



# Dual Enrollment: An Instructor's Perspective

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## Abstract

This paper addresses common arguments for and against dual enrollment from an instructor's perspective. Teaching college classes in a high school setting can present challenges for both students and their instructors; the paper focuses on frequent issues that occur and proposes solutions to ease the transition process. Evidence is also presented to answer the criticism that high school students are unprepared for college work; results from several dual enrollment Economics courses confirm that these students can not only succeed at the college level while still in high school, but in many cases outperform students in the traditional classroom.

## Introduction

The Economics Department of Auburn University Montgomery has been offering dual enrollment classes for five years. The programme offers classes at high schools in three counties, serving approximately 100 students, some by distance learning. I am currently one of two faculty members who instruct in the programme. All teachers in our department's programme, past or present, have had Master's Degrees in Economics or the equivalent and have also taught as adjunct or full-time instructors at the University before joining the dual enrollment programme. In this paper, I will give special attention to the differences in teaching a dual enrollment versus a traditional course, both from the standpoint of administration and instructors. While some of these issues have been previously discussed, most notably by Martell, Navin and Sullivan (2006), I will remark on administrative issues such as location, staffing and course standards as well as issues concerning grading, technology and distance learning that have not been thoroughly discussed in previous literature. Lastly, I will address concerns about student preparedness and ability to succeed in college courses with specific evidence from my own university's programme.

## History of dual enrollment programmes

In recent years, there has been tremendous growth in dual enrollment programmes. The National Center for Educational Statistics reports (2005) that in the academic year 2002–2003, 98% of public two-year institutions and 77% of public four-year institutions had high school students taking college courses for credit on their campuses. Overall, 680,000 high school students in 47 states were taking college courses for credit, 84% of these as part of a dual enrollment programme. In dual enrollment programmes high school students, typically in their senior or last year of high school, enroll in college courses for credit. The courses offered in the programme are usually lower level courses that satisfy basic education requirements. Students attend regular courses alongside university students on campus or, as is most often the case, attend special sections of the course that are offered on their high school campus as part of the high school curriculum. Although high school teachers sometimes do teach in the dual enrollment programme, the courses are usually taught by college faculty. Dual enrollment programmes are also often known as dual credit programmes, because as students enrolled in both high school and college, participants receive credit at both the university and high school levels for the course. Unlike Advanced Placement (AP) classes, where students receive college credit for advanced level high school courses only after making an acceptable score on the course exit exam, college credit is awarded to all dual enrollment students who pass the class. In our programme students were required to pay college tuition for the courses, although many programmes waive tuition for high school students. Whether tuition is charged is a decision that is usually made by the college offering the programme, but in some cases state law dictates whether students will pay for the course.

Begun in the 1970s as the result of a Carnegie Commission report, dual enrollment has traditionally always meant high school students taking college courses for simultaneous high school and college credit whether on campus, at their high school or via distance learning. Recent expansions of the programme have also come to include middle colleges, where high schools are integrated onto college campuses, and early college high schools, such as those funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, where high school students earn both a high school diploma and an associate's degree in a four- to five-year span. Typically targeting underachievers and future first generation college students, these early college programmes reach populations that have been underserved by traditional dual enrollment programmes. Many students enter the programmes to eliminate 'core curriculum' subjects such as English, Math, Political Science and History, but the programme has now grown to include vocational and technical education, as well as business topics such as Economics.

## Advantages of dual enrollment

Because most states do not charge tuition for the programme, its advantages are clear: students can earn up to a year of college credit free of charge, lessening the financial burden of college. Because the courses are offered during the high school years, they also lessen the time needed to complete a degree. A study by Hans Andrews (2004) evaluating several dual enrollment programmes showed that students who participated had improved college outcomes. Students given greater access to information about the college experience and who have gained confidence in their academic abilities at the college level are more likely to attend college. Middle and early college programmes have been proven to be successful in leading students who might not otherwise considered college a viable option to enroll in higher education (Hugo, 2001; Martinez and Martinez, 2006). By offering a 'sneak peek' of the college experience, dual enrollment programmes help students come to college with a better understanding of what will be expected of them, and perhaps also reduce the need for remedial classes. By offering advanced courses that challenge high school seniors, dual enrollment eases concerns of 'senioritis' and may prevent the senior year of high school from becoming what Secretary of Education Richard Riley described as a 'lost opportunity' (as cited in Koszuru and Bolton, 2005).

