



STRENGTHENING SUPPORTS FOR DUAL CREDIT INSTRUCTION IN CHICAGO: Takeaways and Promising Practices

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Education Systems Center

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DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

In Spring 2021, Education Systems Center (EdSystems) began a project to provide strategic counsel, analysis, and recommendations to City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) to enhance its systems for onboarding and supporting dual credit high school instructors. After investigating existing national and Illinois models, EdSystems conducted focus groups and interviews with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) dual credit instructors, principals, and central office administrators and CCC administrators, early college coordinators, and faculty coordinators. Throughout the summer EdSystems worked with CCC and CPS administration to refine an emerging set of recommendations for next steps beginning in Fall 2021. This document outlines the process EdSystems used for this analysis and the resulting insights and recommendations. It is intended for both CPS and CCC system administrators, as well as CCC faculty and CPS instructors involved in dual credit delivery. The recommendations may also be beneficial to other community colleges and school districts seeking to strengthen their systems for dual credit delivery. EdSystems continues to partner with CPS and CCC in ongoing consultation for implementation of the recommendations.

BACKGROUND OF, AND CONTEXT FOR, DUAL CREDIT DELIVERY IN CHICAGO

Dual credit opportunities¹ have been expanding rapidly in Chicago Public Schools. Since the 2015 SY, dual credit course offerings have expanded from 101 courses with 2460 student enrollments, to 275 courses with 6,500 student enrollments. Chicago's expansion of dual credit is bolstered by supportive local policies such as CCC's offering of dual enrollment and dual credit at no cost to families or to CPS.

The continued expansion of dual credit is a core strategy of the Chicago Roadmap, a comprehensive partnership between CCC and CPS that seeks to break down institutional silos and focus on transformational practices that build on Chicago's public education value proposition. One of the five domains of the Roadmap is "Access to High Quality Programs," which addresses the implementation of strategic, dual credit within Model Pathways that are aligned to credentials with strong labor market value. While the Roadmap has identified strategies for promoting and expanding strategic dual credit opportunities, both CCC and CPS have recognized that continued expansion requires an examination of existing support structures for dual credit instructors. The existing systems have emerged over time, on an incremental basis, as dual credit has expanded from a small percentage of students to the goal of dual credit for a majority of CPS graduates. This analysis was requested by CCC to identify strategies to shift the dual credit support system from its foundations in a modest number of course offerings into a model that can meet the scale of the joint CPS and CCC Roadmap objectives.

¹ In this document, the term "dual credit" is used for a course offered to high school students for both high school and college credit. The term "dual enrollment" refers to a high school student's enrollment in a college course for college credit, but not for high school credit.

- » A joint CPS/CCC committee should meet on a regular basis to address challenges and oversee the continuous improvement of dual credit delivery.
- » There should be a mechanism for integrating separate district and community college technology systems so educators and students can easily navigate student/teacher emails, learning management systems, and resource repositories.
- » Both community college and district stakeholders value consistent implementation of support, including standardized expectations for discipline-specific professional development and comprehensive high school instructor access to model college course materials.
- » High school instructor/Faculty Coordinator relationships work best and are beneficial for both parties when those relationships can be sustained over multiple years.
- » The relationship between high school instructors and college faculty should be one of mutual collaboration and learning.
- » High school instructors and community college faculty should work together to provide sample materials for inclusion in discipline-specific structured course guides and to design professional development.
- » Student insights should be systematically collected and used by high school and community college staff to engage in meaningful dialogue about course adjustments.
- » Special attention should be given to ensuring that students are aware of community college resources and supports, including guidance on the application process and accommodations available to diverse learners.



To inform the project, EdSystems performed an extensive desk review of national frameworks and leading models from around the country for supporting high school dual credit instructors. The review included the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) accreditation guide and resources, the Dual Credit Quality Act [Model Partnership Agreement](#), and other frameworks identified in consultation with the College in High School Alliance. EdSystems also reviewed case studies and conducted interviews with administrators of various dual credit systems identified through independent research including the College of Lake County, Harper College, Illinois Central College, and Elgin Community College in Illinois and Austin Community College District and Ivy Tech Community College outside Illinois.

