

Current Courses Meeting the Criteria for Graduation Requirements 2025-2026

Clarifications in Math, Social Studies, and Fine Arts 12/10/25

The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) requires a minimum of 24 units of credit earned, through course completion (R277-700) or through competency assessment (R277-705), to graduate with a diploma from a Utah public high school.

The USBE sets the *minimum* requirements, however, each Local Educational Agency (LEA) is able to set higher graduation requirements as long as the state minimum requirements are met.

This document outlines the criteria for the various content area credits and additional requirements needed to earn a high school diploma in the State of Utah.

The Alternate Diploma for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities must also meet the 24-credit minimum. Please contact the Special Education Department at the USBE for additional details.

In content areas that have applied, advanced, or alternate courses, teachers meeting state license and endorsement requirements for those courses are qualified to teach for approved subject area credit.

The subject areas outlined in this document are:

4 credits of Language Arts (pg. 2)

3 credits of Mathematics (pg. 3)

3 credits of Science (pg. 4)

3.0 credits of Social Studies: **3.5 credits beginning with the grade 10 cohort in SY 2026-27** (pg. 5)

1.5 credits of The Arts (pg. 6)

0.5 credits of Health Education (pg. 6)

1.5 credits of Physical Education (pg. 6)

1.0 credit of Career and Technical Education (pg. 6)

0.5 credit of Digital Studies (pg. 7)

0.5 credit of General Financial Literacy (pg. 7)

5.5 credits of Electives: **5.0 credits beginning with the grade 10 cohort in 2026-27 SY** (pg. 7)

Additional guidance for each subject area can be found in board rule R277-700-6.

Language Arts - 4.0 Credits

Three courses from the Foundational courses plus one course from the 12th grade course options or the Applied and Advanced List

Foundational Credits (3 credits)			(1 credit)
9 th Grade	10 th Grade	11 th Grade	12 th Grade
English 9 English 9H	English 10 English 10H AP Seminar	English 11 English 11H International Baccalaureate AP Literature & Composition AP Language & Composition	English 12 English Concurrent Enrollment* International Baccalaureate AP Literature & Composition AP Language & Composition
			Applied & Advanced Courses**
			Business Communication Creative Writing 1 and 2 Debate 2 and 3 Humanities Journalism 1 and 2 Literary Magazine Literature Mythology Speech 2 Professional & Technical Communication AP World Languages
School-Sponsored Verbal Communication up to 0.5***			

Students who took ENGL 1010 to fulfill their ELA 11 credit before the 2026-2027 school year will still have that credit honored.

**For Applied/Advanced courses, use the [Supplemental Standards](#) in addition to the [core ELA 11/12th grade Utah Standards](#). Literature courses are the sole exception, relying on the core literature strand standards.

***Refer to Graduation Communications Credits Guidance for more information regarding the school-sponsored verbal communication credit option.

*Concurrent enrollment courses offered from college/university language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies departments.

NOTE: In content areas that have applied, advanced, or alternate courses, teachers meeting state license and endorsement requirements for those courses are qualified to teach for approved subject area credit.

For more information about course CACTUS numbers, please contact Cathy Gray at cathy.gray@schools.utah.gov.

Mathematics – 3.0 Credits

Foundational Courses

Secondary I or Secondary IE
 Secondary II or Secondary IIE
 Secondary III or Secondary IIIE

Secondary III can be replaced by an Applied Course with a written parent request acknowledging that opting their student out of Secondary Math III leaves them unprepared for college mathematics.

Advanced Courses (Secondary III Pre-requisite)

AP Calculus AB or BC
 AP Statistics
 AP Pre-Calculus
 College Prep Math
 Concurrent Enrollment* 1010, 1030, 1040, 1050, or 1060
 International Baccalaureate
 Introductory Calculus

Applied Courses (Secondary II Prerequisite)

Alternative Selections for Secondary III must total 1.0 credit

Accounting I (0.5)
 Accounting II (0.5)
 Computer Programming (0.5)
 Introductory Statistics or Intro to Data Science (1.0)
 Mathematical Decision Making for Life (non-CE course) (1.0)
 Mathematics of Personal Finance (Does not count for General Financial Literacy) (1.0)
 Medical Math (0.5)
 Modern Mathematics (1.0)
 Small Business Math (0.5)

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Science – 3.0 Credits

A total of two courses from two of the five areas of science on the Foundational Courses list plus one credit from the Foundation Courses list or Applied and Advanced Courses list.

