FAQs: COURSE SELECTION & PLACEMENT for RISING SOPHOMORES

1. How many years of a world language should a student take?
Currently there is no world language requirement at Newton North. However, most colleges have a minimum entrance requirement of 2 years of the same language at the high school level. Also, many colleges require 3 years of the same language at the high school level. Therefore, it is advisable for students to study a world language for at least 3 years at NNHS. The WL department recommends 4 years of study at NNHS to reach a higher level of proficiency in the chosen language of study. Students who continue their study through senior year also increase their opportunity to earn a Massachusetts State Seal of Biliteracy.

2. What courses are available to sophomores?
NNHS offers full programs from freshman to senior year in Chinese, French, Italian, Latin, and Spanish. Students who are not taking a language during their freshman year are advised to begin one during sophomore year. Students currently taking a language will proceed to the next level based on teacher recommendation. They may also begin the study of a second language if desired.

Many sophomores will be heading into third year courses, which mark the beginning of the honors sequence in world language. Enrollment in all courses, including the honors sequence, is based on teacher recommendation.

N.B. The honors program in Latin begins in 4th year.

3. What guidelines do teachers use for a recommendation into the honors sequence?
- intermediate low proficiency level in all linguistic skills (reading, writing, listening & speaking)
- strong synthesis & application skills (as demonstrated by a variety of assessments)
- consistent participation and achievement in the intermediate second year ACP course
- the capacity to be an independent, self-directed learner
- enthusiasm for communicating in the language
- love of reading (due to a marked emphasis on reading at in the honors sequence)

4. What guidelines do teachers use for recommendations in other curriculum levels?
Teachers will consider content knowledge, linguistic proficiency and achievement to determine whether a student will remain in his/her current curriculum level: College Prep or Advanced College Prep.

When a student demonstrates low or inconsistent achievement in an Advanced College Prep (ACP) course, a teacher may recommend him/her for placement in College Prep (CP). In making this determination, the teacher will consider the effort, motivation, and attendance of the student along with content knowledge and skills. In certain cases, it may be deemed more appropriate for students to repeat the ACP course rather than move to a CP course. This decision will be made in consultation with parents and the WL dept. chair.

5. What other considerations should a student make in deciding on his/her language course?
A student should consider her/his entire schedule relative to workload, including projected homework time. Students should seek a balanced schedule that allows time for extracurricular activities. Parents and students should discuss the student’s global schedule prior to registration for courses in March.

6. What should students or parents do if they have questions about a placement recommendation?
Prior to registration, teachers will take time to discuss the course sequence for the language, course expectations for the different curriculum levels, and guidelines for placement. They will also discuss their placement recommendation individually with students. If questions remain, parents should communicate directly with their child’s teacher prior to Verification Day (late March).