

ARE YOU READY FOR WHAT'S NEXT?

Is Dual Credit the Right Option for Me?

We applaud your decision to consider enhancing your high school education and get a jump on your postsecondary career by taking dual credit. However, it is important you consider whether this approach is the best one for you. The following are some things you may want to consider as you contemplate your decision.



POSITIVES TO CONSIDER:

- Dual credit is an opportunity to receive high school and college credit simultaneously, allowing a student to get an idea of what college coursework will be like.
- Dual credit might also allow you the opportunity to take coursework that is not available at your local high school. Courses can also give you a closer look at your areas of interest. A dual credit course will allow you to explore that interest in more depth and breadth.
- If Advanced Placement (AP) courses are not available at your high school, dual credit could allow for another opportunity to study college-level coursework.
- Dual credit provides the opportunity to get a “jump start” on college. Taking coursework while in high school will reduce the number of credits you may be required to take while in college. This “jump start” can provide a way to take the upper level course earlier on in your college studies. These upper level courses tend to be slightly more difficult but are often more rewarding and interesting, for they are in your field of study. These upper level classes also have smaller class sizes which can facilitate better participation, gained knowledge, and student-teacher interaction.



CHALLENGES TO CONSIDER:

- The courses are college-level so expectations may be much higher. Students are expected to put in more time outside of class, as well as greater amounts of assigned readings, in-depth class discussion, and complete and detailed knowledge of areas being studied. At the university level, a general rule of 2-3 hours of outside work is required for every hour in lecture. This rule can be applied to dual-credit courses as well. If you have trouble organizing your time or working independently, you may want to have a conversation with your school counselor about whether or not this is the right time for you to take a course.
- If you fail a dual credit course, you may not be allowed to register for future dual-credit courses while in high school. Be sure you know your local school's policy regarding dual credit. Due to this rule, it is important that you know the postsecondary institutions drop and withdrawal policies and dates. These dates determine when you one can withdraw and still receive a refund and at what point one is still able to drop the class even without a refund. Although this rule may seem intimidating, students must realize that this is a big change from regular high school classes. Students can expect an initial difficulty with this adjustment, but must be honest with oneself if the class is too difficult and a withdrawal or drop is necessary.
- Attendance is critical and many courses have a strict attendance policy. If you are actively involved in extra-curricular activities that might detract from your ability to attend class, perhaps you should further consider whether you can successfully meet the attendance requirements. Remember that this is a serious commitment of your time and energy. You must be realistic about the time you have available as well as the time required for the course.