Foundational Courses

Biology

- Biology
- Biology: Agricultural Science⁺
- AP or IB Biology
- Biology with Lab CE SEEd^{*}

Chemistry

- Chemistry
- AP or IB Chemistry
- Chemistry with Lab CE SEEd^{*}

Computer Science

- AP Computer Science⁺
- Computer Science Principles^{***}
- Computer Science Advanced^{***}

Earth Science

- Earth and Space Science
- AP Environmental Science
- IB Environmental Systems

Physics

- Physics
- AP or IB Physics
- Physics with Lab CE SEEd

Applied or Advanced Courses

Agricultural Biotechnology⁺

Agricultural Science⁺ I, II, III, IV Aquaculture⁺

Animal Science⁺ I or II

Astronomy^{**}

Biotechnology⁺

Biology Elective CE No SEEd^{*}

Botany

Chemistry Elective CE No SEEd^{*}

Electronics⁺ 1,2,3

Engineering Principles⁺ 1, 2

Engineering Capstone⁺

Environmental Science^{**}

Equine Science⁺

Genetics^{**}

Geology^{**}

Human Anatomy^{**}

Marine Science

Materials Science⁺

Medical Anatomy and Physiology^{***}

Medical Forensics⁺

Meteorology^{**}

Natural Resource Science⁺ I, II

Physics Elective CE No SEEd^{*}

Plant and Soil Science⁺ I^{**}, II

Robotics⁺ 1, 2

Veterinary Assistant⁺ 1, 2

Wildlife Biology

Zoology

+ CTE Courses ** Includes CE and/or AP Courses

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Social Studies – 3.0 Credits

(3.5 credits beginning with grade 10 cohort in the 2026-27 school year)

2.5 from the foundational required course list (or their equivalent) and .5 elective from any course from the Applied/Advanced social studies area, which could include an additional half credit added to any of the required half-credit courses.

Foundational Courses

World History (.5 min required)

- World Civilization
- World History
- AP European history
- AP World History
- HIST 1100 & 1110 CE* (if both taken)

World Geography (.5 min required)

- Geography for Life
- World Geography
- AP Human Geography
- World/Cultural Geography CE*

U.S. History 2 (1.0 min required)

- U.S. History 2
- AP US History
- HIST 1700 CE* (if offered in a full year)
- HIST 2700 & 2710 CE* (if both taken)

U.S. Government and Citizenship** (.5 min required)

- U. S. Government and Citizenship
- AP US Government & Politics
- Political Science 1100 CE*

****American Constitutional Government and Citizenship:** 1.0 minimum required beginning with the grade 10 cohort in the 2026-27 school year.

Applied or Advanced Courses (not a comprehensive list)

Advanced Geography

Advanced Psychology

American Government and Law

Anthropology

AP Economics-Macro

AP Economics-Micro

AP Psychology

Civics

Criminal Justice

Current Issues

Economics

Economics Elective CE*

Geography II

Introduction to Philosophy

Introduction to Philosophy CE*

Native American Studies

Navajo Culture, Language, and Government

Political Science

Political Science Elective CE*

Psychology

Psychology CE*

Sociology

Sociology CE*

Student Government

World Civilizations II

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The Arts 1.5 credits

See list of approved courses for graduation credit in CACTUS for Dance, Film/Media Arts, Music, Theatre, or Visual Art.

Approved Alternate Courses for Art Credit

- Commercial Art 1/2/3
- Commercial Photography 1/2/3
- Digital Illustration, Digital Media 1/2/Advanced
- Digital Media Capstone
- Graphic Print Design 1/2/3

For additional information on Approved Alternate Courses for Art Credit see [FINE ARTS AND CTE COURSE ALIGNMENT UPDATE](#).

Health Education 0.5 credits

Health II

Physical Education 1.5 credits

The 1.5 credit must be from each of the following areas:

- .5-Participation, Skills, and Techniques
- .5-Fitness for Life
- .5-Individual Lifetime Activities

Career and Technical Education (CTE) 1.0 credit

Career and Technical Education (CTE) provides all students with access to high-quality, rigorous career-focused programs that result in attainment of credentials with labor market value. A total of 1.0 credit required.

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Digital Studies 0.5 credit

The Digital Studies credit requirement is intended to advance students from being computer users to being computationally literate creators. To achieve this, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) may choose for their students to take one of the six approved courses.

The Digital Studies credit includes competencies associated with the field/discipline of computing, aligned to current trends in technology, providing problem solving, reasoning, communication, and computational thinking.

The six approved courses that count towards the Digital Studies 0.5 required graduation credit are:

Business Office Specialist	Digital Business Apps
Computer Programming 1	Exploring Computer Science
Computer Science Principles	Web Development 1

General Financial Literacy 0.5 credit

The 0.5 credit for General Financial Literacy can be met through the following courses: **General Financial Literacy** or **Finance CE**.

Electives 5.5 credits

(5.0 beginning with the grade 10 cohort in the 2026-27 school year)

- A course used to fulfill elective credit does not necessarily have to only contain elective credit. Any course that provides state level credit can be counted toward the 5.5 required elective credits once the requirements for the content area of the course has been fulfilled.
- A student may take a recurring course more than once per [R277-717-2\(5\)](#) in order to further the student's understanding and skills in the course subject, such as journalism or band; or satisfy a different credit requirement that the course may fulfill, such as an art class that fulfills an elective requirement and an art requirement.

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