



**BUFFALO STATE**  
The State University of New York

# Student & Parent Handbook

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COLLEGE ACCESS PROGRAM

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL STUDIES  
BUFFALO STATE UNIVERSITY

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Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians,

Welcome to the Buffalo State University College Access Program (CAP)! CAP allows qualified high school students to earn college credits at reduced fees for college-level courses taught right in their high schools. Congratulations on taking this important step toward your future college education!

CAP has grown consistently over the years, and we now have partnerships with 45 high schools across New York State. In the 2025-26 academic year, over 1,500 students received Buffalo State credit across more than 2,600 course enrollments.

Whether you are participating in CAP for the first time or returning for another year, we are excited to partner with you in bridging high school and higher education. CAP courses maintain the same academic rigor, quality, and learning outcomes as on-campus BSU courses, allowing students to build a real college transcript while still in high school. Taking advantage of these dual credit opportunities helps students save on future college costs, build confidence, and create meaningful pathways toward their future academic goals.

This handbook is designed as a practical guide for students and families. Inside, you will find important timelines, application requirements, payment guidelines, and credit transfer information. If you have questions that are not addressed in this guide, please contact the CAP Office at [cps@buffalostate.edu](mailto:cps@buffalostate.edu) or call 716-878-5907.

We look forward to working with you this year!

Sincerely,

**College Access Program Office Staff**

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## College Access Program Description

The College Access Program (CAP) is BSU's dual credit program. CAP allows qualified high school students to take Buffalo State University courses right in their high school classrooms, taught by university-approved teachers. Students who complete the course with a final grade of C or above earn college credit. Credits will be recorded on an official Buffalo State University transcript and can be used to pursue a degree at Buffalo State University or transferred to another institution. Every CAP offering is an official course from the BSU Course Catalog.

CAP is designed as a hybrid bridge between high school and higher education. Enrolled students complete college-level coursework within a familiar high school environment, allowing them to experience academic rigor with the structured support of high school educators.

The CAP Office is housed in the Continuing Professional Studies office at Buffalo State University and serves as the primary connection between high school and university. BSU faculty members work closely with approved high school instructors, called CAP Instructors, throughout the academic year to ensure all CAP courses maintain the same standards, rigor, and quality as on-campus classes, providing CAP students with an authentic collegiate experience.

## Benefits of Participation

- Earn concurrent high school and college credit.
- Course credit transfers one-to-one within the SUNY system and may transfer to private and out-of-state colleges and universities.
- Reduce the overall cost of college study.
- Lighten collegiate first-year course load, which may reduce stress during freshman year.
- Create time in your schedule for electives, internships, or other co-curricular activities.
- Experience college-level rigor without leaving your high school classroom.
- May complete a four-year degree in a shorter amount of time.

## Taking the Next Steps

It is important to understand that once you apply for a CAP course, you have started an official college transcript. The course(s) you take through CAP will become part of your permanent academic record. You may choose to continue your education at BSU or submit your BSU transcript to apply for transfer credit at another higher education institution.

We encourage you to discuss participation in the CAP program with your family, teachers, and school counselor. Your high school may also have specific eligibility requirements for CAP participation, so be sure to check with your teacher or counselor about local guidelines. Please carefully consider the tuition cost, workload, and information outlined in this handbook prior to applying.

## Banner IDs

The first time you fill out a CAP application, you will be assigned a BSU identification number known as your Banner ID. Your CAP Instructor will receive your assigned Banner ID once the CAP application window closes and rosters are finalized. Be sure to ask your instructor for your Banner ID and keep it in a safe place, as you will need this number if you request official transcripts from BSU.

## Application & Verification

Students complete an electronic application: <https://connect.buffalostate.edu/portal/cap-application>.

The application must be completed during the designated application period for your school, as shared with you by your CAP Instructor. Late submissions are not accepted.

If you are new to CAP, you must first create an account using a personal email address. If you apply at school and must use a school email, be sure to enter an alternate email address in the designated field. Upon graduation, you may lose access to your high school email account and may miss critical program information if no alternate is provided. When setting up your account for the first time, select your high school from the menu options.

After creating your account or logging in, select all courses you are currently taking for which you are seeking dual credit during this specific application period. For semester-based high schools, there are separate Fall and Spring application windows, so you will only apply for Spring courses when the Spring application opens. If your program requires you to take two or more high school courses to earn credit for a single college course, you should wait to apply until you are enrolled in the final high school course of that sequence. Because you can only submit one application per window, you must make sure to select every eligible course available to you on this single application. If a course you are taking is not listed, contact the CAP Office immediately. To add courses after submission, you or an authorized adult must contact the CAP Office before the application window closes.

In accordance with FERPA, student consent is required before BSU can share any account or academic information with parents. You may grant this permission by checking the designated box on the application and providing parent contact information.

Once the application is submitted, you will receive a confirmation email.

### *Verifications*

While the application window is open, the CAP Office sends weekly updates to your instructor with the names of students who have applied. Your instructor then reviews these rosters to verify program eligibility. Once this review is complete, you will receive an additional email notification confirming whether your course request was approved or denied for dual credit.

### *Application Timeline*

CAP operates on two distinct timelines based on whether your high school schedules dual-credit courses on a semester or full-year basis. At semester-based schools, courses run during either the Fall or Spring

term, or across the full academic year. At full-year schools, all offered courses run across the entire academic year.

