

HAC takes over course registration

by Rachel Melancon

On Friday Feb. 13, Home Access Center will allow all parents and students to enter in course selections for next year and view first semester transcripts. However, a lot more goes into creating Home Access Center than simply clicking a button.

Home Access Center, or HAC, became available for viewing to parents and students last year. HAC is the website used to enter student's course selection for the upcoming year.

Sarah Khan, the Winnetka Campus Student Records Specialist, explained that "last year only certain things were available for viewing." This year, grades, transcripts, and the ability to register for courses are some of the new features that have been added.

"It's really nice that I can see my transcript online," shared junior Alex Cook, "it's extremely helpful."

Since its release last year, HAC has come a long way. "This time last year we were just getting started, but next Tuesday we will have grades available," shared Gerald Munley, Assistant Principal for Administrative Services.

New Trier is not the only school that has begun making transcripts and course selection available online. Many schools are choosing to

use the internet to display grades so that students can easily access them. "We want the HAC to be a valuable resource," said Munley.

In previous years, students first had to write out long course codes on a sheet of paper, constantly erasing their mistakes as they formed their future schedules.

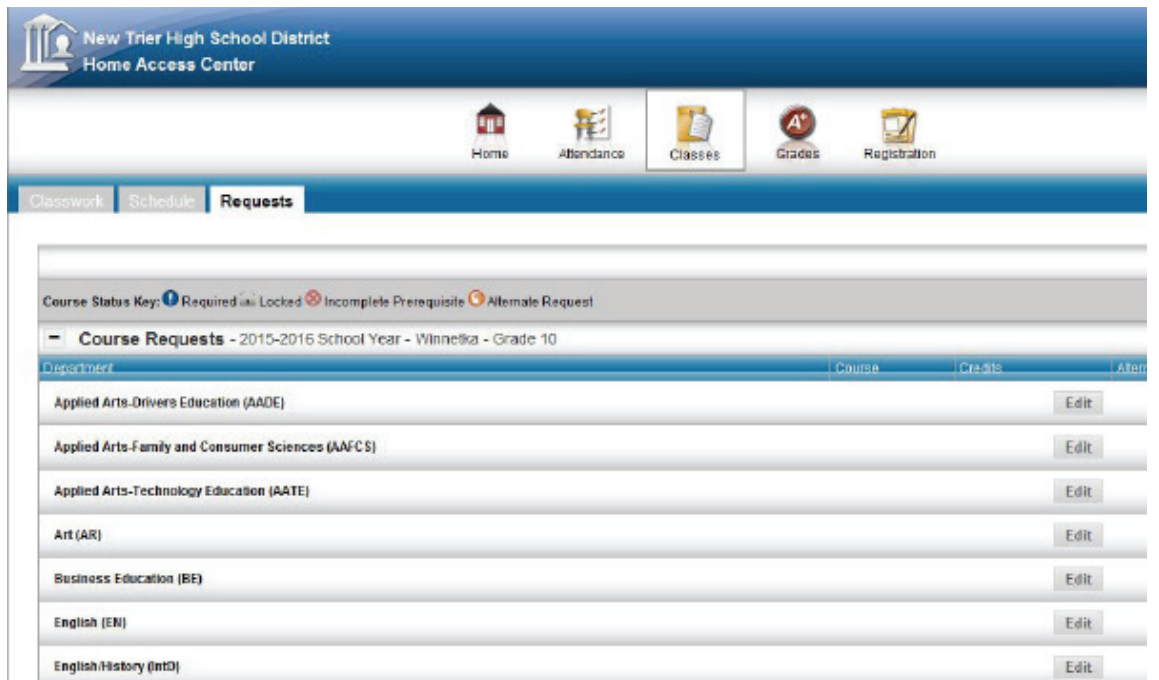
After, advisers had to manually enter their students' course selections. This aspect of class selection could be lengthy because advisers could only enter one student at a time.

This year, HAC is changing its format for submitting class selections. There will be a two week window to enter classes for the upcoming year.

"When going in to enter your classes," said Khan, "a checkbox will be available. All you are required to do is check the box next to the course you have selected."

In addition, HAC will only allow students to register for courses matching their previous class level. Therefore, students must still receive a teacher or parent recommendation to move up or down a course level. An adviser must input the changes into the system.

Nevertheless, a verification schedule is distributed during advisories to ensure that all courses entered are correct. If mistakes are still present, the advisers will be able to access HAC and make any final changes.



