

The “Senior Option” at HHS

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Rationale in Support of the “Senior Option”

- Prior to 2005-2006 School Year
- Seniors in Danger of Failing
- Senior Privileges
- Recommendations of AFG Validation Team

The “Senior Option” Defined

Beginning with the Class of 2011, seniors in satisfactory academic standing may elect, at their option, to take one less course in their final year of study.

The “Senior Option” will be in effect for the entire year.

It will take place during Period 1.

It will not be permitted in lieu of a lunch period (e.g., students may not waive their lunch periods and elect to take seven straight classes during Periods 2-8).

Benefits of the “Senior Option”

It will allow students the opportunity to reduce daily stress.

It will allow them an opportunity to use Period 1 to meet with counselors, finish homework, get something to eat, or just “sleep in” and come to school in time for the start of Period 2.

It will allow them a “senior privilege” they currently lack.

Comparative Data

School	Time	Schedule	Min. Course Requirements	Study Hall?	Senior Privilege?
Millburn	7:45 – 2:32	Traditional	6 courses	Yes	Yes
McNair Acad.	8:35 – 3:05	Rotating	8 courses	No	No
Tenafly	7:55 – 3:04	Traditional	6 courses	Yes	Yes
Mtn. Lakes	8:00 – 2:36	Traditional	6 courses	Yes	Yes
Glen Ridge	8:00 – 3:15	Traditional	Not listed	Yes	Yes
Princeton	7:50 – 2:51	Traditional	6 courses	Yes	Yes
Ridgewood	7:47 – 2:58	Rotating	6 courses	Yes	Yes
N. Highlands	7:45 – 2:36	Rotating	6 courses	Yes	Yes
Demarest	7:40 – 2:36	Rotating	7 courses	Yes	Yes
Chatham	7:45 – 2:36	Rotating	6 courses	Yes	Yes
Holmdel	7:30 – 1:47	Traditional	7 courses	No	No

Trepidation....

- “I want to take the senior option, and so do my friends, but won’t I be hurting my chances to get into a good school”?

Feedback

- “...your assessment of this situation is on the mark. There would be no negative impact....pretty commonplace at some very fine schools. Just need to be sure, as you suggest, that students are maximizing their challenge as they head down the stretch”
 - John Buckley
Associate VP for Undergraduate Enrollment
Fordham University

Feedback

- “Most of our competitive applicants have 4 years of all 5 major subject areas (English, Math, Lab Science, Social Science, World Language). It seems to me that it is quite possible that students meet or even exceed this recommended curriculum while still taking the senior option... I would imagine students who may have had a less rigorous curriculum in previous years, or inconsistency in their high school performance, may be the only students who may want to consider not taking the senior option”
 - Lauren Vildostegui
Assistant Director
Office of Undergraduate Admissions
Boston University

Feedback

- “Sounds like a great idea...this would not pose a problem from our perspective. We often hear from students who are creatively trying to work something extra (independent study, fulfilling a world language requirement) into their senior schedules... would students have the option to utilize the new free period in such a situation”?
- Kyle Downey
Associate Director of Admissions
Undergraduate Admissions Office
Cornell University

Feedback

- “In brief: the situation is just as you stated. As long as our applicants have a rigorous curriculum, we are not concerned about how many free periods they have in senior (or any other) year. In fact, if they are working hard, they probably need them”!
- Eric Hunter, Ph.D.
Assistant Director of Admission
Brown University

Steps to Allay Fears

- Power point presentation on school web site
- “Blurb” in school newsletter; email to parents
- Discussion with School Counseling Staff
- Visit with rising 12th grade in February

Questions?



Thank you!