

Weighted Grading Survey – Feedback

A weighted grading survey was sent to the following 12 Michigan colleges/universities: Central Michigan University, Eastern Michigan University, Ferris State University, Grand Valley State University, Kalamazoo College, Lake Superior State University, Michigan State University, Michigan Technological University, Oakland University, Spring Arbor University, University of Michigan and Western Michigan University. Responses were received from Eastern Michigan University (EMU), Michigan Technological University (MTU) and Spring Arbor University (SAU). In addition, University of Michigan (UM) posted an announcement on their website related to recalculation of grade point averages and Michigan State University (MSU) Office of Admissions has their Admission Review Process on their website. Also, phone calls were made to the Admissions Office at Western Michigan University (WMU) and Grand Valley State University (GVSU). Feedback is summarized below.

1. Does your Admissions Office prefer weighted or unweighted grading and why?

EMU, MTU, SAU, WMU and GVSU reported that there was no preference for weighted or unweighted grading.

Comments –

EMU and GVSU – use GPA listed on transcript

MTU – uses whichever GPA is more favorable, the higher GPA is used for admissions and scholarship purposes

2. Does your Admissions Office recalculate grade point averages, so that all students are being considered for admission based on the same grading scale (1.e., 4.0 or 5.0 scale)?

EMU and MTU recalculate grade point averages to a 4.0 scale, if it is different

SAU – does not recalculate grade point averages

MSU recalculates GPA using only the core academic courses (English, mathematics, physical and biological sciences, social science, and foreign language courses)

UM no longer recalculates GPA. They use the cumulative GPA posted on the student's high school transcript.

WMU – recalculates on a 5.0 scale any courses designated as honors or AP

GVSU – does not recalculate unless a school uses a scale other than a 4.0 across the board for all classes

3. If you do recalculate grades, how do you determine which classes are adjusted?

EMU – For scholarship consideration, EMU recalculates a student's GPA if the high school has not used a weighted GPA. They weight the GPA for Honors, AP and Accelerated classes giving an A in these classes 5 honor points, a B 4 honor points, etc.

MTU and SAU – N/A

WMU – recalculates on a 5.0 scale any courses designated as honors or AP

4. Does the Financial Aid Office, use weighted or unweighted grades to determine the selection for university scholarships?

EMU and MTU – Weighted

EMU – Scholarships are awarded in the Admissions Office and they will use the weighted GPA, if it is listed on the high school transcript. Their staff will recalculate an unweighted GPA, if necessary.

MTU – The Financial Aid Office uses the highest GPA available for the student.

SAU – Does not matter

WMU – uses whatever GPA was used to determine admissions

GVSU – uses whatever GPA is on the student’s transcript

WEIGHTED GRADES

SCHOOLS SURVEYED

Paw Paw	Yes	Gull Lake	Yes
Mattawan	Yes	Otsego	No
Portage	Yes	Niles	Yes
Hackett	No	Three Rivers	Yes
Lakeshore	Yes	B C Lakeview	No
Grandville	Yes		

WEIGHTED GRADING EXAMPLES

Grandville	1.25 Multiplier for AP only
Lakeshore	1.25 Multiplier for AP 1.125 for Honors
Mattawan	1.0 add on for AP
Paw Paw	1.0 add on for AP
Three Rivers	1.0 add on for AP
Hudsonville	1.125 Multiplier for AP
Rockford / Kentwood	1.0 add on per AP class

The following illustrates the impact of using a multiplier of 1.250:

<u>Unweighted Grade Points</u>	<u>Weighted Grade Points</u>
A 4.0	A 5.0
A- 3.667	A- 4.584
B+ 3.333	B+ 4.466
B 3.0	B 3.75
B- 2.667	B- 3.334
C+ 2.333	C+ 2.915
C 2.0	C 2.5
C- 1.567	C- 2.084
D+ 1.333	D+ 1.686
D 1.0	D 1.25
D- 0.667	D- 0.834
F 0	F 0

Based on the information detailed above, there is definitely a strong rationale supporting weighted grading. The following are points in its defense.

- Other districts weight classes which are equivalent to some Vicksburg High School's unweighted classes. Weighted grading would equalize the playing field for VHS students with their competition in the university/college admissions process.
- At the present all classes have the same value. For example, an "A" in Lifetime Sports has the same value as an "A" in AP Biology. Weighted grading takes into account the difficulty of a course, rewarding the student with extra "brownie points" in their GPA.
- Weighted grading would alleviate the perception "Why should I take a rigorous course when I can take a less advanced course and keep my GPA up?" This mentality results in academic complacency which would be alleviated with weighted grading.
- Weighted grading in Honors and AP courses would diminish the above mentality and assist in maintaining numbers in those courses. It would encourage students to "step it up" and be more open to pursuing more rigorous and challenging courses.
- Many high schools provide both a weighted and unweighted GPA on their transcripts. Minimally, VHS should provide a weighted GPA, if not both, on transcripts.