For colleges and universities, benefits extend beyond increased enrollment and tuition revenues; dual enrollment also serves as an excellent recruiting and public relations tool. For community colleges and smaller schools, this is a chance to reach high achievers who may not have considered such schools. Many dual enrollment students in the AUM programme subsequently enrolled in our university, often on scholarship. At Illinois Valley Community College, surveys of past participants in their dual enrollment programme cited an improved image of the college after attending there (Marshall and Andrews, 2002), a perception probably shared with others.

## Criticisms of dual enrollment

While increasing in popularity, the programme is not without its critics. Concerns centre on the perception that the quality of instruction and rigour of the courses, particularly if taught by high school teachers on high school campuses, is not comparable to the equivalent college course. In programmes where tuition is charged, some feel access is denied to lower income students. Students who find themselves unexpectedly unprepared for the rigour of college courses may be left with a transcript that reflects poorly on their academic achievement. Dougan (2005) reported from her own dual enrollment experience that when high school students are placed into a regular college courses, they perform poorly and their immaturity and lack of life experience diminished the experience for the entire

class. Resistance is sometimes met at the high school level when bright students are taken from honours classes to participate in the programme (ECS, 2007).

Dual enrollment courses have also been attacked not only for lacking the rigour of regular college courses, but for being nothing more than 'cash cows' for universities and colleges (Gehring, 2001). Yet many studies present evidence to the contrary. According to the Florida Dept of Education, students who participate in dual enrollment programmes attend college more frequently, graduate from community colleges at greater rates, and do just as well in subsequent university courses (Windham, 2006). This has been found particularly to be the case in majority–minority high schools, which have traditionally been the least likely to offer such programmes (Hugo, 2001; Martinez and Martinez, 2006; Krueger, 2006). A Department of Education study showed that a quarter of students who eventually earned a graduate degree had earned nine credits by exam or Dual Enrollment, a figure ten times the proportion of those who did not receive degrees (Krueger, 2006). In Washington's successful 'Running Start' dual enrollment programme, subsequent college GPAs for students who transferred to the University of Washington following participation in the programme averaged 3.14, and these students completed more credits than non-participants (Krueger, 2006). While it is probable that most students who elect to take dual enrollment courses already have plans for college, and indeed many take the course for the transferable credits (Martell, Navin and Sullivan, 2006), evidence from majority–minority school and graduate programmes suggests that the early exposure to college level work may indeed have an influence on future college success.

## Administrative concerns

### *Location*

A key issue of dual enrollment programmes is where the classes will be held. Most people would assume that teaching these classes on the college campus itself would be most convenient, and indeed, this arrangement is most cost efficient. (Martell, Navin and Sullivan, 2006). For two reasons, I find this a poor choice. The time periods when classes are taught rarely coincide at both the college and the high school. Students attending college classes on a college schedule may, with travel time, have to miss two of their high school class periods, which is often impractical. There is also the issue of liability involving teenage drivers. Students will of course feel more comfortable in their familiar high school environment, and a class with only other high school students is less intimidating for students taking college courses for the first time.

### *Staffing*

One of the key criticisms of the programme is that classes are 'watered down', or high school versions of college classes. If regular high school teachers are teaching the classes, they are seen as being less qualified than a professor. In our programme, instructors were required to meet standards for adjunct faculty in our University, which means 18 semester hours of Economics at the graduate level. I do not see why high school teachers who meet this requirement would not also be qualified to teach the courses; many already are adjuncts. Teachers who participate in the AP programme receive extra training which may also qualify them for teaching. Currently, the fastest growing type of dual enrollment programmes are ones that use high school teachers who are certified to teach college-level courses at their high schools (Gehring, 2001).

