

# DUAL CREDIT IN THE ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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Dual credit provides many advantages: (1) allows academically qualified high school students to earn credits that count toward a high school diploma and a college degree, (2) can help students make the transition from high school to college, (3) saves students and parents money, and (4) has the potential to shorten the time to a college degree or certificate.

*Dual Enrollment versus Dual Credit.* Through dual enrollment, academically qualified high school students concurrently participate in college-level courses and receive *only* college credit. High school credit may or may not be awarded. Through dual credit, academically qualified high school students participate in college-level courses and receive *both* high school and college credit upon completion. Dual credit courses can be taught in the high school, on the campus of a postsecondary institution, or another location, online, or through distance learning. Dual credit standards and course content are college level. Dual credit instructors meet community college faculty requirements ([http://www.iccb.org/pdf/career\\_tech/postsecondary/dcsummit08/statepolicies.ppt#310,10,Models of Dual Credit](http://www.iccb.org/pdf/career_tech/postsecondary/dcsummit08/statepolicies.ppt#310,10,Models of Dual Credit)).

**Administrative Rules of the Illinois Community College Board** relating to dual credit are found in Section 1501.507. All state laws, regulations, and accreditation standards that apply at the college apply to dual credit courses. Instructors of dual credit are selected, employed, and evaluated by the college and have appropriate credentials and teaching competencies. Dual credit students are generally in the junior or senior year of high school and have appropriate academic qualifications and motivation for a college-level course. Students meet course prerequisites and placement testing when applicable. Courses are transfer courses articulated with senior institutions in the state or first-year courses from associate in applied science degree programs, and course outlines are the same as used for courses offered on campus and other sites. Whether a course is offered for both high school and college credit or not is determined at the secondary level (<http://www.iccb.org/pdf/manuals/systemrules10-08.pdf>).

The **Dual Credit Quality Act** (Public Act 96-0194) was approved by the Governor on August 10, 2009, and became effective January 1, 2010. The Act requires the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) to develop policies regarding dual credit. Dual credit instructors teaching credit, college-level courses must meet the same requirements as on-campus faculty, and dual credit instructors teaching career and technical education courses must have appropriate credentials and teaching competencies. Students must meet academic criteria including placement tests and be assessed similarly to students in traditional courses. Course content and learning outcomes must be the same as credit-bearing college courses. High school instructors must be provided with orientation, assessment methods, and administrative requirements before teaching dual credit courses, and they must be able to participate in all activities available to adjunct faculty. Institutions will

annually report to either ICCB or IBHE, and data will be included in a statewide longitudinal data system (<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=1079&GAID=10&GA=96&DocTypeID=HB&LegID=42757&SessionID=76>).

A **Dual Credit Summit** was held in October 2008. General session topics included College Readiness/Success, Historical Perspective of Dual Credit, Strategies to Facilitate Transitions from Secondary to Postsecondary Education and Secondary Perspective of Dual Credit. Breakout session topics included Academic Integrity, Current State Policy Discussion, and NACEP Accreditation (<http://www.iccb.org/pdf/agendas/2008/agenbknov08.pdf> and <http://www.iccb.org/dcsummit2.html> ).

A series of regional **Dual Credit Drive in Workshops** were held in spring/fall 2009 to help colleges, high schools, and other stakeholders gain a more complete understanding of state dual credit policies. The events focused on related *ICCB Administrative Rules* and a synopsis of the new Dual Credit Quality Act. Additionally, materials were disseminated to participants on how to structure regional stakeholder conferences to ensure that local partners are engaged and dual credit courses meet student needs. Participants included community college chief academic officers, college and high school dual credit coordinators, education for employment system directors, and others interested in learning more about the administration of dual credit in Illinois.

A major source of data for the analysis is the Illinois Community College System's SU/SR submissions. The course enrollment and resources data are used to determine enrollment (credit hour) based funding and facilities utilization (class size). The SU data is used to determine allocations of the credit hour formula driven grant. The SU contains the credit hours associated with courses that are paid with 50 percent or more from unrestricted funds. The SR contains the credit hours associated with courses that are paid with more than 50 percent from restricted funds. Both the SU and SR data are used to determine allocations of all other grants that have an allocation based on credit hours.

