

# Statewide Higher Education Policy for Delivery and Transferability of “Dual Enrollment” Coursework Offered in High Schools

## **Preface**

The term “Dual Enrollment” as used in this document refers *exclusively* to sections of courses offered through an institution of higher education in a cooperative arrangement with a local school district (i.e., Local Education Agency or LEA). *The purpose of these courses is to allow high school students who have mastered or nearly mastered the relevant high school curriculum and who are capable of college-level work that is, by definition, more advanced than the regular high school curriculum to earn simultaneously both high school credit toward graduation from high school and academic course credit toward either an associate or baccalaureate degree* in an institution of higher education. In such an arrangement, when the student successfully completes the course, the institution of higher education formally posts the earned credit to a student’s transcript for the collegiate experience, and the high school posts the earned credit to a student’s transcript for the secondary experience.

Dual enrollment courses have been a feature in South Carolina high schools for at least a decade. The purpose of these courses is to provide an avenue through which highly talented high school youth can earn college credit while simultaneously meeting high school graduation requirements by taking courses in the high school setting that are offered by an institution of higher education. In this model both the high school and the college provider earn funding through the state, while the student pays tuition to the college.

Promoters of dual enrollment maintain that it helps students earn credit for a small number of courses prior to entry into college and assists the student to graduate earlier than (s)he might otherwise have done. At the same time, it assists the state to bring more productive workers into the economy at a faster rate. On the other hand, the mechanism for selecting faculty to teach dual enrollment course sections, the state’s full payment to both a LEA and an institution of higher education for offering the same course, and a perceived need for more definitive data on the value-added dimension for students who have completed these courses have been raised as concerns about this practice.

## **I. Purposes of Dual Enrollment**

A. Dual enrollment courses should be made available only to those who have mastered or nearly mastered the complete high school curriculum and who are

capable of college-level coursework which, by definition, is more advanced than the regular high school curriculum provides.

B. Policy guidelines contained herein apply to general education courses offered through South Carolina's two- and four-year public institutions of higher education and technical education courses offered by the technical colleges and, in a very few instances, by four-year public institutions. **These Guidelines do not cover "Advanced Placement" courses or International Baccalaureate courses, which are alternative methods (and which require adequate performance on either national or international standardized examinations) for high school students to earn both high school and college credit.**

## **II. Student Eligibility**

A. Public institutions of higher education offering dual enrollment course sections must require that students wishing to enroll in such course sections meet one of the following criteria:

a.1. For course sections in four-year institutions and two-year regional campuses of the University of South Carolina, a student must have at least a 3.0 grade point average (on a 4.0 scale) and the recommendation of the high school principal or his/her designee;

a.2. For course sections in technical colleges, a student must meet the same requirements for individual courses as other college students and must have the recommendation of the high school principal, his/her designee or the designee of the governing school association.

B. Dual enrollment should be limited to junior and senior students in a high school. Documented exceptions may be made for freshman or sophomore students at the request of the high school principal, his or her designee, or the designee of the governing school association. Such documentation demonstrating exceptional ability to undertake college-level coursework shall be retained in the student's college file.

C. An individual college or university may establish additional criteria for admission into courses.

## **III. Structure and Administration of Dual Enrollment Offerings**

A. Dual enrollment course sections must be comparable in academic content and expected outcomes, syllabus, textbook(s), teaching methodologies, and assessment strategies to the particular course offerings delivered elsewhere by the providing higher education institution..

B. Courses must be approved for dual enrollment status by the institution's chief academic officer, or his/her designee.

C. The chief academic officer of the providing college/university, or his/her designee, will be responsible for selecting and evaluating all dual-enrollment faculty, using Southern Association of Colleges and Schools college-level criteria as minimal requirements for teaching these sections.

D. The chief academic officer, or his/her designee, must ensure standards of student evaluation and faculty evaluation in the dual enrollment course sections comparable to those required of other sections of the same courses.

E. All students enrolled in a college course offered for dual enrollment must be enrolled in the class for college credit, i.e., students in a single class cannot have the option to receive either high school or college credit.