### *Cost*

The majority of dual enrollment programmes provide the courses at no cost to the students. In many cases where courses are provided tuition free, both the high schools and the universities are paid for the students from state educational funds, a process criticized as 'double dipping' (Meyer, 2004). Even programmes that charge tuition usually waive any additional fees, allowing students to pay only for credit hours. This brings a legitimate concern that in cases where tuition is required, lower income students will be denied access to the programme. Because our programme charged tuition (fees were waived), students in one school I taught who received course credit on a weighted scale (4 points for a B, 5 points for an A) were accused of 'buying' their GPA. To make the programme more equitable, scholarships should be available to ease these concerns and avoid the appearance of dual enrollment being an exclusive club. The idea of paying for school and the attending 'sticker shock' many parents feel is a barrier in itself to participation in the programme. The added cost of books also may make the programme unreachable. One possible solution to lower these costs is to use a customised textbook or an edition available online at a discount. Other instructors did not use a textbook at all, and online course support could also substitute for textbook purchases if cost is a significant barrier to participation; however, this may raise concerns that the course is not equivalent to the comparable college course.

### *Admissions criteria*

Our programme required that students applying for admission to the programme have a minimum 3.0 GPA and a 20 ACT score. These standards were higher than our admission criteria for regular students. For the younger students, I found that those just meeting the standards usually did not perform well. Some of these problems

appeared to stem from the lack of rigour in some high school courses; where this is a problem, students with above average GPAs may face difficulties tackling college work. In my experience with these above average students, I found that many were able to excel throughout high school without acquiring the study skills necessary for college. For these students, dual enrollment provides a valuable service by giving them a preview of what will be required of them at the college level, avoiding a first semester surprise in college.

### *Course standards*

The criticism that dual enrollment courses are 'watered down' versions of regular college courses is widespread (Meyer, 2004). Students are enrolling in college, and by all accounts, should be receiving a college course. One problem for dual enrollment teachers, especially those who teach in the fall term, is the pressure from students who have not yet made final college plans (and may still be in scholarship consideration), to weaken course requirements or offer extra credit to improve student grades. Students often face the harsh reality that excelling at the high school level does not always guarantee college success, particularly if a high school does not have rigorous standards. In fact, dual enrollment economics students surveyed in the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE) programme overwhelmingly agreed that dual enrollment courses were more difficult and demanded higher standards than their high school courses. (Martell, Navin and Sullivan, 2006). Students may become emotional when they believe their GPA will be negatively affected. I always remind them that this is a college course. It is not unusual for students to tell me they received their lowest grade ever on a test in my course. Usually after the first test, an adjustment is made, when students realise that the study habits of high school are not adequate for college. In my experience, high achieving students often lack study skills, since they rarely have had to use them. Study tools such as posting notes, practice quizzes and PowerPoint slides on course web support programs such as WebCT is a good way to alleviate this problem.

In order to maintain the integrity of the programme, it is clear that courses should not be modified into a 'high school' and college version. I used the same textbook, syllabus and grading standards for my DE and regular students, a requirement also used to ensure quality in other successful programmes such as the programme serving around 4,000 students at Syracuse University (Gehring, 2001), and the programme at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (Martell, Navin and Sullivan, 2006). The only modification made was that Microeconomics chapters were covered in detail for students taking Macroeconomics, since they had never before taken an economics course, and were also required to satisfy the high school state

core requirements. These chapters mainly dealt with supply and demand analysis, and were generally the ones most difficult for students. The only syllabus modification I made for the high school group was to include homework; the students not only needed practice, but homework is also expected at the high school level. Extra credit was offered in the same manner and for the same value as my regular classes, although dual enrollment students were much more likely to complete it, which improved many grades and compensated for typically very low first test grades as students learned to adjust to more difficult material and a higher level of expectations.