### **Gender and Racial/Ethnicity Characteristics of High School Students Taking Community College Courses**

Nearly equal proportions of male (49.8 percent) and female (50.2 percent) students took community college courses in fiscal year 2008. Eight in ten high school students who took community college courses in fiscal year 2008 were White (79.4 percent). Latino students accounted for 9.1 percent, and African American students accounted for 8.1 percent. Asian (2.3 percent), Multiracial (1.0 percent), and Native American (0.1 percent) represented a small portion of students (Illinois State Board of Education, [http://www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/hs\\_college\\_courses0708.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/research/pdfs/hs_college_courses0708.pdf)).

### **Enrollment Location of Dual Credit Courses**

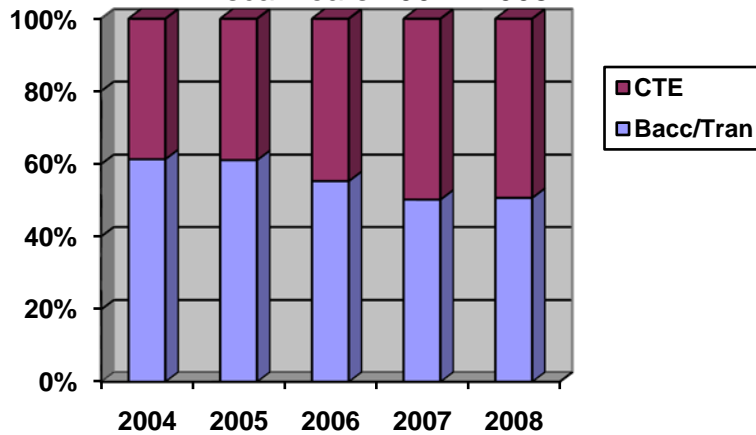
The vast majority of dual credit courses took place on secondary campuses in fiscal year 2008 (79.2 percent). Dual credit courses on the community college campus

represented 17.1 percent and online enrollments just 1.7 percent (<http://www.iccb.org/pdf/agendas/2008/agenbknov08.pdf>).

### Dual Credit Course Counts and Student Enrollments

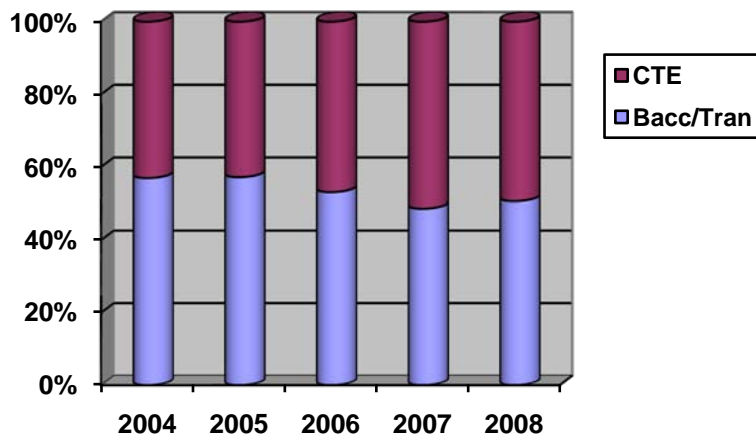
Dual credit course counts and enrollment data are organized by PCS: Overall, Baccalaureate/Transfer Education, and Career and Technical Education. Figures 1 and 12 depict dual credit course counts and enrollments by PCS in fiscal year 2008. Table 1 highlights course counts, enrollments, and average class size by PCS. Dual credit courses and enrollments were nearly evenly split between Transfer and Career and Technical Education.

