

# MIDDLE COLLEGE FAQs

## Overview

### **What are the benefits of participating in a Middle College?**

This institutional collaboration between the university and the school district allows high school students to take courses on the university campus, alongside university students, at no cost, while still receiving full support from their school district. Studies show that Middle College participants are more likely to attend college after high school graduation, and more likely to complete degrees in a timely fashion.

### **Is it true that participants can receive high school credit for their college classes?**

Yes. One semester of a college class equals one full year of high school credit. For example: if a student needs one year (1 credit) of English 11 in high school and qualifies to take a college-level writing class, then one semester of a college-level writing class can fulfill their full year of English 11 requirements. Thus, students have the opportunity to accelerate the completion of their high school graduation requirements while in Middle College. The Middle College academic advisor and high school counselor work together to ensure students' class schedules address their high school graduation requirements.

### **Are students also earning university credit in the Middle College?**

Yes, and this is important. Because participants are taking regular university courses, they are building a permanent academic record at the university level. The grades and credits completed as part of the program can impact many things in the future, such as admission to a college or university, scholarships (especially those that consider GPA as a criterion) and financial aid eligibility. The transcript of courses taken with UAA will need to be supplied to most, if not all, future colleges or universities to which the student applies. It's important, then, that students only take courses that they are prepared for and can plan to do their best in.

### **How does Middle College affect future financial aid opportunities?**

Even though Middle College students are not eligible for financial aid, it's important to know that how well a student does in a college course, i.e. the grades they earn, and how many college courses a student takes can impact financial aid eligibility in the future. The primary way in which future aid is impacted is through what is known as Satisfactory Academic Progress, or SAP, which all U.S. colleges and universities are required to monitor. While the details of a college's SAP policy differ, generally student GPA and progress toward completion of their declared degree program are key elements. All of the courses taken while participating in the Middle College program will be counted toward SAP, so it is important for participants to select courses thoughtfully and to do their best in them.

## **Student life in Middle College**

### **How does a high school student qualify to participate in Middle College?**

The school district partner sets the criteria for participation and sets the schedule for screening applications to the program. Because participating students take regular university classes, they must meet regular university pre-requisites and placement requirements.

### **What is the process for selecting Middle College classes?**

The two collaborating institutions guide what courses a student takes in Middle College.

The school district determines the number of classes a student can take the first semester, based on high school grades. The school district also requires all new students take a University Studies course ([UNIV A150](#)) to assist in their transition into college coursework. This helps the student gain ownership of the educational experience while also integrating them into the university community.

For specific class choices, students meet with their Middle College academic advisor. The school district provides the Middle College academic advisor with the student's high school transcript so that university courses will meet high school graduation requirements. College placement scores and post-secondary education and career goals are also shared.

Once enrolled and studying in the Middle College, students meet with their Middle College advisor midway through each semester to review progress in current classes and determine the best classes for the next semester. Students register for classes according to specific priority registration dates set by the university registrar.

### **What is expected of parents/guardians of Middle College participants?**

Besides parental obligations to the school district, parents of Middle College participants are also expected to attend Middle College parent orientation and parent meetings to assist in their student's success.

### **What if a participating Middle College student needs to change their UAA class schedule?**

Like all college students, Middle College participants can take advantage of the add/drop deadlines, a time window when changes can be made. To ensure the student stays within the guidelines of the program, all changes to a student's UAA schedule must be approved by the high school counselor after the student consults with the UAA Middle College academic advisor.

### **What university services are available to a Middle College participant?**

UAA offers an array of services to enrolled students that directly support student learning. Middle College students are encouraged to take full advantage of these services. They include **The Learning Commons**, where students can access computer labs, small-group study spaces, and a variety of academic tutoring and resources.

**Can Middle College participants join UAA clubs, attend university campus dances, or join a fraternity or sorority?**

No. Middle College participants are first and foremost high school students. As such, it is expected that they remain fully engaged in their high school community. By agreement with the school district, Middle College students do not pay the customary student activity, student government, athletic/sports complex, and health services fees that are mandatory for other university students.

**What if a Middle College participant needs to see a school nurse or counselor?**

Middle College students wishing to see a school nurse or counselor should schedule appointments through their sponsoring high school. By intentional design the UAA Student Health and Counseling Center is set up to serve adult college students who pay the health services fee. Middle College participants are not eligible to pay this fee.

## **Ways that high school and college differ**

**How does a Middle College participant receive disability support services?**

Students requesting accommodations for high school district courses and activities should contact the special education department at the sponsoring high school.

Students requesting accommodations for university courses for the first time need to make an appointment with the [UAA Disability Support Services \(DSS\) Office](#), preferably before the start of the semester. Planning early affords DSS staff adequate time to make the necessary arrangements for support services. Accommodations and services are not retroactive and begin after the intake process when UAA faculty are notified by the DSS staff. Once eligibility has been determined, students login to the DSS online system to make specific requests each semester.

Please note that Middle College students are high school students first and foremost. Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 Plans apply to high school courses and activities. They do not apply to the university. Overall, the responsibility of the student and of the school are very different at the university level. Here are some comparative examples:

<b><i>At High School</i></b>	<b><i>At University</i></b>
<i>School staff may be mandated to tell parents how their son or daughter is doing in class</i>	<i>Unless the university has written authorization from the student, staff and faculty are prohibited from disclosing information to a parent. It is recommended that parents ask their student how they are doing directly and to also ask them for documentation.</i>

<b><i>At High School</i></b>	<b><i>At University</i></b>
<i>The school is responsible for determining if the student has a disability and arranging for the student to receive accommodations</i>	<i>At the university, the student must provide evidence of the disability and once approved for an accommodation, they must request the accommodation for each course they are needed.</i>
<i>Accommodations and services are designed to maximize the student's potential.</i>	<i>Accommodations are approved to provide a more level learning experience. Accommodations that would exceed this goal are not granted.</i>

### **How can I get information about safety and security at UAA?**

All institutions of higher education are required by federal law to provide information about crime and safety on their campuses. UAA's current report, the **2017 Annual Security & Fire Safety Report**, can be found on this [UAA website](#). The actual report, a 75-page PDF, can [be read or downloaded here](#).

### **What are the rules that govern student conduct at UAA?**

The university requires students to conduct themselves honestly and responsibly and to respect the rights of others. Students may not engage in behavior that disrupts the learning environment, violates the rights of others or otherwise violates the **Student Code of Conduct**, university rules, regulations, or procedures. Find the Student Code of Conduct [on this web page](#).

### **What does my student need to know about Academic Honesty at the University?**

Academic integrity is a basic principle that requires students to take credit only for ideas and efforts that are their own. Cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are defined in the Student Code of Conduct section of the Student Handbook. In addition, individual course syllabi may include course-specific information about academic honesty, expectations, and consequences for violations. Middle College Students will be expected to adhere to these policies in their university courses.

### **Will the university tell the parent of a Middle College participant how their student is doing?**

No. FERPA, or the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, gives parents certain rights regarding their children's elementary and secondary education records. These rights transfer to the student at age 18, or when that student attends a postsecondary institution at any age. Under FERPA, an eligible student must provide a signed and dated written consent before UAA discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records. A Middle College participant who wishes to allow UAA to share information with a parent or individual can sign an [Authorization to Release Education Record Information form](#), found [on this web page](#).