The Home Access Center, on the New Trier website, is now used for next year's online course selection | Patton

Once the courses have been approved, the school must calculate what classes will be held in the upcoming year. Munley explained that "the department chairs figure out how many classes are needed and the appropriate amount of staff. They then request to the school the number courses and classes needed. At times a class might need to be cut because not enough students signed up."

The HAC staff is planning on dispersing 2015-2016 schedules in

May, two months earlier than last year. These schedules will be passed out during advisory and can be viewed online.

"It can be hard to use at times and the website can get confusing," junior Cameron Coughlin explained, "but it is very efficient for the amount of information available."

Junior Gabby Sirazi also agreed. "I can easily make a mistake when entering my classes but it is more productive than having my adviser

submit it."

HAC is still rather new, and despite numerous test runs it is still a work in progress. "It is hard to make sure everything is entered is correctly. There is a lot of paperwork to keep track of," said Khan.

But as administrators gain more experience and receive more feedback, HAC will continue to improve. "We are always trying to improve it and see what will make HAC better," explained Khan.

College scholarships are a taxing but worthwhile process



Northwestern University is one of the many universities with unusual scholarship requirements | Northwestern.edu

by Camille Baer

With first semester ending soon, seniors are pushing forward with their stressful schedules full of college, college, and more college. How could it get worse? Try adding yet another crazy process: applying for scholarships.

The application process of most scholarships is infamous for being tedious and grueling, but all that hard work pays off in a tremendous way. Literally.

If it means a year's worth of books, half a semester, or possibly a full year of college would be paid

for, wouldn't it be worth a shot?

Junior Mary Daley is pro-scholarship and is going to give those applications her best attempt. "I think regardless of where we live [referring to the affluence of the North Shore and the higher socioeconomic classes around here] college is still a major investment."

Daley also believes that after working incredibly hard in high school, receiving a scholarship would not only be highly rewarding, but would help relieve some financial strain for her family, "Even if I could get money for books, that's something."

James Conroy, Post-High School Counseling Chair, encourages students not to get discouraged when it comes to applying for scholarships. "Students don't apply for scholarships as much as they could be," stated Conroy.

"You've got to look at the big picture. There are some students who apply for 25-30 and don't get any, and some who apply for 15-20 and get one or two. You've really got to be pushy about how you apply."

Conroy compared applying for scholarships to playing a game, "that you're playing it to win." He expressed it is important to advocate

for yourself and to be persistent. The moment you become discouraged, you allow yourself to start giving up.

Senior Celine Oberholzer, is applying for scholarships to avoid serious debt after college. "People sometimes are just simply lazy and don't want to fill out yet another application, or just assume they won't get one, so then they don't even try."

"The main scholarship I'm interested in included a weekend where I had to do interviews at The University of Indiana during a time span of two days," Oberholzer said. "The whole process was pretty intense."

Senior Sedrick Joseph, feels every student deserves a fair shot. "Colleges are so competitive nowadays, and every student is unique in their own way, so why not try and apply for a scholarship?" Joseph believes it can only help students, not hurt them.

Another interesting fact about scholarships is that the board or foundation providing that particular scholarship can decide how much money they're willing to donate, as well as what kind of person they want to receive it.

"Sometimes there are scholarships that are available one year, and then disappear the next, if the money doesn't come back," said Conroy.

Over the years, Conroy has come across a few unique scholarships that students have expressed interest in.

One that has returned a few

times is the tall scholarship. "I remember that the girl had to be at least over six feet tall," he said.

A lot of times the more interesting scholarships have to do with a person's ethnic background, such as a Lithuanian scholarship, but you have to be able to prove it, which is sometimes difficult.

Conroy is also amazed with how unique some scholarships can be.

"I can remember one where Northwestern University talked to us about a scholarship that was looking for any girl from a certain county, in a certain state, who had red hair, with a certain first name. They haven't used it in 25 years because no one is qualified for it." Usually the money just sits there, waiting for a particular student with all of those qualifications.

Some places can even require you to pay in order to apply for a scholarship. Conroy commented on this incredulously, "You should never pay a penny to find money. That's ridiculous, to maybe not get anything, but still pay to apply?"

Rachel Rohland, a freshman at Boston University, reflects on when her friends were applying for scholarships. She said the most awkward thing about scholarships is that money is such a personal issue.

"I hate how colleges don't know your backstory, or why you're applying for that scholarship. Money shouldn't define a person's academic ability or personality."