

# Building Your Future

Preparing for Academic Success at Regent Universities of Iowa



Building your future is like building a house. Not somebody else's house—your own. You need to both envision your dream house and create blueprints for building it.

High school is a time of choices. In fact, **some of the most important choices you'll make in life face you right now** as you sign up for your high school courses.

**Board of Regents, State of Iowa:**  
[www2.state.ia.us/regents](http://www2.state.ia.us/regents)

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## TAKE THE CHALLENGE

Be ambitious in your planning. **Prepare yourself not only to survive in college but to thrive. The best preparation for college is to take not the minimum courses but the optimum courses.** Experience at all three universities points to one definite conclusion: students who succeed best in college are those who build the best foundations in high school. Even if you're not currently considering attending college, you will still benefit from a strong foundation, since all jobs require much better academic preparation than they did a few years ago.

## DRAFT YOUR BLUEPRINT

- 1. Lay your foundation carefully and wisely.** It's tempting to choose a course in which you know you could get a good grade, rather than one that might be difficult for you. But a challenging course will help you when you get to college. During high school you need to develop strong skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and reasoning. Courses that will help you do so include English/language arts, mathematics, sciences with laboratory experience, social studies, and foreign language. Your counselor can help you make the right choices. **Taking an ambitious course load in high school means you'll be starting college at an advantage.**
- 2. Learn to love learning.** Every class you take is an opportunity to find something you care about, explore your intellectual horizons, and pursue your interests. **View each class as an opportunity and a challenge.**
- 3. Develop a framework of study and work habits.** Practice study strategies that have been shown to work in college: listening and note-taking skills, distributing study time rather than cramming, revisiting, revising, and reflecting. Make every effort to understand the concepts, theories, philosophies, and relationships you're learning. **Students who come to college with proven work and study patterns have a great advantage over students who need to establish them while they're coping with all the new experiences of being a college freshman.**
- 4. Experience and explore.** While you are in high school, consider taking courses that will allow you to explore a future career, cultivate a talent in the performing or visual arts, or teach you about a scientific field you've known nothing about until now. Participate in extracurricular activities. These initiatives are valued in college because they broaden your horizons, enhance your total educational experience, and increase your interaction with other people. Combined with a strong academic program, these activities should make you a confident and successful college student. **Taking full advantage of your senior year is a key to both meeting the requirements for admission and taking advantage of courses and experiences that allow you to explore your interests and develop your talents.**

# BUILDING YOUR FUTURE

## YOUR COURSES COUNT

MINIMUM COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION				OPTIMUM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUCCESS
	IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY	THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA	UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA	
ENGLISH	<b>4</b> years emphasizing writing, speaking, reading, as well as an understanding and appreciation of literature.	<b>4</b> years with an emphasis on the analysis and interpretation of literature, composition, and speech.  <b>1</b> year of journalism will count toward fulfilling the English requirement.	<b>4</b> years including one year of composition, also may include one year of speech, communication, or journalism.	<b>4</b> years with an emphasis on the communication skills of writing, reading and listening, and the analysis and interpretation of literature. In addition, courses in journalism and media literacy will be valuable.  Extracurricular activities in debate, speech contest, newspaper, and yearbook will further develop essential competencies.
MATH	<b>3</b> years including one year each of algebra, geometry, and advanced algebra.	<b>3</b> years including two years of algebra and one year of geometry for admission to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.  <b>4</b> years including two years of algebra, one year each of geometry and higher math (trigonometry, analysis, or calculus) for admission to the College of Engineering.	<b>3</b> years including the equivalent of algebra, geometry and advanced algebra.	<b>4</b> years, one in each year of high school. While advanced courses like calculus and statistics are good, it's more important that you gain a complete understanding of advanced algebra and trigonometry.
NATURAL SCIENCE	<b>3</b> years including one year each from any two of the following: biology, chemistry, or physics.	<b>3</b> years including one year each from any two of the following: biology, chemistry, or physics for admission to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.  <b>3</b> years with at least one year each in chemistry and physics for admission to the College of Engineering.	<b>3</b> years including courses in general science, biology, chemistry, earth science, or physics. Laboratory experience is highly recommended.	<b>4</b> years, one in each year of high school. To be really well prepared, take at least one year each of biology, chemistry, and physics.  These can be taken in any order and may be taught productively in either a separate or an integrated fashion, depending on your school's offerings.
SOCIAL STUDIES	<b>2</b> years for admission to Colleges of Agriculture and Life Science, Business, Design, Engineering, and Human Sciences.  <b>3</b> years for admission to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.	<b>3</b> years with US history and world history recommended for admission to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.  <b>2</b> years with US history and world history recommended for admission to the College of Engineering.	<b>3</b> years including courses in anthropology, economics, geography, government, history, psychology, or sociology.	<b>3</b> years is essential, but four is better. Take at least one year each of US and world history.  Additional courses in anthropology, economics, political science, psychology, and sociology provide an important understanding of our political, social, and economic institutions.
FOREIGN LANGUAGE	<b>2</b> years of a single foreign language for admission to the Colleges of Engineering and Liberal Arts and Sciences.	<b>2</b> years of a single foreign language are required for admission. For many degrees, the fourth year of proficiency is required for graduation.	Foreign language courses are not required for admission. However, two years of foreign language in high school with a C- or above in the last course will meet the university graduation requirement.	<b>4</b> years of a single foreign language. By taking foreign language during all four years of high school, you'll go beyond the basic skills and begin to use the language and reinforce your fluency.
OTHER COURSES	Specific elective courses are not required for admission.	Specific elective courses are not required for admission.	<b>2</b> years of additional courses from the required subject areas, foreign language, or the fine arts.	Explore! Courses in the fine arts, performing arts, computers, or technology will help round out your high school experience. Your future field of concentration or career may lie in one of those areas. Follow your interests, talents, and the strengths of your school. Remember to choose courses with high academic standards.