If you are unsure of your school's schedule, check with your instructor or counselor early in the school year, or consult the [CAP website](#). Specific application and administrative deadlines for the current academic year are available on the CAP website and will also be shared directly by your instructor.

| Application             | Courses on Application | Timeline                      |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Semester School: Fall   | Fall and Full-Year     | Mid-October to Mid-November   |
| Full-Year School        | All Courses            | Early December to Mid-January |
| Semester School: Spring | Spring Courses Only    | Mid-March to Mid-April        |

## Program Fees

CAP program fee is \$270 per course, regardless of credit hours. Courses with a co-requisite, such as a lab, are bundled and billed as a single course. If your high school class is equivalent to more than one college course, you and your family can choose how many college courses to apply for based on your budget, with a program fee charged per individual college course.

A discounted rate of \$125 per course is available for students demonstrating economic need. To request this rate, you must upload documentation of household income directly within your CAP application.

Accepted documentation includes:

- Free and Reduced-Price Lunch award letters
- SNAP or TANF benefit letters
- Medicaid eligibility letters
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) statements
- A prior-year tax return (Form 1040)

Payment procedures depend on your school district:

**Family-Paid Fees:** If families in your district are responsible for tuition, you will complete the payment section directly within the CAP application at the time you apply.

**District-Covered Fees:** Some school districts use grants or external funding to cover CAP tuition. If your district covers tuition, a payment section will not appear on the CAP application, and you will be able to submit the application without payment. Your school will be invoiced directly after the application window closes. Check with your CAP Instructor or contact the CAP Office if you are unsure of your school's payment arrangement.

Because program fees are paid to the CAP Office and are not tuition paid to the college, we do not issue 1098-Ts.

## Registration Timeline & Grades

Students are officially registered for the college course in the BSU semester following the one in which the course was taken at the high school. Students in Fall term courses are registered in BSU’s Spring semester, while students in full-year and Spring term courses are registered in BSU’s Early Summer semester, which aligns with the end of the high school year.

To earn college credit, students must earn at least 73% in the high school course, which equates to a BSU grade of C. All CAP Instructors submit grades directly to the CAP Office, where they are converted to letter grades using the BSU grading scale and entered into the university system. Because of this conversion, your final CAP letter grade may differ slightly from your high school letter grade.

| Points                                                             | Grade |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 92-100                                                             | A     |
| 89-91                                                              | A-    |
| 86-88                                                              | B+    |
| 83-85                                                              | B     |
| 79-82                                                              | B-    |
| 76-81                                                              | C+    |
| 73-75                                                              | C     |
| <i>Students who earn below 73 will not receive college credit.</i> |       |

## Withdrawals & Refunds

Prior to withdrawing, please discuss your options with your high school teacher. A student who wishes to withdraw from the course must officially withdraw through their teacher by submitting an official withdrawal form. There will be no indication of withdrawal on the student’s permanent transcript. BSU will provide a fee refund only in documented, highly extenuating circumstances.

## End-of-Course Survey

BSU holds all courses to the same standard of rigor, whether they are taught on campus or in your high school classroom. To align with on-campus practices, BSU assesses the student experience in dual credit courses using the same survey taken by university students at the end of their course. Near the end of the dual credit course, CAP students will be asked to complete an anonymous “End-of-Course” survey. Your CAP Instructor will share the survey link with you, and all responses remain confidential, with results shared only with the CAP Instructor after the course ends.

## Transcripts & Transferring Credit

If you plan to attend another college or university, you must send an official transcript directly from BSU, as your high school transcript will not be sufficient for transfer credit. The receiving institution will evaluate your BSU transcript to determine how credits are applied. Transfer acceptance by other SUNY schools is typical, and General Education courses are guaranteed to transfer to all other SUNY institutions.

While transfer credit cannot be guaranteed for out-of-state or private institutions, credits earned with a grade of C or better are widely accepted by a broad range of colleges and universities. Students planning to attend another college are highly recommended to contact that institution's admissions office to inquire about their credit transfer policies prior to applying for a CAP course. If your prospective college requires a syllabus or additional course information, please contact the CAP Office.

Students can order an official transcript by following the instructions on the BSU Registrar's webpage (<https://registrar.buffalostate.edu/transcript-ordering>). Transcripts cost \$9 each, and you will need your Banner ID to complete the order. Official transcripts should be sent directly to the admissions office of the receiving higher education institution.

Transcripts containing Spring term or full-year courses are not available until the end of the BSU Summer semester in mid-August. Students may place an order prior to this date, but you must select the option to hold the transcript for summer grades to ensure all current coursework appears. Held orders will automatically process and send as soon as grades are finalized.

If you need documentation of your CAP courses prior to mid-August for Fall course scheduling, you may contact the CAP Office to request a course history letter, which will be emailed directly to you.

## Furthering Your Education at BSU

As a CAP student, we hope you will consider continuing your education at Buffalo State University for your undergraduate degree. To apply, visit <https://suny.buffalostate.edu/apply> to complete either the SUNY application or Common Application.

If you enroll at BSU after high school, be sure to tell your Academic Advisor at your first registration meeting that you have already earned BSU credit through CAP.

## Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level.