

March 2009 – Notice to St. Francis Students re: Important Course Scheduling Information

As you know, we are in the process of requesting classes for the 2009-2010 school year. As you review your choices, it is important that you select a course of study that furthers your intellectual development and prepares you for college while at the same time leaving you time for family, friends, activities, prayer and appropriate rest. The Department Chairs and advanced level teachers have been talking to the students about the rigor and requirements in all courses of study. While we know that this is a challenging and competitive time for college admissions, it is extremely important to request a well-balanced and achievable schedule.

Our general policy as outlined in our Student Handbook is to allow students to register for a maximum of 3 Advanced Placement or Honors classes per semester. We have carefully determined that a student taking no more than 3 of these classes can maintain a balance with her spiritual, social, extra-curricular and family commitments. Students may challenge this policy via the Placement Panel. A student who successfully challenges and is allowed to request more than 3 Advanced Placement or Honors classes will not be permitted to drop any courses or move to a less rigorous class. With this in mind, as you request your classes via Naviance next week, we ask that you make thoughtful choices.

We will do our utmost to honor your course requests, however, there are occasions when we are unable to do so. This most often occurs when a student requests classes that are offered only once or at the same time as other courses that the student has requested, such as Advanced Placement, Honors, Student Leadership and many arts classes.

Please know that there are some scheduling restrictions that we have in place to assist in giving students a balanced experience. Students will not be allowed to register for more than 8 classes or 80 credits (7 classes or 70 credits if the student cannot take zero block). SF sports teams earn credits and, therefore, count as a class. Additionally, every student must have a lunch block, which means that C, D, E or F block must be free for lunch. We will require a student to drop a class if the schedule does not permit one of those blocks to be free. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

Moving forward, I want to advise you that we will be handling schedule changes very differently this coming academic year. All schedule changes will be processed during the month of July, and the last day to request a schedule change will be Thursday, July 23, 2009. Requests must be received at St. Francis by this day to be considered. If you know that you are going to be out of town during this period, please request a temporary address change through our registrar at lansell@stfrancishs.org. Once school has started, no schedule changes will be considered until after the end of the 1st quarter and then only for the reasons outlined in the Student and Parent Handbook. Reasons such as the material is too difficult, there is too much homework, or the course is too rigorous will not be considered.

Please take the time ask a lot of questions of the teachers, Department Chairs, Guidance Counselors and students who have completed the courses you are considering. Most importantly, you have to choose the courses that are the best match for your interests, ability levels, academic goals, and that afford you the time for a healthy, balanced life.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Patrick J. O'Neill

Assistant Principal of Academics