### *Mixed classroom*

A frequent argument made against dual enrollment programmes, made most notably by Carol Dougan (2005) based on community college dual enrollment classes that she taught, is that students are unprepared, immature, and bring down the level of discussion, lessening the experience for all in the classroom. A large maturity gap does exist between 17 and 18 year olds and their 19- and 20-year-old counterparts who would be taking these classes as sophomores in college. Yet in my experience, the dual enrollment students were more eager to generate class discussion than traditional students, a phenomenon that may come about because in contrast to a college course, most of the students in a high school class know each other and would therefore feel more open in expressing their opinions. (Martell, Navin and Sullivan, 2006). While at times they did show a naiveté and limited worldview, this was more than compensated for by their eagerness to learn. On the other hand, sleeping in class, talking and working on other assignments was much more prevalent in my high school classes. Teachers must also be mindful of the youthfulness of high school seniors when making jokes and framing examples. I often found that something easily understood by 20 year olds was easily misunderstood by the high school group. The more professional relationship that a college professor has with their students compared to a high school teacher, who takes a more 'pastoral role' (Martell, Navin and Sullivan, 2006) and is often seen as a buddy, may be seen as coldness by the high school crowd, and a special effort has to be made to bridge this distance.

Particularly in a business class where financial matters dominate many discussions, the understanding of the world that high school seniors have differs much from that of a college sophomore. While about half of all teenagers work, not having been out on their own precludes them from some level of understanding of economic issues, yet I found these problems to be minor. The differences in maturity are no different from what I have seen in freshman classes where there are wide age ranges and older students may be annoyed by the attitudes of young

freshmen, especially when working in groups. In classes such as these, young freshmen are sometimes intimidated by older students; students who have not yet learned the decorum of a college class would be less prompted to act up to gain attention if they are in their familiar high school settings. In an article describing a successful middle college programme, English teacher Jane Koszuru advocated classes containing high school students only as this allowed her to assign age-appropriate writing prompts. As she articulated well, students sometimes need the permission to 'just be sixteen' (Koszuru and Bolton, 2005).

### *Schedules*

High schools and universities will not have the same semester schedules. High school semesters usually begin before university semesters start and university courses usually end earlier. This means instructors will have to begin the course before classes begin on campus, and due to deadlines concerning grades, often have to end the semester before the high school year has ended. Students may have difficulty understanding these issues at first. School holidays and breaks must also be taken into account. Asking students to attend classes during break is usually unreasonable, and if courses are taught at the high school, facilities will be closed during this time period. Observing both high school and university holidays will take too much time away from the course. Because familiarity and routine both give high school students the security they need, following the high school schedule as closely as possible is preferred, even if this means that instructors may teach more weeks than their counterparts. Due to the significant schedule differences and the sharp distinctions between the high school and college classroom environments, a high level of commitment to the programme is almost a prerequisite for dual enrollment instructors (Martell, Navin and Sullivan, 2006).

### *Issues for instructors*

#### *The high school setting*

Those new to dual enrollment may initially be frustrated by the peculiarities of the high school system. Class is often interrupted by announcements, assemblies, club outings, fire drills, and particularly for seniors, graduation events. Morning announcements may be lengthy and take up significant class time. The key is flexibility. In some schools, I was treated as a member of the regular faculty, and was required to sign in and out, make announcements, provide hall duty, and report attendance to the office. For some, this may be seen as an affront to their professionalism, but instructors in dual enrollment programmes should be prepared for school administrations that may see you this way. On the other hand, not being seen as an 'outsider' leads to greater trust between students and teacher. A school

that encouraged my attendance at extracurricular activities, including graduation, provided me with a unique opportunity to get to know my students in a way not always possible at my university, where the majority of the students are commuters.

### *Technology*

Technology is a significant issue since it varies so widely from school to school. The technology I have encountered has ranged from state of the art distance learning labs that allow course delivery by computer, document camera, Smartboard, and video and DVD, to stand-alone classrooms equipped only with a whiteboard and overhead projector. In distance learning situations that are so dependent on technology, glitches are bound to occur. At times the connection failed and one class would be excluded, or it would take significant time to make the connection. Fax machines were used for communication instead of e-mail in some school systems due to technical difficulties and in some cases, teacher preference. Class delivery by PowerPoint would be unfeasible for some classes because the technology was not available. Classes were frequently held in a teacher's classroom during their planning period, and naturally that teacher will be accessing the computer during that time.