EdSystems conducted virtual focus groups and interviews in Spring 2021 with personnel involved with dual credit including 17 faculty and six administrators from CCC and nine high school instructors and eight administrators from CPS. To better understand how supports need to be differentiated, focus groups and interviews included both high school instructors who were new to teaching dual credit and those with years of experience in the dual credit system, as well as instructors in both core academic areas and career-focused coursework. Guiding questions referenced:

- » The strengths and challenges of high school instructor professional development including any barriers to access;
- » The strengths and challenges of the mentorship process;

- » How often and in what ways college faculty interact with high school instructors and how those interactions could be improved;
- » The strengths and challenges of the observation process;
- » The quality of dual credit course materials provided to high school instructors by CCC;
- » Best uses of the weeks after CCC courses end while CPS is still in session; and
- » How online systems, resources, and video conferencing tools might be leveraged to expand and improve collaboration between college faculty and high school instructors.

Focus groups included the following:

- » 5 members of the Faculty Council of the City Colleges of Chicago (FC4)²
- » 6 CCC Early College Coordinators
- » 12 CCC Faculty Coordinators³ and follow up questionnaires
- » 9 CPS Dual Credit Instructors and follow up questionnaires
- » 4 CPS Principals

Interviews included the following:

- » 2 CPS Early College Administrators
- » 2 CPS Central Office Administrators
- » 1 CCC Faculty Coordinator

² The Faculty Council represents faculty in all matters of general academic policy, such as curriculum, program development, academic freedom, and professional development.

³ Dual Credit Faculty Coordinators are CCC faculty who receive additional compensation for “assuring academic integrity and fidelity to the curriculum and instruction for all off-campus college credit offerings. This will include professional development sessions, observations, and mentorship for high school teachers.” Each CPS dual credit instructor is assigned a CCC faculty coordinator who serves as a main point of contact.

Follow-up questionnaires were administered to CPS high school instructors and CCC faculty coordinators. A small stipend was paid to instructors and coordinators who participated in a focus group and completed the questionnaire. Questionnaires were informed by focus group conversations and included inquiries into a desire for cross-school high school instructor collaboration, the appropriate cadence and structure of CPS-CCC instructor collaboration, academic freedom in the context of dual credit, opportunities for centralized dual credit processes and supports, and suggestions for intentional inclusion of student voice in the design and improvement of dual credit courses.

Using results from the above reviews and analysis, EdSystems developed a preliminary draft of findings and recommendations for strengthening supports for dual credit instruction. EdSystems met with CCC senior administrators and CPS administrators from the Office of College and Career Success to review the findings and recommendations. Based on these meetings and input, EdSystems prepared a final set of recommendations along with an implementation plan including workstream areas and the charge and membership of a District-Wide Dual Credit Course Implementation Committee to advise on and drive the efforts of the workstreams. CCC has engaged EdSystems to continue to support the implementation.



The results of EdSystems’ inquiry led to seven broad categories of recommendations: leadership structure, strengthening CCC support roles, CPS systems and policy adjustments, onboarding and professional development, course materials, observations, incorporating student voice, and technology integration. This section outlines the recommendations along with their rationales and includes insights from stakeholders.

I. LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE: DUAL CREDIT COURSE IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

Focus group attendees and interviewees expressed the need for centralized direction of dual credit support. As one Faculty Coordinator said, “We need to merge CCC and CPS policies and standards and not have two very distinct sets of policies.” A CCC administrator agreed. “I would love to see better alignment between CPS and CCC. This would benefit the entire operation.” A high school instructor commented that, “sometimes it feels like we are caught in between what CCC wants and what our administration at our school will allow. It would be nice if we were all more on the same page.”

