

OWEAC Policy on Dual-Credit Programs [v. 6 Approved as amended 5-11-07]

I. The OWEAC maintains that dual-credit and dual-enrollment programs providing college credit to high school students must ensure college-level quality education.

A. Teachers and courses must meet minimum qualifications consistent with college instruction.

- 1) master's in discipline or with equivalent experience (OAR 589-007-0200 requires a "Master's degree for instructors of Lower Division Collegiate courses")
- 2) syllabi approved by college faculty based on faculty models
- 3) college document standards (e.g. conventions, format, word processing)

B. Students must meet minimum qualifications comparable to college students.

- 1) self-selection—students should want to do this
- 2) demonstrate ability and maturity through writing samples, teacher recommendations, and/or placement tests

C. Courses should be at the 100 level and should have content and structure equivalent to traditional college courses (above and beyond high school curriculum).

- 1) outcomes
- 2) delivery methods
- 3) book selection and reading difficulty
- 4) adult-level material consistent with college
- 5) enrollment caps at national standards of 20 or fewer for composition and 25 or less for discussion-based literature (NCTE)
- 6) dual-credit teachers paid to be "in the loop" regarding course equivalency

D. Because high school teachers are not protected by tenure and therefore may struggle to ensure quality, colleges must invest in a liaison from among program faculty who will approve, oversee, assess, and advocate for high quality dual-credit offerings. This liaison position should be reassigned for 1 course per term for every 6 teachers supervised. Funding for this position and the professional development necessary to ensure quality should be aligned with a percentage of the enrollment numbers or tuition dollars the dual-credit program generates. Position duties should include:

- vetting new hires
- monitoring enrollment caps
- overseeing and assessing curriculum
- performing regular site visits
- mentoring and providing workshops for professional development
- establishing regular, funded meetings and classroom visits between college and dual-credit teachers (e.g. in-person or via blog or teleconference)
- maintaining records of all students' placement and grades for accreditation purposes
- providing a statement for parents and guardians indicating that instructors will not alter mature and diverse course content and must abide by FERPA regulations against discussing student progress with others
- arranging for mandatory training of college faculty for reporting signs of abuse of students under 18 years of age

E. Students must abide by college deadlines for dropping or withdrawing from courses, and students failing college courses must have those failures indicated on transcripts (they cannot take just high school credit after the drop deadline).

F. Programs must maintain quality of dual-credit offerings through regular assessment, for example, by reviewing sample papers and/or establishing an exit exam scored holistically to monitor student performance.

II. The OWEAC recommends colleges address ethical considerations, such as the following:

A. Students may attempt to “double-dip” by having colleges count both AP and college credit generated by the same course.

B. Dual-credit courses may not be accepted by colleges in cases where no additional work is done to receive both high school and college credit. (This concern relates primarily to courses taught at the high school by college faculty.)

C. Dual-credit programs may exacerbate the abuse of part-time instructors.

III. OWEAC members are concerned about the effect such programming will have on students, teachers, and schools. The OWEAC will continue to examine, and encourages other groups to examine, the following questions:

A. What happens to the quality of high school education when the top students don’t attend regular courses?

B. What is high school’s purpose? Does dual credit erode the concept of childhood? Should everyone have a college degree?

C. Does dual-credit provide actual access for at-risk students?

D. Who pays for the college credit, and what happens to high schools when money is diverted from the district to do this? Is this just another version of money following the privileged students?

E. Who gets the FTE? Will dual credit result in the loss of high school jobs?

F. Does taking lower-level coursework in high school impact ability to integrate into college life?

IV. OWEAC members are concerned that dual-credit programs are difficult to assess because dual-credit courses are transcribed like any other college course, making them difficult to track. The OWEAC recommends colleges offering dual-credit programs develop a means of data collection and review in order to demonstrate dual-credit programs meet expectations.