

NACEP Conference
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Reaching More Students with Concurrent Enrollment

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“There is no difference between career tech as college and UT [University of Texas] as college. They’re all going to college, and they feel like they’re going to college. What do we do for the bottom 25%? That’s where, as educators, it’s our responsibility to find a solution. They’re somebody’s child. If I’m number 188 of 188 students, I still go home to somebody. That student deserves an opportunity.”

– Superintendent of Hidalgo Independent School District

College and Career Ready?

- Emphasis tends to be on *College*, as in “college for all”
- College = 4-year
- Focus on liberal arts courses
- Misleads students that the only path to success is through a bachelor’s degree

Who is left out? Are we doing a disservice?

James Rosenbaum, Jennifer Stephan, Janet Rosenbaum. *Beyond One-Size-Fits-All College Dreams*. American Educator: Fall 2010.

Benefits of CEP

- Enhances rigor of HS curricula
- Introduces students to college expectations within supportive HS environment
- Increases educational aspirations: students visualize themselves as college material
- Creates positive spillover effects throughout partner schools
- Increases college-going and persistence rates
- *Builds strong regional networks among secondary and postsecondary educators, and even industry*
- *Increases relevance and engagement, to the extent that courses are connected to careers and interests*

= Seamless, successful transition from high school to college & careers

Who has access?

- Selectivity – a double-edged sword
 - Minimum eligibility requirements (minimum GPA, class standing, standardized test scores, HS recommendation)
 - Help to identify students with a proven track record, but may prevent or discourage other interested students from enrolling
- Researchers suggest that *all students can benefit* from participating
 - Improve college preparation; provide motivation to take rigorous courses and early warning about academic readiness
 - Increase college-going and persistence rates, and college GPA
 - The benefits of CE are *particularly strong for males, low-income students, and academically underprepared students*
 - Students with lower HS grades benefited more than higher GPA students

Accelerated Learning Options: Moving the Needle on Access and Success. Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE): 2006.

http://www.wiche.edu/Policy/Accelerated_Learning/reports.asp

The Postsecondary Achievement of Participants in Dual Enrollment: An Analysis of Student Outcomes in Two States. Community College Research Center: 2007.

What to do... Some guiding principles

- All students should have the opportunity to challenge themselves in an area of strength and explore their interests.
- Students don't know what they don't know. We need to show them!
 - Explicitly teach college success skills – goal setting, time management, study and reading strategies,
- Remember, it's not just about the “content”...
 - Can influence a student's approach to learning; develop habits, attitudes, ways of thinking associated with success; connect school with their lives
- Build course sequences
 - Pre-college or “lower” skill courses; align pre-requisites with CE courses; career pathways
- Student support systems are essential

What does TC3 offer for CE?

- Traditional Liberal Arts/Gen Ed courses plus...
- Accounting, Business, including Computer Apps
- Art and Music
- College Success Skills
- Health and Fitness
- Career & Technical Courses
 - Computer Technology (programming, support, network design)
 - Digital Media
 - Drafting/CAD and Digital Electronics
 - Early Childhood
 - Food Prep
- Will soon offer College Reading and Personal Finance classes
- Schools working on aligning their non-CE Math and English courses to our pre-college courses

Going outside the liberal arts box

- Relevance → increased engagement
- Career exploration
- Jumpstart on careers/major
- Introduces professional terminology and networking
- Courses may have minimal academic skill requirements
- Builds confidence, college success skills
- College credits may motivate students to continue their education and develop academic skills

How many are earning CE credit?

- Over 70% of high school seniors from our local counties graduate with college credit through TC3 CollegeNow
 - Three districts helped approximately 95% of their graduates earn CE credit!
- The schools with the highest percentages offer courses in a broad variety of areas including college success, business, communications, technology, health, art & music
- CE students are less likely to need remediation in college

Are we reaching underserved students?

CEP graduates from Class of 2010:

- 34.6% have parents who didn't attend college
 - 92% became the first generation in their family to attend college
- 42.1% were low income (Pell-eligible)
 - 94% went on to college

"I loved this course and it really helped to further my horizons. I realize the many career opportunities that I have now." - TST BOCES student

"...it gave me more of an incentive to do well in class. It was also one of the first classes that taught me that how to learn for my own personal pride instead of completing a course for a specific letter grade. The dual credit program was more challenging for me than most of my other classes and I believe that it was overall in my benefit to have taken it." - TC3 student

"After taking Accounting 101 in high school through Concurrent Enrollment I decided that is what I want my major to be." - TC3 student

"Even if a student doesn't move on to college, they still have the fact that they took a couple of courses through TC3 on their resume." - SUNY Brockport student

What do our CE graduates say?

- Respondents from the Class of 2010 agreed that CEP courses:
 - increased the strength of their high school curriculum (90%),
 - better prepared them academically for college (78%),
 - provided them a more realistic understanding of college expectations (73%),
 - boosted their confidence regarding their ability to succeed in college (75%),
 - improved their writing abilities (63%), study habits (65%), and time management skills (69%).

“The courses not only offered necessary knowledge that prepared me for... my [current] college courses, but also offered the optimal opportunity for my building the more fundamental skills needed to succeed in college.” – SUNY Oswego student

“I learned so many things that I needed to know about college. After going to the CollegeNow concurrent classes, I have become more organized, my time management improved... which gave me more confidence.” - TC3 student

“They are a great way to prepare students for college life. Although my study habits still had to change when I went into college, the courses I took in high school helped me realize a little about harder college course work.” – RIT student

What about the impact on schools?

- Higher expectations
 - More students are perceived as capable of higher levels of achievement
 - Counselors changed how they present college options to students
 - Instructors established higher standards for students
 - “Prerequisite” courses became more rigorous
- Better understanding of college
 - Counselors said CE increased their knowledge of college requirements
 - Instructors developed a better understanding of college expectations within their discipline

“Our students are benefiting from the challenge of these courses. They are gaining confidence in their abilities and are seeing college as something that they can be achieved and not just dreamed about.” – Counselor

From Impact Survey of 2007-08

- More engaged instructors
 - CE instructors found their jobs more satisfying and learned new ideas and developments in their discipline
- Positive impact on students
 - Renewed interest by students in elective courses
 - Students took more challenging courses, including in senior year
 - Students gained in-depth knowledge of subject area
 - Many students considered, for the first time, attending college

“Our school is becoming known for the quality of our programs. I have seen a shift in internal perceptions--where there used to be a belief among some students that they were at a disadvantage for college admission and scholarships simply because they were from this school, now I see more of a generalized belief that students from this school can be very competitive. Our menu of concurrent enrollment courses... is a critical component of this positive shift.” – Counselor

“I strongly believe in Dual Credit courses and think that they should be offered as often, if not more than AP courses. AP courses depend completely on a single test whereas a Dual Credit course is much more realistic of what a college course represents.” - Roberts Wesleyan College student

Institutional Concerns

- Adjunct requirements
 - Different for liberal arts and career/technical/college success courses
- Training/professional development for teachers
 - More in-depth training often needed
 - Permit HS teachers take the courses
- Additional supplies/technology may be needed
- Perkins Title I funding can support efforts
 - Grant goals: develop “career pathways”; improve postsecondary transition; provide support services
- Some object to letting “lower-achieving” students enroll in CE