In response, CCC and CPS launched a new Dual Credit Course Implementation Committee in September 2021 with joint representation from both organizations as shown in the table on the right.

The Committee is the primary vehicle for implementing the recommendations of this project and is responsible for ongoing monitoring and improvement of dual credit implementation.

The Committee’s initial charge includes:

- » Advising on a consistent approach for dual credit course requests and approvals;
- » Advising on the development of course packets for strategic dual credit courses that include sample syllabi and curricular resources;

DUAL CREDIT COURSE IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE	
CCC Membership*	CPS Membership
Early College Senior Administrators	Central Office Early College and Career Senior Staff
Vice-President of the Faculty Council	Central Office Computer Science Manager
Career-focused Faculty Coordinator Representative	Central Office Literacy Manager
Core Academic-focused Faculty Coordinator Representative	Central Office Manager of Mathematics
Senior Early College Coordinator	Central Office High School Chief
Vice President of a College	Two High School Principals
	Two High School Counselors
	Career-focused Dual Credit Instructor
	Core Academic-focused Dual Credit Instructor

* Members are selected to ensure that each CCC college is represented.

- » Recommending enhanced professional development for high school instructors and college faculty;
- » Advising on guidance for student placement into early college credit coursework;
- » Developing metrics for assessing dual credit implementation; and
- » Establishing and publicizing a process for stakeholders to surface issues and concerns for ongoing problem-solving and improvement.

The Committee will meet on a regular basis to address these charges and the other recommendations that emerged through this inquiry. Once new structures and processes are established it will meet at least quarterly as part of a continuous improvement cycle. As appropriate, the Committee will deploy subcommittees to address specific needs and accomplish goals identified in the workstream areas. Subcommittees may include Committee members as well as additional CCC and CPS representatives to ensure sufficient stakeholder engagement and perspectives are included.

Paradigm Shift: High School Instructor and Faculty Coordinator Collaboration

There is widespread agreement among the stakeholders we spoke with that the relationship between high school instructors and college faculty should shift from a paradigm of mentorship to one of mutual collaboration and learning. Both groups can benefit from understanding the others' context better so that they can more effectively serve students. Many high school instructors and faculty coordinators expressed that they have insights and expertise to share with each other and are interested in professional development and collaborations that involve two-way, collegial interactions. As one Faculty Coordinator said, "The majority of the time, the high school teachers have way more experience than a lot of the college instructors in that they have been teaching for years and in some instances have more education." A

member of CCC faculty suggested that CCC should, "implement a collaborative professional development process which is iterative, reflective, and outcomes-focused so that there are multiple opportunities for collaboration, support, and remediation (where and if needed)." Another said, "I know that it is a difficult ask, but there should be more sense of community between CPS faculty and CCC faculty and administration." The recommendations that follow should be understood in the context of this paradigm shift.

» PROMISING PRACTICE

College of Lake County is utilizing the new conversations around the implementation of Transitional English to guide the work of their English dual credit courses and build space for mutual collaboration that supports both course types.

Dual Credit Course Teams

An example of this paradigm shift in practice is the establishment of Dual Credit Course Teams. Each Course Team will be composed of discipline-specific CCC faculty and CPS dual credit instructors who will work collaboratively to develop and gather content to be included in course packets for priority courses in biology, English, math, and computer information systems, as described in further detail below. Dual Credit Course Teams also will support the onboarding of new dual credit teachers and continued professional development for existing teachers. Through this collaboration, support will include resources for both the high school and college level.

