



## **Recommendations For Improving And Expanding Dual Credit Programs**

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The Unified Education Enterprise (UEE) recommends to the Joint Boards of Education that the Dual Credit Task Force recommendations be endorsed and advocated for in the future.

Oregon's Dual Credit programs create the opportunity for our students to take college-level courses while still in high school. The Dual Credit Task Force found that, in 2005-06, one in seven Oregon juniors and seniors took advantage of this opportunity, saving some \$9 million in tuition. Through its pilot analysis of the subsequent academic performance of these students, the Task Force also found that "in most cases, dual credit students match or outperform their college-prepared counterparts in both community college and university settings."

Thus, Dual Credit is a viable option for qualified students to begin post secondary learning early, and it can contribute significantly to meeting Oregon's 40-40-20 goal. The Task Force recommends that

- Dual Credit programs be continued
- A common set of standards be used to govern these programs
- The pilot study of students' subsequent academic performance be institutionalized and carried out regularly.
- The pool of teachers qualified to participate in Dual Credit programs be expanded.

UEE endorses these proposals, which are described in more detail in the following documents:

1. Letter from the Dual Credit Task Force
2. Policy option package written by the Task Force
3. Pilot analysis of students' subsequent academic success (Executive Summary).

This information needs to be shared at all campuses with faculty and administrators. UEE, through the Dual Credit Task Force, is committed to monitoring, improving, and expanding this accelerated option for high school students.



April 30, 2008

To: Members of the Unified Education Enterprise  
From: Members of the Dual Credit Task Force  
Re: Dual Credit in Oregon

Dual Credit, in the broadest sense, allows students to earn both high school and college credit for the same class. Dual credit is known by various names around the state (e.g., “College Now,” “College Credit Now,” “Advanced College Credit,” “Challenge Program”, etc.).

Over the past 30 years, dual credit programs have grown substantially. Initially, the community college programs were specialized for career and technical education (CTE). In 2005-06, 7,656 students were enrolled for a total of 33,129 credits in CTE courses. Since the early 1980s, community colleges have also sponsored dual credit programs that offer lower-division academic courses that transfer to colleges and universities. Four OUS institutions sponsor dual credit academic programs, as well. In 2005-06, 9,267 students in Oregon high schools received 85,625 credits for community college academic courses, and another 2,760 students received 23,288 credits for OUS courses. These statistics indicate that dual credit academic courses currently serve at least one in seven Oregon high school students (14 percent).

Just like tuition and fees, charges to students for dual credit vary among the colleges and universities. However, a conservative estimate is that, in 2005-06, students and their parents saved themselves about \$2.0 million by taking dual credit CTE courses, about \$5.1 million by taking community college dual credit academic courses, and about \$2.1 million by taking OUS dual credit courses.

On January 30, 2007, UEE reviewed the “Policy Governing Accelerated Learning.” “Oregon has many options for students to obtain post-secondary education while still in high school and these excellent programs constitute an important way to strengthen preparation for college and the workforce. They also have the potential to keep our top high school graduates in Oregon. The ‘Running Start’ program in Washington accomplishes this and is well-known and admired nationally. To assure the same quality and attract the attention that Oregon’s programs deserve, policies governing their operation and quality need to be widely understood and embraced.”

The UEE formed a Dual Credit Task Force that first met on May 25, 2007. It has met several times since. The Dual Credit Task Force has produced a study, “*Dual Credit in Oregon; An Analysis of Students Taking Dual Credit in High School in 2005-06 and Subsequent Performance in a College Setting*,” which reviews how well students do in the next course in a sequence if they took the preceding course as a dual credit high school course. Overall, the results show that these students do well.

The Task Force believes that although the current dual credit programs are good, their potential for the state of Oregon has not been fully realized. Since these programs ought to contribute measurably to meeting the goals of 40-40-20, the Dual Credit Task Force has written a Policy Option Package for strengthening and expanding options for dual credit in Oregon.

## **Dual Credit Policy Recommendations And 2009-2011 Joint Board Budget Request**

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**Title:** Dual Credit Programs in the State of Oregon

*Policy Initiative:*

Among priorities identified by the Joint Boards of Education (State Board of Higher Education and State Board of Education) are strengthening and expanding options for accelerated learning in high schools (particularly the ability to obtain college credit), providing broader access to these programs, and finding ways to deliver seamless education. A Dual Credit Task Force was formed to review one accelerated learning option, Dual Credit, and to advise on the future direction of these programs in Oregon.

*Description:*

In Oregon's high schools, there are three primary vehicles for high school students to earn college credit at the high school site—the College Board's Advanced Placement Program (AP), the International Baccalaureate Program (IB), and Dual Credit (or Concurrent Enrollment) programs. The name "Dual Credit" is frequently applied to a range of programs that vary in design, but this proposal focuses on a single kind of program, which is also the most common one in Oregon. In this program, a dual credit course is one that is taught in a high school, by a high school teacher, in partnership with a community college or an Oregon University System (OUS) institution. Successful completion counts as credit for both high school and college/university work. Dual Credit courses permit considerable monetary saving for students and parents since state support typically reduces the cost of the courses to a small fee, well below the actual cost of teaching them (tuition).

