

PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon

Academic Elective Course – Academic Decathlon Curriculum

Many, many schools across the United States that participate in Academic Decathlon also participate in a Decathlon course. Efforts to offer an academic elective course in Georgia that uses the USAD curriculum has been on a voluntary basis for two years. Through consultation with the Curriculum Director at the Georgia Department of Education in the Winter of 2002, we learned of the potential of offering the USAD curriculum through an academic elective course in Georgia high schools. The potential courses and QCCs that frequently match the content of the USAD curriculum are listed below. The course selected should change from year to year to be most compatible with the USAD curriculum of that year. Districts/schools should attempt to match the AD curriculum with potential QCC courses annually to achieve the best correlation of standards for the selected content for that year. However, courses should not be randomly selected. Each year when the curriculum topics are published by USAD, the course title and number of the most appropriate course will be communicated to all school districts. Matching the AD curriculum to a different course each year will enable interested students to receive elective credit in four different elective courses should a student chose to be a part of this curriculum each of his/her four years in high school.

The **rationale** for offering the decathlon curriculum through an academic elective course is to provide opportunity for a whole class (20+) of students to engage in this rich and rigorous curriculum. The nine students that may make up the Academic Decathlon team may come from this course, but there may also be other students who would like to be a part of the team but are not able to work the elective course into their schedule. Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.03 prohibits for funding the use of “any course that requires participation in an extracurricular activity and for which enrollment is on a competitive basis.” To meet the requirements of this rule, students who are members of the Academic Decathlon team should **not** be required to take this course. Neither should students in the course be required to be on the Decathlon team.

Students who participate in such a course that offers a rich, rigorous, and challenging curriculum and the extended opportunities for research should produce positive results in achievement. Such an opportunity promises to go a long way toward closing the achievement gap for those underachieving and unmotivated high school students. It’s worth a try!

Potential Courses

Following is a listing of academic elective courses from which schools and school districts may choose to offer the AD curriculum that most closely parallels the topics for the current year. It is suggested that districts planning to offer the course should do so in the first semester. The teacher of the course, who may also be the team coach, will need assistance from experts in other disciplines. Strategies for using the expertise of others are provided in the “Study Strategies” section of the *PAGE GAD Coaches’ Manual*.

Academic Elective Course – Academic Decathlon Curriculum *(continued)*

Academic Elective Courses Which Have Been Used in Past Years

- 40.07100 Oceanography
- 40.37110 Oceans: Living Space for the Future
- 40.37210 Earth 2525: A Time Traveler’s Guide to Planet Earth
- 40.37220 Bioethics Symposium
- 40.37230 From Earth to Mars: A Study in the Humanities of Space Exploration
- 40.37240 The Impact of Science on History (History and Science: There’s No Divorce in This Marriage)
- 40.37250 Space Technology On-Line
- 45.01100 Comparative Religions
- 45.01300 Science: Technology & Society
- 45.07200 Asian Studies
- 45.08900 Early Military History

2009-10 Academic Elective Course Possibilities

- 23.32300 Comparative Literature
- 44.00100 Humanities
- 45.01200 Current Issues
- 45.01400 The Humanities/Social Studies

Other Possibilities:

- 70.03100 Directed Study I
- 70.03200 Directed Study II
- 70.03300 Directed Study III
- 70.03400 Directed Study IV
- 35.06100 Study Skills I
- 35.06200 Study Skills II
- 35.06300 Study Skills III
- 35.06400 Study Skills IV

These courses have no prescribed standards. A course syllabus would need to be developed that would define the parameters of the course and the standards that would be covered in the course.

To access a copy of the standards for applicable courses, log onto the Georgia Department of Education website at www.gadoe.org. Click on “GeorgiaStandards.org.” Then select 9-12, and the subject. When you access the desired standards, you will see their descriptions. It is suggested that you print them.

We found these standards:

- EDU-CIE-3 Humanities
- BCS-BCP-3 Oral Communication
- ACCT-GDP-8 Communication Skills
- ELA-10W3, ELA-11W3, ELA-12W3 Research and Technology to Support Writing
- SS-WH14 Analyze the Age of Revolutions and Rebellions
- ACCT-GOP-1 Leadership Skills