 2018 require P.E., Yoga, or the P.E. waiver</i>
Visual and Performing Arts	1 year / 10 credits
Elective Courses	75 credits

Biology, Forensic Biology, AP Biology, Anatomy and Physiology are biological sciences.

Physics, AP Physics, Chemistry, AP Chemistry, and AP Environmental are physical sciences.