

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*.

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Potential Academic Elective Courses

- 45.01200 Current Issues
- 45.07200 Science: Technology & Society
- *45.01400 The Humanities/Social Studies
- *44.00100 Humanities
- 45.01100 Comparative Religions
- 40.07100 Oceanography
- 40.37110 Oceans: Living Space for the Future
- 23.32300 Comparative Literature
- 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
- **45.07200 Asian Studies (Geography)

To access a copy of the standards for these courses, log onto the Georgia Department of Education website www.doe.k12.ga.us Click on “Curriculum and Instruction,” then on “QCC.” Then select 9-12, Social Studies, and key in the name of the course from the list above. When you access the desired course, you will see the QCC standards for that course. It is suggested that you print them.

NOTE: The GPS standards are not yet posted on the DOE web.

* These courses match the 2005-2006 decathlon curriculum.

** This course matches the 2006-2007 decathlon curriculum theme.

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.