

THE BEACON PROGRAM

Illuminating the Pathway to College and Career for High School Students



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What is the Beacon Program at Suffolk County Community College?

Suffolk's Beacon Program (formerly the Excelsior Program) is a concurrent enrollment program that allows high school juniors and seniors to get a head start on college by taking Suffolk courses at their high school during regular school hours. Classes are meant to enhance college-level student learning, not replace high school requirements. Students can earn up to 30 college credits through Suffolk's Beacon Program.

Why should I take college courses while I am still in high school?

Concurrent enrollment is a national trend. Taking college courses while still in high school through Suffolk's Beacon Program enables students to:

- Earn college credits during their high school day
- Transfer the credits they earn to most colleges or universities
- Enjoy greater flexibility in college
- Enhance their college admissions profile
- Save money on tuition



How to get started?

To take a course through Suffolk's Beacon Program, students must be a high school junior or senior, enrolled in an approved course, who has demonstrated readiness to take college-level course work, and has been recommended by their high school teacher or guidance counselor. Some Beacon Program courses may have additional requirements for acceptance. Participating high schools have student enrollment applications containing all of the information necessary to take advantage of this opportunity. The program is explained and enrollment is completed in each of the classes being offered through the Beacon Program. Interested students should contact their high school administration to see what courses are being offered in their school district.

How does the Beacon Program differ from AP/IB?

With the Beacon Program, college credit is earned and an official Suffolk County Community College academic transcript is generated upon the completion of each course. Student success is based on a variety of assessments throughout the course, not solely upon one test. Courses offered through Suffolk's Beacon Program follow the College syllabi using college-level textbooks.

What can be expected from these courses?

College courses are rigorous and challenging; careful time management skills are essential. The workload varies between courses, but typically involves additional time and extensive reading and writing assignments. Courses are designed to promote independent and peer group study skills with increased student expectations and higher level class discussions.

What can students do with the credits they earn?

Courses offered through the Beacon Program generate an official Suffolk academic transcript. Successfully earned college credits can be used toward a degree at Suffolk, or transferred to many private and public colleges and universities with general acceptance within SUNY institutions. Suffolk accepts all credits successfully earned through the Beacon Program.



"By taking advantage of this program, I am able to show colleges that I hold a high academic standard and can handle an intense workload. This increases my chances of being admitted to highly competitive schools, gives me greater flexibility during my college career and shortens the time needed to receive a bachelor's degree."

- Rosario Terracina, Shoreham-Wading River High School student