II. STRENGTHENING CCC SUPPORT ROLES

New District-Wide, Discipline-Specific Leads

CCC should establish district-wide, discipline-specific lead roles in priority courses for biology, English, math, and computer information systems. These roles should be filled by experienced Faculty Coordinators who can support and train newer Faculty Coordinators. Discipline-Specific Leads also can serve as a central point of contact for the high school instructor qualification review and approval process. If a high school instructor is not approved to teach a course, the Lead should provide specific reasons and suggest other dual credit courses the high school instructor would be qualified to teach. In addition, the Leads should play a key role in implementing the discipline-specific professional development and course packet recommendations described below in further detail. Leads will also play a key role in driving the work of the Dual Credit Course Teams in collecting and developing content for the course packets. In past years, CCC may have discontinued a similar practice for English and math. Those involved with the previous process should be consulted for best practice recommendations.

» PROMISING PRACTICE

Illinois Central College has been intentional in identifying who is best equipped to serve as the content expert and Faculty Coordinator for their dual credit instructors rather than automatically assigning this role to the department chair or dean of an academic department.

Faculty Coordinator Assignments and Training

Faculty Coordinators expressed interest in receiving training and support for their role beyond the requirements for checking-in with their high school instructor(s), document collection, and deadlines for the course. One said CCC could better support them through “more focused training related to mentorship and preparation of student evaluation tools.” Another said, “I would like more training and mentorship myself for the work that I am doing.” Faculty Coordinators said they would benefit from sharing best practices with one another and having a clear set of expectations for relationship-building with high school instructors throughout the duration of the course. Led by the Discipline-Specific Leads, Faculty Coordinators should engage in annual training that addresses expectations for supporting high school instructors, including review of any online modules, course guides, or other materials received by the high school instructor. One example of existing training is this Dual Credit Mentoring Presentation from Truman College. Further, Faculty Coordinators should strategize with each other as a learning community for continuous improvement. Topics covered during these trainings should include:

- » What they should look for in a syllabus,
- » What makes a good observation,
- » Best practices for collaborative review of student work,
- » How to build relationships with high school instructors, and
- » How to engage in conversations with CPS instructors, addressing topics such as how to capitalize on both CCC and CPS instructor expertise and how to acknowledge and work with the different roles and responsibilities that exist at the college and high school level.

Since so much relies on the Faculty Coordinator/high school instructor relationship, to the extent possible Faculty Coordinators should have consistent within-year and year-over-year assignments. When Faculty Coordinator assignments

shift from year to year it is difficult to build relationships with high school instructors. As one CCC administrator noted, “High school teachers get a lot of support from their faculty coordinator but the depth and consistency of that support varies depending on that relationship.” Faculty Coordinator and high school instructor contact information should be shared the semester or summer before the start of the course so they can begin collaborating. An annual survey should be administered to gather system-wide insights into how these relationships are working.

Several focus group participants suggested revisiting the Faculty Coordinator role description, along with time commitment expectations, with an eye to fulfilling any new recommendations. They also suggested that special assignment contracts for Faculty Coordinators should be extended to support high school instructors throughout the entirety of the CPS school year and during the summer. One Faculty Coordinator said, “PD sessions and workshops [should be] over the summer, when teachers have time to reflect, research, and plan.” Another noted, “Truthfully, this position should be treated like a class assignment and not a stipend position, and it will be easier to formalize meetings and our relationships, and we will achieve so much more together as a result.”

» PROMISING PRACTICE

College of Lake County is creating a dual-credit specific onboarding module for adjunct faculty to support their understanding and awareness of their expectations as a Faculty Coordinator for dual credit instructors. College of Lake County is comparing their general adjunct faculty training and dual credit instructor training to determine the most applicable content for Faculty Coordinators.

III. CPS SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

CPS should establish clear, standard expectations for dual credit instructors and administrators regarding participation in:

- » professional development,
- » observation procedures,
- » course material requests,
- » grade submission, and
- » engagement with CCC technology systems.

CPS Central Office should coordinate scheduling, monitoring, and follow-up of CCC professional development opportunities and should incorporate them into the district-wide calendar. One dual credit instructor told us, “I do not attend because there have been meetings scheduled on the same date and time as those of my school. Another said, “Structures and schedules are the most important things, I think.” Since teaching dual credit courses involves additional responsibilities such as learning and using new technology platforms, engaging with CCC, and adhering to alternative grading procedures and deadlines, stipends should be offered to instructors who meet all expectations.

