

Orange Unified School District
AVID SENIOR SEMINAR
(ADVANCEMENT VIA INDIVIDUAL DETERMINATION)
Year Course

GRADE: 11-12

PREREQUISITE: Previous enrollment in AVID lower-level courses for three years.

CO REQUISITE: Enrollment in at least one Honors, Advanced Placement, or International Baccalaureate course.

NOTE: Students who do not meet the prerequisite and CO requisite for AVID Senior Seminar receive credit for twelfth grade AVID.

COURSE PHILOSOPHY

AVID elective courses at all grade levels are designed to prepare, in an academic context, disadvantaged students for entrance into four year colleges, with emphasis on analytical writing, preparation for college entrance and placement exams, college study skills and test taking, note taking, and research.

The AVID Senior Seminar is the culmination of a student's years in the AVID program, and the course involves substantial critical reading and writing, preparation for external exams such as Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate, and weekly Socratic seminars. Students enrolled in the Senior Seminar are required to complete weekly timed writings and analytical discourses in subjects across the curriculum. In addition, students are required to make oral presentations to the class on topics related to college entrance, contemporary issues, and social concerns. As with all AVID courses, the Senior Seminar features tutors (college students who lead discussions and analysis of the academic subjects in which the students are enrolled). Senior Seminar students, working with the tutors, are expected to participate in and eventually act as moderators for Socratic seminars. These discussions move beyond didactic instruction and assist students in gaining multiple perspectives on texts, supporting arguments with clear reasoning and evidence, and developing their critical thinking skills to the degree necessary for success in college.

The AVID teacher plays a unique role for all students in the AVID classroom, which will typically have a mix of students from grades nine through twelve. Younger students, both freshmen and sophomores, receive coaching in note taking, organization, and study skills, along with instruction in writing domains such as the autobiographical incident, comparison/contrast, and cause and effect. Younger students are also introduced to textual analysis and writing across the curriculum in various disciplines. Junior level students experience more analytical writing,

literary analysis, and college entrance preparation, such as the SAT, ACT, and Subject A in addition to college placement exams. Writing modes such as logic, definition, and taxonomy are introduced. Senior Seminar students engage in more analytical writing, timed essays, research, and intense preparation for external exams and college placement tests. Moreover, Senior

Seminar students are required to produce an extended, reflective essay focusing on one of their areas of study such as mathematics, science, history, English, or world language. It is recommended that they work with a university professor as an advisor for this project.

COURSE DESCRIPTION/STRUCTURE

The AVID Senior Seminar follows the weekly structure of all AVID classes, with two days of teacher led curriculum per week, two days of tutorials, and a day allocated for guest speakers, mini-courses taught by college instructors, and visits to colleges, museums, art galleries, or drama productions. As seniors progress through the year, this additional day is also used for them to work with the AVID teacher and tutors to plan their Socratic seminar leadership, to select appropriate text materials to be discussed, and to plan their grouping strategies.

Throughout the school year, the AVID teacher serves as conduit to colleges and universities, as well as to academic departments on campus. This individual assists AVID students in applying for college, researching financial aid and housing, registering for entrance and placement exams, and in preparing for external examinations in the spring. AVID tutors also assist in these processes by providing actual information and giving feedback to AVID seniors regarding their applications and essays.

The AVID Senior Seminar is divided into four quarters of emphasis, leading to the student's acceptance at a four-year college or university.

Quarter One: Gaining Admission

Quarter Two: Becoming a College Student

Quarter Three: Placement and External Exam Preparation

Quarter Four: Selecting a Major and Career Emphasis

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

1. Students will complete the a-g course requirements for entrance to the University of California
2. Students will successfully complete college applications and financial aid packages.
3. Students will demonstrate analytical writing at a college level in a variety of discourse modes.

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4. Students will improve their oral communication skills through a variety of means, including presentation, debate, and Socratic seminar.
5. Students will learn to evaluate their own and others' writing, using rubrics and scoring guides modeled on UC and CSU entrance exams.
6. Students will prepare for college entrance and placement exams, using the AVID College and Careers Library Supplement, and other materials.
7. Students will prepare for an external exam such as Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate.
8. Students will select a college area of study which leads to an anticipated career.
9. Students will complete and present a portfolio of their work in AVID.
10. Students will learn to act as moderators for Socratic seminars.

COURSE OUTLINE

Quarter One: Gaining Admission

1. The College Application
2. Writing the College Essay
3. SAT/ACT preparation
4. Financial aid
5. Study of sample AP/IB exams
6. Registration for exams
7. Ongoing tutorials
8. Times writings and analytical discourse

Quarter Two: Becoming a College Student

1. College Placement Exams - an introduction
2. Time management
3. Advanced note taking
4. Socratic seminars (led by tutors and AVID teacher)
5. Timed writings and analytical discourse
6. Introduction of the Extended Essay; contact with college advisor

Quarter Three: Placement and External Exam Preparation

1. UC and CSU placement exam preparation
2. Socratic seminars (led by AVID seniors)
3. Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate practice
4. Research project - critical issues in college acceptance
5. Portfolio development

Quarter Four: Selecting a Major and a Career Emphasis

1. Research project - options at my university
2. Socratic seminars (led by AVID seniors)
3. Career exploration - professions in my field of study
4. Portfolio presentations
5. Completion of the Extended Essay

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

AVID seniors will be evaluated using a variety of performance-based assessments. While they will be judged on rudimentary AVID “basics” such as a well-organized notebook, participation in tutorials, and note taking, they will also be assessed according to their performance on timed writings, practice placement examinations, participation in scoring of practice examinations, leadership in Socratic seminars, and external exam preparation. In addition, AVID seniors will be required to complete a research paper exploring issues in college access. This paper will also be presented to the class. Finally, AVID seniors will be required to develop and present a portfolio, representing their four years of work in the AVID program.

SENIOR PORTFOLIO CONTENTS

Portfolio contents will include, but not be limited to the following:

College admissions essay

Final career research paper

Four-year plan

Timed writings

Analytical essays

Notes taken in content areas

Extended essay

Dialectical journal from core literature study

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