

## Transcripts 101 Workshop

Presented by Jen Hartenburg, STAR Torrey Academy Administrator, Biola University  
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Workshop Goal: To empower you to take greater control of your home education program both by offering you the big picture and by clarifying some of the miry details about high school transcripts especially as it relates to recording STAR Torrey Academy courses.

### I. Big Picture: You have freedom and almost limitless creative range!

*Question:* So, why do you need a transcript?

*Hypothesis:* Does California law require me to meet certain course requirements and reflect those courses on a transcript?

No. You have creative range with your student's transcript and can include or exclude whatever classes you want; however, keeping transcripts and other school records is a wise provision and a helpful planning tool.

- Schools must "offer" a specified range of subjects, but the law does not dictate that transcripts reflect any specific course requirements.
- Truancy laws apply to student attendance but do not come to bear on the types of course listed on your transcript.

*Hypothesis:* Does my student need a transcript for his or her career?

No. What you really need for a career is lots of experience, a college degree, or both.

- You don't even have to be a high school grad to get entry-level low-skill jobs.
- The GED, California Proficiency Exam, or community college course completion/enrollment can provide you with many of the same career advantages as a high school diploma; most employers will not be concerned with looking at what courses are or are not listed on a high school transcript.
- Advanced positions often require a college degree but some take experience instead.

*Hypothesis:* Does my student need a transcript in order to be admitted to a four-year college/university?

Yes and no. Some colleges and universities will not accept homeschool transcripts, but all colleges and universities have expectations about what students should know before being admitted to the undergraduate program. (Please see "What High School Courses Are Required?" chart handout.)

- Universities like Biola and Harvard, for example, accept homeschool transcripts in place of traditional day school transcripts and actually recruit homeschooled students.
- Universities like USC and the University of California system, on the other hand, require homeschool applicants to take additional subject tests to verify high school work and scholastic aptitude.
- HSLDA provides a helpful resource on the web that ranks colleges and universities by their admissions policies toward homeschool applicants:  
[www.hslda.org/docs/nche/000002/00000241.asp](http://www.hslda.org/docs/nche/000002/00000241.asp).

## **II. Plan with the End in Mind.**

*Question:* What high school courses do I need to fit in my student's course plan and on his or her transcript?

*Answer:* Those courses that best meet your educational aims and goals.

Identify your student's post-high school goals and follow a high school program that will best assist him in completing those goals.

- If your student desires to go directly from high school into the workforce, he should have plenty of work experience and apprenticeships during high school, and his academic program should be well-rounded to give him the traits that all employers look for: quickness in learning new information and skills, the ability to think and understand well and to communicate well, self-discipline, self-initiative, and attention to detail.
- If your student desires to attend a school like Harvard or Yale, she should take four years of almost every core academic subject and the more rigorous the better.
- If your student desires to attend a school like one of the UC campuses, he should take the recommended high school courses for those schools and either prepare to test very well on SAT I and SAT II subject exams or to complete his first two years of college in the community college system before transferring in to the UC system.
- If you desire to prepare your student for long-term success in any setting and for growth in righteousness, pursue a course of study that will give her the tools to think Christianly about many things in a life-long learning process—regardless of whether or not you follow state, federal, or specific university admissions guidelines to the letter.

You don't have to limit your educational program to government or "traditional" day school standards. Think outside of the box and choose an academic program that best facilitates the values and goals of your family and of the Kingdom of God. Plan with the end in mind.

## **III. How-To's**

*Question:* How do I actually put a transcript together and how do I list STAR Torrey Academy classes?

General:

- Gear your student's transcript toward the audience you have in mind (i.e. a specific college admissions board) and toward your personal educational goals.
- If you belong to an umbrella school or ISP, you will have to keep in mind their specific transcript guidelines especially for formatting and appearance.

### TA Specifics:

Join with us in thinking outside of the box! STAR Torrey Academy is designed with flexibility in mind to fit into your overall academic plan to facilitate what we deem to be the key aims of any wholesome education:

- *Acquisition of the basic tools of learning:* grammar, logic, rhetoric—reading well, thinking well, writing well.
- *Inspiring love for Christian values:* Truth, beauty, goodness, faith, hope, love, humility, generosity, chastity, self-discipline, kindness, diligence, and so on.
- *Thinking and living Christianly:* head, heart, and hand working together to glorify God.

Because these are our goals, STAR Torrey Academy classes do not fit tightly into any government or university admissions guidelines. For example, we spend a lot of time on Bible, Theology, and Christian worldview and philosophy development. But on the other hand, STAR Torrey Academy classes can be recorded on your transcript in a way that is most advantageous to your student. (Please see “Sample STAR Torrey Academy Transcript” and “Suggested High School Class schedule with TA” handouts.)

### ADDITIONAL HANDOUTS:

Biola Home School brochure

“What High School Courses Are Required?” chart

Transcript Template

Sample STAR Torrey Academy Transcript

Suggested High School Class schedule with TA