Figure 1. Dual Credit Course Count  
Fiscal Years 2004 - 2008



Source: ICCB SU/SR Records

Figure 2. Dual Credit Student Enrollment  
Fiscal Years 2004 - 2008



Source: ICCB SU/SR Records

| Table 1<br>Dual Credit Course Count, Student Enrollment, and Average Class Size<br>Summary Table |                |                |                |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|  | Latest Results | Percent Change | Percent Change |
|  | 2008           | 1-Year         | 5-Year         |
| <b>Overall State Totals</b>  |                |                |                |
| Number of Courses  | 8,438          | 12.8%          | 70.9%          |
| Number of Students   | 75,989         | 15.1%          | 93.6%          |
| Average Class Size   | 9.0            | 2.0%           | 13.3%          |
| <b>Baccalaureate/Transfer Education</b>  |                |                |                |
| Number of Courses  | 4,276          | 13.8%          | 41.1%          |
| Number of Students   | 38,447         | 19.8%          | 72.1%          |
| Average Class Size   | 9.0            | 5.2%           | 21.9%          |
| <b>Career and Technical Education</b>  |                |                |                |
| Number of Courses  | 4,162          | 11.7%          | 118.2%         |
| Number of Students   | 37,542         | 10.6%          | 121.9%         |
| Average Class Size   | 9.0            | -1.0%          | 1.7%           |

SOURCE: ICCB SU/SR Records

## Overall

In fiscal year 2008, Illinois community colleges offered 8,438 dual credit courses, which is a 12.8 percent increase over 2007 (N = 7,481) and 70.9 percent over 2004 (N = 4,937). Total dual credit enrollments were 75,989 in fiscal year 2008, which is a 15.1 percent increase over 2007 (N = 66,038) and a 93.6 percent increase over 2004 (N = 39,257). Average dual credit class size was 9.0 students in fiscal year 2008, which is a 2.0 percent increase from 2007 and a 13.3 percent increase from 2004.

Enrollments in the ten largest courses accounted for 46.0 percent (N = 34,967) of all dual credit enrollments in fiscal year 2008. The ten highest enrollments overall by CIP code in fiscal year 2008 were in English Composition (23.0401; N = 9,231), Office Occupations and Clerical Services (52.0408; N = 5,319), Business Technology (52.0407; N = 3,517), Mathematics (27.0101; N = 2,797), Psychology (42.0101; N = 2,772), Speech (23.1001; N = 2,477), Administrative Assistant (52.0401; N = 2,352), Spanish (16.0905; N = 2,292), History (54.0101; N = 2,150) and Welding Technology (48.0508; N = 2,060). Eight programs experienced increases from 2007, and all ten programs saw increases from 2004. Enrollment in Speech increased 135.5 percent from 2007 (N = 1,052) and 299.5 percent over 2004 (N = 620).

## Baccalaureate/Transfer

Illinois community colleges offered 4,276 Baccalaureate/Transfer (PCS 11) dual credit courses in fiscal year 2008, which was 50.7 percent of all dual credit courses offered. This is a one-year increase of 13.8 percent (N = 3,756) and a five-year increase of 41.1 percent (N = 3,030). Enrollments increased to 38,447 in fiscal year 2008, an increase of 19.8 percent from 2007 (N = 32,102) and 72.1 percent from 2004 (N = 22,342). Enrollments in this area accounted for 50.6 percent of all dual credit enrollments. The highest enrollments in transfer courses included English Composition (23.0401; N =

9,144), Mathematics (27.0101; N = 2,797), Psychology (42.0101; N = 2,768), Speech (23.1001; N = 2,471), and Spanish (16.0905; N = 2,292). Average class size was 9.0 in 2008.

### **Career and Technical Education**

Career and Technical Education (PCS 12) dual credit courses and enrollments have more than doubled in the last five years. In fiscal year 2008, there were 37,542 enrollments in 4,162 courses, an average class size of 9.0. Dual credit courses in Career and Technical Education accounted for 49.3 percent of all dual credit courses offered in fiscal year 2008, and Career and Technical enrollments accounted for 49.4 percent of all dual credit enrollments. The number of courses offered increased 11.7 percent from 2007 (N = 3,725) and 118.2 percent from 2004 (N = 1,907). Enrollments increased 10.6 percent over 2007 (N = 33,936) and 121.9 percent over 2004 (N = 16,915). Between fiscal years 2006 to 2008, enrollments averaged 32,742 and courses averaged 3,641. The highest enrollments in this area were in Office Occupations and Clerical Services (52.0408; N = 5,319), Business Technology (52.0407; N = 3,517), Administrative Assistant (52.0401; N = 2,352), Welding Technology (48.0508; N = 2,060), and Nurse/Nursing Assistant (51.1614; N = 1,649).

### **Promising Practices**

The Illinois Community College Chief Student Services Officers surveyed the community colleges throughout the state (<http://www.icccsso.org/>). The following is a summary of some of the promising practices.