- The cumulative GPA determines class rank, which should be a reflection of both academic performance (grades) and the rigor of the student's coursework – in comparison with other students.

SCHOLARSHIP SUMMARY

Each College/University has its own criteria for scholarships. There are numerous scholarships available within and outside each post secondary school. The target scholarships pertaining to this (weighted grades) proposal have to do with GPA class rank and schedule strength. We need to place our graduates at the same level as all other students applying for Honor Programs and Honor Scholarships. Some Honor Programs and scholarships do not recalculate GPA's.

HONORS FOR STUDENTS – to be determined later

Top 10 would include weighted and unweighted students

We would continue to do top 20%.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian have been eliminated in a number of districts. - Preference

Honors could be amended as follows:

- 3.9 and above Highest Honors
- 3.7 – 3.89 High Honors
- 3.5 – 3.69 Honors

Unweighted grades will continue to be used in awarding Excellence in Education and state scholarships.

Transcripts would contain weighted and unweighted G.P.A.'s

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that we use a multiplier of 1.25 for VHS Advanced Placement, ATYP AP courses, and KAMSC courses only, beginning with the current junior class.

AP COURSES

AP English Literature	AP English Language
AP French	AP Spanish
AP Chemistry	AP Physics
AP Statistics	AP Psychology
AP Calculus I	AP Calculus II
AP Biology	AP Art
AP Government	AP World History
AP American History	ATYP – AP Courses

KAMSC COURSES

KAMSC Calculus BC	KAMSC Calculus AB
KAMSC Advanced Physics	KAMSC Advanced Computer Science
KAMSC Biochemistry	KAMSC Microbiology
KAMSC Human Genetics	KAMSC Organic Chemistry
KAMSC Bio-Medical Science	KAMSC Discreet Mathematics
KAMSC Advanced Calculus	

Course Name	Prerequisite	Grade	AP Exam Available	Rationale for Quality Points
<i>KAMSC Advanced Calculus</i>	<i>AP Calculus AB or BC</i>	<i>11th, 12th</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Advanced calculus is multivariate calculus that is equivalent to a second year college course. It is rigorous course requiring the prerequisite of two courses of calculus. [Year]</i>
<i>KAMSC Advanced Physics</i>	<i>AP Calculus BC</i>	<i>12th</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Advanced physics is a rigorous year-two college level course. It is calculus based. It is taught using a college textbook. The course is rigorous with intensive laboratory experiences using technology seldom in high school laboratories. [Semester]</i>
<i>KAMSC Advanced Computer Science</i>	<i>AP Computer Science</i>	<i>11th, 12th</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Advanced Computer Science is a second level computer science course. Its course content exceeds the requirements for AP Computer Science. The content is required for the AB version of the AP Computer Science exam. [Semester]</i>
<i>KAMSC Organic Chemistry</i>	<i>College level Chemistry course</i>	<i>11th, 12th</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Organic Chemistry is a second or third level College course. Students must have at least one full year of chemistry. A college textbook is used as one resource of the class. It is a very rigorous course with extensive laboratory experiences. [Semester]</i>
<i>KAMSC Biochemistry</i>	<i>Organic Chemistry or Bio-Medical Science</i>	<i>11th, 12th</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Biochemistry is a second or third level college course. The prerequisite for the course is Organic or Biomedical Science. A college textbook is used as a resource for the class. [Semester]</i>
<i>KAMSC Microbiology</i>	<i>Biology</i>	<i>11th, 12th</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Microbiology is a college level course using a college textbook as a resource. Laboratory experiences include microbial techniques and the use of other laboratory technologies. [Year]</i>
<i>KAMSC Bio-Medical Science</i>	<i>Biology and Chemistry</i>	<i>11th, 12th</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Bio-Medical Science I & II is a college level course. It is intense and highly interactive. The laboratory experiences are extensive using a variety of technologies. A college textbook is used as a resource for the class. [Semester each]</i>

<i>KAMSC Discrete Mathematics</i>	<i>Computer Science I & II</i>	<i>11th</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Discrete Mathematics is referred to as a math class; however, it is a college level computer science course required for all computer science majors. A college textbook is used as a resource. [Semester]</i>
<i>KAMSC Human Genetics</i>	<i>Year each of Biology & Chemistry</i>	<i>11th, 12th</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Human Genetics is a first year college level course. It is rigorous where students learn the techniques and methodologies of genetic studies. High-level laboratory skills and techniques are incorporated into the laboratory experiences. The prerequisites are a year each of biology and chemistry. A college textbook is used as a resource. [Semester]</i>