

DUAL CREDIT / DUAL ENROLLMENT

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Dual Enrollment?

Broadly defined as any situation in which an individual is concurrently enrolled at both a secondary (high school) and post-secondary (college or university) institution. However, the term is frequently used to distinguish from dual credit courses and used to identify situations in which a high school student enrolls in a college course for college credit only.

What is Dual Credit?

A dual credit course is a college course taken by a high school student for which the student is awarded both college and high school credit.

How are Dual Credit courses organized or offered?

Some courses are taught by qualified college faculty on the high school campus during regular school hours and are recognized by the college as meeting college requirements. Others are taught on the college campus by regular college faculty and are recognized by the high school district as meeting high school requirements.

Do all Dual Credit courses transfer for credit to all colleges and universities?

Current dual credit courses offered through cooperative agreements with Illinois community colleges generally fall into two broad categories: Career and Technical Education (CTE) or General Education (GE). General Education courses must be approved for credit under the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI). Such courses are accepted for credit by all IAI participating schools, which includes all Illinois public universities and some 94 other Illinois colleges and universities. CTE courses may or may not be accepted in transfer credit.

What are the benefits of Dual Credit courses?

- Facilitates the transition between high school and college
- Reduces the cost of a college education
- Reduces the time needed to complete a degree program
- Reduces high school drop out rates
- Prepares students for college work
- Reduces remediation
- Raises student motivation and aspiration
- Offers greater advanced credit opportunities in rural areas
- Increases post-secondary enrollment

Are there concerns about Dual Credit courses?

- Costs involved in programs and potential funding uncertainty
- Requires cooperation across sectors
- Questions of quality and rigor

- Capacity of high school faculty to provide college-level instruction
- Capacity of college faculty to adequately serve the needs of high school aged students
- Limited access for low-income and the academically underprepared student
- Little or no data to support claims of success

How does Dual Credit differ from Advanced Placement (AP)?

Both courses are taught at the college level. However, college credit is awarded for advanced placement courses only upon completion of a single assessment test. In addition, different cut scores are required by different institutions for credit in these courses. Dual credit courses earn college credit in the same manner as any other college course – through satisfactory performance on such assessments as quizzes, tests, and homework assignments.

In addition, dual credit courses are taught by qualified college faculty who hold the appropriate credentials in the subject matter. For instance, faculty teaching general education courses must hold at least a Master's degree in the subject area. High school AP courses do not have this requirement.

Who is eligible to take part in Dual Enrollment and Dual Credit programs?

In order to enroll in dual credit courses currently offered through cooperative agreements with Illinois community colleges, students must meet all admission requirements that would be applied to a student enrolling for the same course at the college.

What does it cost to enroll in a dual credit course?

To the student: Current dual credit opportunities are offered through cooperative agreements between individual high school and college districts. The agreements vary as to how much of the tuition and fees normally charged for the college course are passed on to the high school student.

To the high school: Although there is variation between institutions, funding primarily comes from state FTE reimbursements, and from Accelerated College Enrollment (ACE) grant funds.

To the college: Variation exists, but colleges primarily receive funding through state funds based on student enrollments, Accelerated College Enrollment (ACE) grant funds, and student tuition. Colleges may significantly reduce or waive tuition for these courses.

Does Illinois have any regulations in place concerning Dual Credit / Dual Enrollment?

Dual credit programs at community colleges follow administrative rules established by the Illinois Community College Board. Even under these rules, substantial variation exists as institutions have the flexibility to respond to local demands. Dual credit offered by private or proprietary institutions does not fall under these regulations.