**Danville Area Community College** offers four different dual enrollment opportunities for high school juniors and seniors. Through Traditional Dual Credit, students can complete transfer courses and career and technical courses. College Express allows students to earn up to 16 hours in Career and Technical courses while providing opportunities for career exploration. Project Lead the Way encourages interest in engineering by providing students the opportunity to complete up to 14 hours in pre-engineering courses. Students in the Middle College may earn up to 24 hours in program-specific and elective courses. Tuition is free for the students in all four programs; fees and books are free for students in the College Express, Project Lead the Way, and the Middle College programs. Home school students and out-of-district students may participate in the Traditional Dual Credit program, but they must pay the tuition.

**Illinois Central College** partnered with Midland High School to offer the Midland Fast Start program. Admission to the program is competitive as a maximum of ten students are admitted. Eligibility requirements include enrollment in grade twelve, under 21 years of age, appropriate levels on placement tests, waive all FERPA rights, completion of college orientation session, meetings with high school and college counselors three times per semester, maintaining a 2.0 average, completion of a two-year education plan, essay, interview process, no more than five absences the previous school year,

and no discipline problems the previous year. Students are responsible for all tuition, lab fees, textbooks, and transportation. Students attend classes on the ICC campus.

The Dunham Early College Academy at **Waubensee Community College** serves 50 high school juniors per cohort. The students take two general education dual credit courses per semester for a total of 24 semester hours completed by the time they graduate high school. The students in the program are allocated a laptop, which they keep upon graduation. The program dedicates Friday afternoons to “Learning Enhancement” activities such as ACT prep, study skills, and career counseling. In addition, **Waubensee Community College** has a UNIQUE Partnership with the Aurora Public Art Commission (APAC) to all Aurora high schools. UNIQUE is a civic organization dedicated to the presentation of public art in all its forms. The APAC has facilitated the offering of after school, dual credit studio art classes since fall 2003.

### Next Steps

What are some next steps to assure that dual credit coursework serves secondary students and remains aligned with the expectations of postsecondary education?

- Collaborate with colleagues in secondary education to access high school student records through a secure FERPA compliant process to more precisely track dual credit student outcomes and progress.
- Continue the dialogue and discussion with front line professionals in secondary and postsecondary education to assure that standards are understood and applied appropriately and uniformly.
- Enhance data reporting on dual credit faculty who are primarily employed at secondary schools and also teach dual credit courses. Community colleges have been diligent in assessing the preparation of individuals who are employed by high schools and also teach college-level courses. Community colleges are encouraged to take the next step and document the academic preparation and experience of high school faculty who teach dual credit courses in their electronic data submissions to the state (e.g., ICCB Faculty, Staff and Salary submissions, ICCB Course Enrollment and Resources SU\SR records). The level of detail reported should parallel what is required of community college faculty.
- Work with four-year higher education partners to assure that dual credit courses are accepted as college-level credits and applied toward baccalaureate degree requirements. The syllabus/content of the dual credit instruction is established by the postsecondary institution and the qualifications of faculty meet or exceed college minimums. Hence, the credits earned through dual credit should transfer seamlessly across postsecondary institutions.

Quality dual credit instruction offers the opportunity for a “win-win” arrangement for all parties: students gain access to challenging college-level coursework to make their

junior and senior years of high school more productive, students can prove to others and themselves that they have the ability to succeed in college, college costs can be reduced for parents and students, time to degree at college can be shortened, schools and colleges are reimbursed for their contributions to the student's education, and high school and college faculty dialogue can contribute to a better alignment between secondary and postsecondary education. Continuing to collaborate with educational partners to offer academically qualified high school juniors and seniors rigorous college coursework while they are still in high school holds promise for smoothing transitions between Illinois secondary and postsecondary education and preparing more individuals for high skills, high wage careers that can support a middle class lifestyle. At the national and state level, policy makers are calling for more college graduates and dual credit instruction is a key ingredient as higher education strives to meet these elevated expectations through the delivery of high quality courses and programs.

See the full report for more information:

[http://www.iccb.state.il.us/pdf/reports/dualcreditrpt\\_January2010.pdf](http://www.iccb.state.il.us/pdf/reports/dualcreditrpt_January2010.pdf)

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