Over the past 30 years, Dual Credit programs have grown substantially. Initially, the community college programs were specialized for career and technical education (CTE) and, in 2005-06, 7,656 students were enrolled for a total of 33,129 credits in CTE courses. Since the early 1980s, community colleges have also sponsored Dual Credit programs that offer lower-division academic courses that transfer to colleges and universities. Four OUS institutions sponsor Dual Credit academic programs, as well. In 2005-06, 9,267 students in Oregon high schools received 85,625 credits for community college academic courses and another 2,760 students received 23,288 credits for OUS courses. These statistics indicate that Dual Credit academic courses currently serve at least one in seven Oregon high school students (14 percent).

The strengths of Dual Credit programs include:

- Instructors with depth in their field and credentials that meet college requirements for teaching in the field.
- Multiple and varied assessments to evaluate learning (quizzes, mid-terms, papers, a final, etc.).

- Rigor and exposure to college-level expectations that smooth the transition to college. These courses are the first exposure many students have to college-level learning and the program encourages students' connection to campus in a variety of ways—from faculty visits to their classrooms to campus visits by classes. Students also have access to services such as computer accounts, the library with its online research databases, and on-campus activities.
- Joint professional development opportunities for high school instructors and college and university faculty (workshops and training).
- Close relationships and alignment between high school and postsecondary institutions.
- Tuition savings for the family.

Dual Credit Task Force:

The UEE appointed a Task Force to review the Dual Credit model in Oregon. The Task Force reviewed the size and geographical distribution of these programs, as well as the standards and procedures currently governing them. It found that Oregon Dual Credit programs serve all of the state. The procedures and processes vary but are consistent with those of the sponsoring college or university. The committee also considered model programs in other states and the national standards required by NACEP (National Alliance for Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships). NACEP was founded by the premier dual credit program, Syracuse University's "Project Advance," to address the need for quality standards that are nationally recognized. At present, there are four states that have either adopted the standards statewide or required NACEP accreditation of individual programs; these are Utah, Minnesota, Indiana, and Kansas.

To determine the effectiveness of Dual Credit courses, the Task Force, in collaboration with community college and OUS data analysts, piloted a study of students' subsequent academic performance. Specifically, performance in the next related course by students who took Dual Credit courses in high school was compared with that by students who took the same courses in a community college or university. The aggregate results indicate that Dual Credit courses are effective, since students taking them performed at least as well as students who took all of their course work at a college or university. The results of the study do not provide data on individual courses, high schools, or programs.

Recommended Actions:

The Task Force believes that, although the current Dual Credit programs are good, their potential for the state of Oregon has not been fully realized. Since these programs ought to contribute measurably to meeting the goals of 40-40-20, the Dual Credit Task Force recommends the following:

1. Continue the Dual Credit programs described here since they are a strong accelerated learning option.
2. Ask colleges, universities, and high school partners to consider the adoption of a common set of standards for all Dual Credit programs in Oregon. At present, each program is governed by locally-understood standards but there is a fair amount of

variation across the state. The Task Force was impressed by the standards set out by the National Alliance for Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) and noted that the existing standards for a number of Oregon Dual Credit programs resemble them. Therefore, the Task Force recommends holding a Dual Credit Summit this coming summer (2008) to allow teams of administrators and faculty from high schools and postsecondary institutions, to consider the wisdom of adopting common standards, with the NACEP standards as a specific example.

3. The pilot study of subsequent academic performance should become a regular annual or biennial part of System-level data analysis. This will ensure the continued high quality of Dual Credit programs, and will be essential for a move toward NACEP-like standards. It is also suggested that focused studies of additional courses—or course-patterns—be completed periodically and that OUS graduate programs in education, public policy, or other relevant areas collaborate to lead innovation in the design and scope of the project. Portland State University will consider contributing to such a collaboration.
4. Expand the pool of qualified teachers. To encourage teachers to pursue the training needed to teach at the postsecondary level (typically, a master's degree in the discipline), a fund covering approximately one-third of the cost should be available. The individual teacher, the high school, and the postsecondary institution would combine resources to pay the remaining two-thirds. To estimate the dollar amount that should be contributed by the fund, the Task Force looked at the cost of completing the 32 graduate credit hours (eight courses of four credits each) needed for a master's degree at PSU's current tuition rate (\$1,469 for one four-credit course). At this rate, the total cost is  $8 \times \$1,469 = \$11,752$ ; one-third of this cost is **\$3,917**.

Total allocated state funds for 100 high school teachers:

**\$391,700** annually  
**\$783,400** for the biennium.

**TOTAL REQUEST: \$391,700** annually or **\$783,466** for the biennium

Attachment: Dual Credit in Oregon: An Analysis of Students taking Dual Credit in high School in 2005-06 with Subsequent Performance in College