

FAQs
Secondary Science Curriculum

- 1. Student comes to us from another school district with Chemistry on the schedule, and fails at the semester. Student also has below average algebra ability. What does the student take for second semester science?**

Student could drop science and take Earth Science or Chemistry the following year (do not “mix” different sciences during the year).

- 2. Will APS still be offered in our district?**

APS is being phased out; earth science will replace it. However, due to specific credentialing issues needed for Earth Science, sites may not be able to completely phase out APS.

- 3. What correlation do you see between Biology grades and success in Chemistry? If a student has a B in Algebra but is failing Biology, what is the next level of science for these students?**

There is not a strong correlation between success in biology and success in chemistry in terms of subject matter. Chemistry is more mathematical problem solving, while Biology is conceptual and requires more memorization. There is, however, a stronger correlation between Algebra and Chemistry. If the student is having success with Algebra I, you should be able to place the student in Chemistry.

- 4. How should we determine which students to place in Earth Science versus Biology in the freshman year?**

Students whose goals are to go to a UC should definitely be placed in biology as freshman. This will fulfill the “d” requirement early in their high school career, and leave room in the junior and senior years to take upper division elective science courses, including Advanced Placement classes.

Students who may have limited English skills would also be better served by being placed into Earth Science. Earth Science is more concrete than conceptual, and, while still vocabulary dense, the vocabulary is not as advanced or unfamiliar as that in biology.

- Earth Science would be a great place to start AVID students. For many who are not sure of the college pathway that they are going to take, it will fulfill a “g” requirement for the UC system, allowing them to move forward to take their two “d” requirements in the following two years. The three years of science will make them more competitive for a UC admission. In terms of CSU, the Earth Science will fulfill the “d” physical science requirement until the 2010 school year.*

- 5. If a student fails a science course during the school year, can they make it up in summer school? Credit recovery?**

If a student fails a science course during the school year, you must ensure that he/she makes up the same class and the same semester that they had failed. For example, if the student failed first semester biology, they must take first semester biology in summer school. If they fail second semester earth science, they cannot take first semester earth science to get credit for the semester they failed. In addition, they may not take APS first OR second semester to make up for Earth Science credit. You can not mix and match classes. The courses are one year courses and cannot be taken a la carte.

If students are making up science courses in credit recovery, you MUST ensure that you provide 16 hours of lab coursework with a credentialed science teacher so that the student can receive UC/CSU credit. CVUSD only offers college preparatory coursework that has been approved by UC/CSU, and with that comes requirements of 16 hours minimum lab time for the year.