With today's students so plugged into the Web, students are often assumed to be more tech savvy and comfortable with computers than in college classrooms, where students may span many age groups. I found that this was not always the case, and when giving an online assignment, I discovered that not all students had access to technology at home and that access at school is typically much more limited than it would be on a college campus. The lack of college-caliber lab and research facilities, tutoring centres, and other services typically given on college campuses has proven problematic in some programmes (Gehring, 2001), but allowing dual enrollment students access to campus facilities and services does not seem an unreasonable accommodation.

### *Course delivery*

I found that the lecture format was very unfamiliar to my students; in fact, while the majority of college economics courses are delivered by lecture, the lecture format is seldom used in high school classes (Martell, Navin and Sullivan, 2006). Some students in Broward County Florida's early college programme cited the opportunity to 'learn something other than how to finish busy work' as a major reason for applying to the programme. (Koszuru and Bolton, 2005) Students often had to learn to take notes, although in some cases were already doing so with their own laptops. For many, however, the advantages of note taking did not become clear until after the first test. Because the lecture format was often unfamiliar to my students, I tried

to incorporate more hands-on activities where appropriate, and focus more on current events, an approach that was also successful in the programme at SIUE (Martell, Navin and Sullivan, 2006). I have found the learning experience is enhanced this way in all of my courses, both traditional and dual enrollment, but that the dual enrollment students tended to get the most benefit from them.

### *Parental issues*

While possible, it is rare for a college teacher to have interaction with the parents of students. In dual enrollment programmes, I did communicate at times with parents concerned about their child's progress. Parents frequently contacted me when a student had to miss an exam or several class periods; their concerns often centred on the perception that the university may have had a different attendance policy than their high school. With teenagers, information given to parents may also be rather incomplete. Parents may be surprised at the grades given at the end of the semester, since their children may not want to share that they are doing poorly. Having all the information available, as well as positive feedback will help. Parents who are paying for the classes may expect to see superior results, and these concerns often centre on GPAs and eligibility for scholarships. Parents may also not understand that university deadlines must be met when it comes to exams and inputting of final grades. The opportunity to make up work after the semester is over is usually not available as in a high school class. A copy of the university student handbook, given to students at the beginning of the semester, will help to clarify where the university's policies differ from those of the high school, and also provides a useful reference for concerned parents. This will also serve to make clear that students will be required to follow the university's guidelines concerning their academic work, particularly on such important issues as grading and academic dishonesty, where college regulations are most likely to differ.

### *Grading*

Dual enrollment professors are required to give two sets of grades – one for the university's credit and another for the high school itself. Since university grades are given in letters, most high schools will require a number grade that aligns with their system, and this is also used in determining class rank. In one school in which I taught, the school had a nine-point grading scale, the university a ten-point grading scale. This resulted in some students receiving a higher grade for the university course than they received in high school, which created some hard feelings. Grades in most schools were weighted much as an Advanced Placement course would be, with an 'A' grade earning 5 points on a four-point scale. Many students strove for an A for that very reason, while other students did not work as hard, knowing their 'B' would count as an 'A'. Low achievers who earned a D for the

class would pass their high school requirements, but the course would not be transferable to most colleges. Unfortunately, transferability of dual enrollment credits varies widely from state to state and from college to college, an issue of particular concern to parents. Another issue facing dual enrollment instructors is that students who do not pass the course will not just face the extra cost and time of retaking the course; failure may mean the student will not graduate from high school. Such high stakes make it imperative that struggling students are identified early and given opportunity to improve.

