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## **What is the Scholars Program?**

The Scholars Program is designed to offer highly motivated and diligent students at Somerset Academy the opportunity to graduate with their High School Diploma and an Associate of Arts degree from Miami Dade College (MDC). Students earn the AA degree by taking a combination of Advanced Placement courses and Dual Enrollment courses at MDC throughout their sophomore, junior and senior years in high school.

Interested 9th grade students may qualify for the program by having a minimum unweighted GPA of 3.0 and by passing the PERT exam (College Placement Exam). Scholars will be identified in their freshman year, so that they can take the PERT exam and start dual enrollment classes the summer after their freshman year. Once in the Scholars Program, students are committed to taking two MDC dual enrollment classes every college semester, including summer B semesters. Somerset Academy will arrange transportation to MDC for sophomores and juniors. Seniors are responsible for providing their own transportation to any MDC campus. A Scholars' schedule will consist of five periods of high school courses and two periods of MDC dual enrollment courses. Scholars are encouraged to earn A's and B's in all college courses in order to improve their success with college admission.

Taking college courses while in high school will:

- Increase student's College Readiness
- Allow students to begin their College Degree earlier
- Increase student's Grade Point Average
- Save money towards a College Degree

Please note, students who earn a "C" or lower in any one dual enrollment, will not be allowed to continue participating in the dual enrollment program / scholars program at any post-secondary institution.

## **Eligibility Requirements**

Requirements for the Program:

- A student must have a 3.0 un-weighted GPA
- A student must also pass the PERT (Post-Secondary Education Readiness Test)
  - *Minimum score of 106 in Reading*
  - *Minimum score of 103 in Writing*
  - *Minimum score of 114 in Mathematics*

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Answers to some of the most frequently asked questions surrounding the Scholars Program:**

**How soon can I enroll in the Scholars Program or Dual Enrollment?**

As soon as the summer after your freshman year, when your first official GPA becomes available.

**Do I have to take college and high school courses at the same time?**



**SOMERSET**



**ACADEMY**  
SOUTH HOMESTEAD



Yes, but the college courses you take will be applied towards the credits you need to graduate from high school and will count towards your college diploma, as well.

### **What kinds of grades do I need to get to stay in the Scholars Program or Dual Enrollment Program?**

You must earn A's and B's in all your college courses. Otherwise, you will be ineligible to remain in the program. If you receive a C, a meeting with your counselor will be scheduled to discuss your continued participation in the program. If you receive a D or lower, you will not be able to continue in dual enrollment at any post-secondary institution.

### **What effect will this program have in my college transcript?**

The grades you earn in your college courses will become part of your permanent history in college. This is why Somerset Academy has a strict grade policy for college courses.

### **Where do my college credits get transferred?**

Most public state universities and some out of state institutions will accept dual enrollment credits. However, post-secondary institutions have different policies regarding the acceptance of dual enrollment credits and the number of these credits they accept for transfer.

### **Do college credits count towards Bright Futures Scholarships?**

Dual enrollment credits are used towards determining your Florida Bright Futures eligibility. These credits are weighted the same as Advanced Placement courses.

### **What is the difference between the Scholars Program and students taking Dual Enrollment courses?**

The Scholars Program is unique in that it offers our students the alternative of graduating with both, an Associate of Arts degree and a High School Diploma. Students taking Dual Enrollment courses are only advancing specific college courses.

### **What is the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT)?**

It is a testing tool to assess a student's college level of readiness, which can only be taken twice during the 9th and 10th grade and twice again during the 11th and 12th grades. Moreover, it may be waived by SAT and/or ACT scores. Students who are sophomores are encouraged to speak to their counselor before attempting to take the PERT.

### **Should I practice for the PERT?**

Students can prepare by visiting the Miami Dade County Website and/ or College Board website.

### **How can I register to take the PERT?**

You must first see your counselor for a PERT referral form and then you may contact the testing department at the Miami Dade College campus of your choice.

### **Is the Scholars Programs right for everyone?**

*Factors to consider before committing:*

- Course content
- College level course and level of difficulty
- Students are expected to be college-ready
- Study time per week is at least two hours of study for one hour in class.
- Class Composition- students of all ages in college classrooms
- Impact of grades on student's record can affect high school graduation and college admission.