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HOME SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT PRIMER

This memo goes with the sample transcript that I am providing to any home schooler who is interested. Please feel free to share a copy of this transcript and these instructions with any home schooler. The transcript is a Microsoft Word document that will allow you to easily enter the information you desire. This is not a spreadsheet that will automatically calculate GPA and Unit totals. These calculations must be made separately as noted below.

I have created this transcript after viewing many transcripts that Covenant College receives. While any type of system will suit your needs, this represents one of my favorite formats for a concise and clear reporting of curriculum. Please note that this is a tool and just as with any other tool, you may modify it to the way that best fits you and your home school program. You will note the transcript is divided first by subject categories down the left margin and by class years and terms along the top of the grid. This gives a concise picture of the curriculum content by subject category. I have designed this in order to present all the information on the front of one 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper. There may be other issues that could and/or should be included in an addendum to accompany the transcript (e.g. running bibliography of resources by year, listing of extra-curricular activities).

I will start by describing the top section with Personal Information. I recommend including the full legal name exactly as shown on the student's social security card. This will be important when applying for any type of federal or state financial aid. For colleges to disburse federal aid, the student's social security number and full legal name must match with the social security administration records. I believe in the privacy of the social security number, but the federal government has approved the use of the SSN as a requirement for federal and state student aid. This information is also helpful to allow colleges to identify the correct student to associate with a transcript (which John J. Smith?). On the right side I have left a location to name your institution if you so desire. Naming your institution may be helpful when trying to obtain teacher's manuals from certain publishers. Specifically stating the graduation date and graduation GPA in the top right section allows a college to note that this is a final high school transcript. Covenant will use this graduation information as certification of eligibility for federal student aid having completed a high school program.

The middle grid section is where you will begin entering the content of the home school program. When possible, it is wise to utilize common course titles that would likely be found in other school systems. This allows colleges to easily discern the category into which these courses will fit. Note that each calendar year can be divided into two semesters such that a half-year course can be noted easily and separate grades can be

assigned to each semester. If you desire simply to assign one letter grade for the year, you could either include the same letter grade for both terms or feel free to modify the form to suit your purposes. Below are instructions on how to calculate the GPA for each year as well as how to calculate a cumulative GPA.

On the right side, the first section will allow you to designate results of tests by date, section and scores on each test completed such as the PSAT (October of 11th grade for eligibility in the National Merit Scholars), SAT and/or ACT (typically 11th or early 12th grade). Official results should also be sent directly from the test provider to the institution. The SAT result forms will include all attempts of the SAT tests by date. The ACT result forms will only list the individual testing date and not show a cumulative list of all attempts of the ACT test. If a home school diploma is not being completed before entering college, I recommend taking the ACT at least once. You may want to consider taking multiple tests as your scores may improve just by becoming familiar with the testing process and strategies. Testing strategies can make a difference on different tests. Incorrect answers have a negative impact on the scoring of the PSAT and SAT. Incorrect answers do not impact the ACT scoring, therefore guessing may improve your chances on the ACT.

The next section allows you to identify the grading scale used for your transcript. While there are a number of different methods that have been used over the years (e.g. letter grade, numerical and percentile), I would recommend that you consider using a straight 4.0 letter grade scale (see GPA below). Institutions will most likely convert other grading structures to their system for comparison purposes, however, you will raise fewer questions by utilizing a system that is commonly used in the secondary education market. Admission officers are looking for a well organized transcript to present the academic records. Allow your creativity to be expressed on the application essay, portfolio or addendum.

The last section allows you to make any brief comments that should be mentioned. An example could be taking a course by dual enrollment or perhaps if you had taken courses from another institution and are having them transferred onto this home school transcript. Note how I have listed 9th grade as having been completed at another institution since all transcript information should be combined to just one high school transcript. Any comments that require further declaration could be added to the addendum or be included in some type of formal letter from the principal, headmaster or teaching parent of the student.

Calculating Grade Point Average (GPA)

There are typically two GPA calculations reflected on a transcript. A yearly GPA (9th grade) and a cumulative GPA (combines multiple grades). Using a straight 4.0 letter grade scale, an 'A' is equal to 4 points, 'B' is equal to 3 points, etc.

A GPA is calculated by dividing the Total Quality Points for a year by the Total Quality Units. I consider a Quality Unit the same as a Carnegie Unit. A carnegie unit represents

the typical period of time for one academic years work in a single subject matter, commonly based on 36 weeks with 5 sessions per week of 50 minutes per session.

Total the number of units of 'A' grades, the number of 'B' grades, and on down. Multiply the number of units for each letter grade by the points for each letter grade to derive the Quality Points for that letter grade. Sum the column of Quality Points and the column of Quality Units and divide. See the example below that corresponds to the sample transcript.

To determine a Cumulative GPA (note 10th Grade Cumulative below), total the Quality Points and the Quality Units for 9th and 10th grade and then divide ($42.5 / 12.5 = 3.40$). DO NOT take the average of the 9th and 10th grade GPAs. Always recalculate using the total quality points and total units each time. I recommend using a two decimal point format for reporting GPA. For decimal place values beyond the hundredths place, you can either truncate (simply drop) or use standard rounding rules (e.g. if at least .005, round up to the next hundredth, see below).

		<u>9th Grade</u>		<u>10th Grade</u>	
<u>Grade</u>	<u>Pts.</u>	<u>Q Units</u>	<u>x Pts = Q Pts</u>	<u>QUnits</u>	<u>x Pts = Q Pts</u>
A	4.0	3.0	x 4.0 = 12.0	2.5	x 4.0 = 10.0
B	3.0	3.0	x 3.0 = 9.0	3.5	x 3.0 = 10.5
C	2.0	0	0	.5	x 2.0 = 1.0
D	1.0	0	0	0	0
F	0.0	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Yearly Totals		6.0 Units	21.0 Q Pts	6.5 Units	21.5 Q Pt

<u>GPA Calculations:</u>	<u>Q Pts / Q Units = GPA</u>
9 th Grade	$21.0 / 6.0 = 3.50$
10 th Grade	$21.5 / 6.5 = 3.31$ (3.30769 that I round up to 3.31)
10 th Grade Cumulative	$42.5 / 12.5 = 3.40$
11 th Grade	$26.5 / 7.0 = 3.54$
12 th Grade	$18.0 / 5.0 = 3.60$
High School Cumulative Grades 9-12	$87.0 / 24.5 = 3.55$

Please let me know if I can assist you in any way!!