### *Distance learning*

Five schools in our programme received instruction through distance learning. This mode of delivery allows more students to be a part of the programme, and in the case of rural schools, allows for a greater variety in course offerings. The downside of distance learning is that students who do not have an actual teacher in the room may be less attentive and interested in the course; via television they may not get the whole sense of the class and may feel less involved. My distance students were much less likely to contribute to discussion and ask questions. It may seem to them that they are being ignored; learning names early and using them to call on students in distance learning classes helped to alleviate the concern of distance students that they didn't matter.

For the teacher who has other teaching obligations, it may be difficult to travel frequently to remote locations for face-to-face lectures, although this is highly encouraged. Face-to-face contact is especially important for the younger student; not only does it help to establish a relationship with the instructor, it gives the remote class a feeling that they are also important and worthy of the instructor's time, a need I found to be especially important to the high school students. E-mail and course support systems are other important ways these students can be made to feel they are part of the class. For instructors, the significant travel time and expense will need to be factored in when determining assignments. Since most high schools begin at 8 a.m. or earlier, this requires early commutes for first period instructors. Facilitators who administer the distance programmes are for the most part very helpful, even offering to grade tests and talk to students who are having difficulties. Establishing a good relationship with these facilitators makes for a much smoother experience for both instructor and students.

### *Paperwork*

My greatest challenge upon beginning dual enrollment was the coordination of paperwork from distance learning sites. Weekly tests and quizzes had to be faxed, but due to the amount of paper and school budgetary concerns, completed tests

could not always be returned to me by fax. A good solution I found was to use Scantron and have the Scantron sheets faxed back. I also tried to give lengthy tests from a remote site, so these would not have to be faxed or mailed. Providing pre-paid mailer envelopes also facilitated in getting papers back and forth between remote campuses, since driving to pick up papers weekly was impractical. Other instructors have had facilitators put short quizzes on the document camera for grading or sent keys along so that the facilitator could grade them and then fax the grades back to the instructor. While on-line testing seems an easy solution, at most schools access to the computer lab was not available during the school day and was limited to a few after school hours. When access is readily available, either at school or in the students' homes, carefully constructed online testing could be an efficient solution to this paperwork problem. However, in my experiments in giving on-line assignments, I found that my students, who may be very familiar with the geography of social websites, found navigation of unfamiliar sites difficult, even in a school where WebCT use was required by many teachers; home computer access was also not available to all class members.

### *Economics*

Economics is a special case in dual enrollment since the course is probably the first course students have ever taken in the subject. High school seniors may be unfamiliar with many economic concepts, and their views are often coloured by the media and politics. Unlike courses such as maths and English, we are also asking high school seniors to take a sophomore level course that is often only taken in college by business majors. In many public high schools, Economics is taught as a personal finance course, where students are taught the basics of consumer credit and how to balance a chequebook. Instructors in dual enrollment are probably teaching a very different course from that offered at the high school they are teaching in. Because topics will be covered much more quickly and Economics involves a great deal of analytical thinking, homework and out of class assignments are critical at this level, as well as frequent quizzes and testing. High school students may not have the mathematical prerequisites required for a college student to take the course, and many graphs and formulas commonly used even in introductory courses may be new or require significant review time for mastery. Course support sites that give PowerPoint lectures or practice quizzes are practical ways to make the material more manageable for these students. Current events and hands-on activities, such as having the students create their own CPI basket, focus on the relevance of the topic and are ways in which to make an unfamiliar topic more understandable. Knowledge of the differences in the topic coverage and format of a high school level Economics course, as well as the possible need for reinforcement of mathematical concepts, is also useful for instructors who are teaching introductory

courses on campus and who may assume that students have already been exposed to the lecture format and the basics of Economics in high school.