F. Students enrolled in dual enrollment courses must be guaranteed convenient geographic and electronic access to student and academic support comparable to what is accorded on-campus students, including access to library resources. Students in dual enrollment courses also must have reasonable access to the course instructor outside regular classroom hours either in person, via phone, or electronically.

G. Institutions shall cooperate with each other in providing dual enrollment courses in a particular geographic area.

#### **IV. Faculty Eligibility and Support**

A. The appropriate higher education institution's full-time teaching faculty and the chief academic officer, or his/her designee, of the offering higher education institution shall assure that any faculty member teaching in dual enrollment offerings meets all relevant SACS criteria.

B. Orientation and evaluation of instructors teaching dual enrollment course sections rests with the appropriate academic department of the respective institution of higher education. The chief academic officer, or his/her designee, shall assure consistency and comparability of both orientation and evaluation across the institution.

C. Dual enrollment instructors must participate in the expected, relevant professional development and evaluation activities of the offering institution of higher education.

D. For purposes of assuring comparability of dual enrollment offerings with other institutional offerings, academic departments must provide instructors of dual enrollment course sections with support services, including a designated on-campus faculty liaison.

E. Whether the course is offered by traditional means or by distance learning technology, the providing higher education institution must provide evaluation and supervision of dual enrollment faculty members in the high schools. Traditionally-delivered dual enrollment coursework should only be offered within reasonable commuting distance of the offering institution to facilitate on-site evaluation and supervision.

F. The higher education institution must demonstrate clear control of each dual enrollment course, to include control of the faculty either through a direct employment contract or through a statement signed by the faculty agreeing to comply with all college course requirements.

#### **V. Assessing Student Learning**

A. The same methods of assessment should characterize dual enrollment courses in relationship to on-campus and other offerings of the same level and subject matter to assure quality and comparability.

B. The college faculty in the relevant department must approve both formative and summative assessment strategies and tools.

The chief academic officer of the institution of higher education offering the course is responsible for the review of student performance prior to the continuation of the course and the instructor in subsequent semesters.

#### **VI. Limitations on Credit Earned and Transferability of Credit**

A. Dual enrollment offerings are meant to enrich the academic experience of high school students who have mastered or substantially mastered the secondary school content of the curriculum in certain subject areas. The number of college-level courses completed in these dual enrollment offerings will vary according to the student's ability and work ethic.

B. Credit earned by satisfactory completion of dual enrollment courses will transfer to other public institutions in South Carolina provided that

- b.1. for general education coursework, dual enrollment courses have been selected from the List of Transferable Courses in the Statewide Transfer and Articulation Policy.
  - b.2. for technical education courses the student enrolls in a technical college after high school which allows for such a course to be counted toward an associate degree, diploma, or certificate.
- C. Course credit transfer to public institutions in South Carolina for dual enrollment courses not covered by either b.1 or b.2 above must be articulated directly by the student with the receiving higher education institution. Such articulation should take place prior to enrolling in the course in high school.
- D. Prior to course registration, an institution offering a dual enrollment course shall advise students in writing that it is the student's responsibility to contact and receive written assurance from any nonpublic institution in South Carolina or any public or private institution outside South Carolina of that institution's willingness to accept a dual enrollment course toward degree requirements.

## **VII. Demonstration of Policy Compliance and Reporting**

- A. Each institution shall develop an annual report on dual enrollment offerings that demonstrates compliance with these policy and procedure guidelines for each dual enrollment course offered to high school students.
- B. This annual report shall be submitted to the Division of Academic Affairs and Licensing of the Commission on Higher Education by September of each year for the prior academic year. Each technical college shall send its annual report to the State Technical College System office which shall assemble a summary report for the technical college system and transmit it and the 16 institutional reports to the CHE.
- C. The Commission on Higher Education, in consultation with its Advisory Committee on Academic Programs, shall annually provide the standardized format for the institutional reports.
- D. The Commission shall issue annually a report on dual enrollment offerings of the prior year by public institutions of higher education in South Carolina.

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