

Smithville ISD
Senior - GPA-Exempt Options
Procedures and Informational Overview
2021-22 (Near-Final DRAFT)

Our high school students are encouraged to pursue their areas of interest and special talents to enrich their academic experience. In an effort to enhance these pursuits Smithville HS seniors may request courses and class periods that are GPA-exempt.

What are the available “GPA-exempt” options for SHS seniors 2021-22?

- Seniors may utilize up to **two(2)** full year GPA-exempt “options” during their **senior year**.
- **Option 1 - Student Assistant/Aide** - student works under the guidance of SISD employees to gain valuable work and life experiences; opportunities in the school office, library, various school-based programs; see counselor for information, details and an application
- **Option 2 - Late Start and/or Early Release** - student requests and is approved to arrive one period late and/or leave one period early to work on individual interests; see counselor for more information, details and an application
- **Option 3 - GPA-Exempt, pass/fail course** - pre-approved Tier 1 course taken by an eligible senior student; the student receives credit and passes the course, however, the grade is not included in the GPA, it is GPA-exempt; this increases opportunities for individual students to pursue their interests; see your counselor for more information, details, and an application

Option 3 Details:

Who is eligible to take a GPA-Exempt course in 2021-22?

- Seniors only; determined by the counselor’s office and credits

What courses may be requested and taken GPA-Exempt, “pass/fail”?

A senior may request any **Tier 1 elective course** be taken GPA-Exempt

How are grades handled in the GPA-Exempt course?

Eligible students(Seniors only) who apply, are approved and choose to enroll in a GPA-exempt, “pass/fail” course will receive:

- Numerical grade each grading period on the report card
- Actual numeric grade with a comment or mark indicating “GPA-exempt” on the Academic Achievement Record (transcript).
- Credit for the course(s)
- Exclusion of grade earned from the computation of their GPA

What are the performance standards for the students in these GPA-exempt courses?

- Students are expected to complete all assigned work in a GPA-exempt course including daily assignments, tests and semester exams, unless “exempt” from semester exam.
- Students are required to adhere to all attendance requirements
- Students are expected to be active participants in the class

How will the GPA-Exempt courses affect extra-curricular activities/eligibility?

The numerical grades earned in a GPA-exempt course will be used to determine eligibility for participation in all UIL or all school-sponsored activities.

What if a student “drops” an “exempt” course?

Students are expected to complete a full-year course for which a GPA exemption has been requested and granted. In extenuating circumstances, where a student is approved to drop a GPA-exempt course after the first semester is complete, the student will receive the first semester credit as GPA-exempt. However, the originally requested 1.0 GPA exemption is considered to be fully expended and count as one of the GPA-exemption options for the senior student.

How do students enroll in a GPA-Exempt course?

Students interested in taking one of the GPA-Exempt courses should:

- Discuss this option with their parents/guardians
- Set a meeting with their counselor to discuss the details and requirements
- Request the GPA-exempt course option application from your counselor
- Complete and return the signed application to the counselor on or before the 10th day of instruction (August 30th, 2021)
- GPA-Exempt course requests are made for yearlong, 1.0 credit courses.
- Once the senior student makes the decision to take a course as GPA-exempt, the decision is final and cannot be changed; extenuating circumstances may be considered at semester break; see counselor for more details
- Students enrolled in the full-year courses do not need to reapply for the second semester
- Students, including move-in students, who miss the deadline for application for the first semester, may apply for exemption for the second semester if they meet the criteria. Very limited exceptions will be made for the “second semester” of yearlong courses.

GPA-Exempt Course Request Quick View:

- Seniors only
- Maximum of 2 GPA-exempt options may be utilized during your senior year
- Yearlong courses; limited opportunities for extenuating circumstances at semester break
- Completed application submitted to counselor on or before the 10th day of instruction (Aug. 30th, 2021)

If you have any questions, needs for clarification or concerns regarding GPA-Exempt options during your senior year, the application process or the procedures, please contact the high school counselors for more information and a copy of the application.

High School Counselor Contact Information:

Cari Ulrich culrich@smithvilleisd.org 512-237-2451, ext. 6097

Reena Reese rreese@smithvilleisd.org 512-237-2451, ext. 6689

High School Principal Contact Information:

Tucker Copeland tcopeland@smithvilleisd.org 512-237-2451 ext. 6096