### Performance results

In response to the criticism that high school students are not prepared for college work and do not perform as well as traditional students, I compared my grades in my dual enrollment classes to the grades earned in same course I taught on campus to traditional college students during the same time period. To eliminate bias from my own teaching methods, a sample taken from spring semester 2007 of Macroeconomics courses taught on campus by other faculty members is compared to the outcomes for my own dual enrollment Macroeconomics classes. This information is found in Tables 1 and 2. Both sets of data prove unequivocally that the dual enrollment students outperformed students in regular classes. While some

**Table 1:** Comparison of classes by percentage receiving each grade

Grade	A	B	C	D	F
Regular Macroeconomics Classes on Campus	20%	31%	34%	6%	8%
Dual Enrollment Classes – Macroeconomics	58%	29%	11%	3%	0%
Department Wide Macroeconomics Classes – Spring 2007	25%	28%	31%	9%	7%
Dual Enrollment Macroeconomics Classes – Spring 2007	58%	29%	11%	2%	0%
Distance learning only	70%	15%	11%	4%	0%
Non-distance learning students	54%	33%	10%	2%	0%

**Table 2:** Comparison of classes by number receiving each grade

Grade	A	B	C	D	F
Regular Macroeconomics Classes on Campus	13	20	22	4	5
Dual Enrollment Classes – Macroeconomics	66	33	12	3	0
Department Wide Macroeconomics Classes – Spring 2007	28	31	34	10	8
Dual Enrollment Macroeconomics Classes – Spring 2007	26	13	5	1	0
Distance learning only	19	4	3	1	0
Non-distance learning students	41	29	9	2	0

bias may involve the fact that dual enrollment students face higher admissions standards, this should be negligible since this may also occur by chance in any class. It must also be considered that our dual enrollment students received more course material than on campus students, including several chapters in Microeconomics that are notoriously challenging.

### Comparison to traditional classes

Compared to my regular on-campus classes, dual enrollment students earned nearly three times as many A grades as my regular students, a similar percentage of B grades, and far fewer C and D grades. Results comparing department wide courses to those I taught in dual enrollment show that dual enrollment students earned over twice as many A grades, a similar amount of B grades, and a fractional amount of C and D grades compared to the regular classes. No dual enrollment students in our programme failed the class.

It has also been suggested that students who receive the course through distance learning do not benefit from the experience as much as students who have a teacher in the classroom. Contrary to conventional wisdom, my distance learning students outperformed their non-distance counterparts. Students who took the course via distance learning earned nearly 25% more A grades than their on site classroom counterparts, half as many B grades, and somewhat similar C and D grades. Some explanation may be found in that students who take a course via distance learning are more motivated to succeed; indeed, in most of these classes, which were primarily in rural areas, the valedictorian and salutatorian were in the class. For the small percentage of students who did not perform well in the programme, whether taught on-site or by distance learning, the assumption that students who decide to take college courses while in high school are highly motivated and seeking a challenge did not always fit. Some students sought a less crowded classroom or to attend the course with friends, a social reason also cited as being important to students in the SIUE programme (Martell, Navin and Sullivan, 2006). Others may have been avoiding a high school teacher who was unpopular or thought to be hard. Motives such as these were often found in those students who earned grades on the lower end of the grading scale.

### Conclusion

In this paper I have highlighted special concerns and administrative issues that are of importance particularly to instructors involved in dual enrollment programmes and administrators considering starting a dual enrollment programme. Through my own experience, I have outlined ways in which I was able to overcome these

differences and difficulties, resulting in what has been a very rewarding teaching experience. The perception and frequent criticism that high school students do not belong in college courses was disproved by my data for dual enrollment versus traditional classes, both for my own classes and those taught by other faculty members. The majority of the students were high achievers who were engaged and eager to learn; an observation proven in my results showing that nearly 60% of all participants in our programme earned an 'A' grade, with 87% earning either an A or B. For the instructor, the key word is flexibility. While trying at times, administrative and technology issues are usually easily overcome, particularly if a good relationship is forged with high school facilitators of the programme. While tuition will always be an issue, it is often state law and not the individual institution that sets these policies. Awareness that this may be a barrier to enrollment and providing alternatives to students for which this may preclude participation is important in making the programme more equitable. By providing students a 'sneak peek' or 'jump start' on college through dual enrollment, colleges will probably find they are attracting a higher calibre of student to their campuses, and instructors a gratifying experience teaching a new generation of students.

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