CPS also should confirm and make known a designated dual credit liaison position, which could be a current dual credit instructor, for high schools to work directly with CCC Early College Coordinators on both logistical and pedagogical items. CPS Central Office administrators told us that each school already has a liaison, but several dual credit instructors we spoke with were unaware of them. It also should establish a process for bulk purchase of newer editions of used textbooks in connection with the recently-approved CCC process. One high school instructor told us, “I need new textbooks but my school cannot buy them.” Bulk purchases would help to manage costs.

IV. ONBOARDING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

» PROMISING PRACTICE

Ivy Tech Community College provides two distinct course modules through Canvas that dual credit instructors have access to refer back to throughout the course of the school year. One module is for policies and procedures applicable across all dual credit courses and the other for content-specific course materials and resources developed by their curriculum committee. Ivy Tech's faculty coordinator roles have access to observe these modules so they are aware and can be supportive of the content being provided to dual credit instructors.

High school instructors say that the existing onboarding professional development is helpful, but doesn't address discipline-specific content enough to support them in building their courses to meet college-level expectations for rigor. As one high school instructor said, "They do a great job going over the logistics of the semester/school year and providing an overview of the deliverables. They are not as helpful as far as best teaching practices for the dual credit classroom." One high school instructor summed it up this way, "CCC has a ton of resources and amazing people doing awesome things... but I felt completely disconnected from those at my campus. The textbooks were my only real guiding lights - that's it." Faculty Coordinators agree. As one said in response to a question regarding the main barriers high school instructors face in providing quality dual credit experiences for students, "familiarity/practice with college-level assessments, lessons, pacing, and expectations." In response, CCC should develop two levels of support; (1)

logistical onboarding and (2) discipline-specific professional development. Since online modules can support consistency in this work, CCC also should create two sets of corresponding online modules for high school instructors to access throughout the year. Faculty Coordinators and high school administrators should be aware of and have access to the modules so they can support their dual credit instructors.

High School Instructor Logistical Onboarding

CCC should facilitate kickoff meetings that address both district-wide and college-specific high school instructor onboarding before the beginning of the course, preferably in the Spring after course schedules have been determined at CPS. While onboarding meetings currently exist, their content and timing should be revisited. Attendance should be mandatory and tracked, and teachers should be compensated if the meetings occur outside regular hours. District-wide onboarding should address district-wide CCC logistics and responsibilities, and should include training for CPS administrators regarding dual credit requirements and the expectations of dual credit instructors. Kick-off meetings should address at least the following:

- » Process and deadlines for entering grades,
- » Accessing CCC email,
- » Accessing CCC course materials,
- » An overview of the observation process and its purposes, and
- » An overview of CCC resources for high school instructors and students including the wellness center, the writing center, subject-specific tutoring, and the library.

College-specific onboarding should include discipline-specific information such as each college's approach to assessment, grading, and other requirements. Ideally, the meetings would be in person so instructors can meet their Faculty Coordinators, but a virtual option also should be provided. Exit slips should

be administered to understand what high school instructors learned and found valuable, as well as what questions and needs remain.

» PROMISING PRACTICE

Illinois Central College engages dual credit instructors and Faculty Coordinators in discipline-specific PD the week before classes begin in both the Fall and Spring semester. Faculty coordinators at Illinois Central College also ensure that dual credit instructors are included in all departmental emails for additional PD and collaboration opportunities.

Discipline-Specific PD

CPS only expects dual credit instructors to participate in initial onboarding, though it will pay for substitutes so instructors can attend additional professional development. We heard from high school instructors and Faculty Coordinators that they are eager for discipline-specific professional development opportunities. As one high school instructor said, "I feel confident in my course but would love to work with a community of teachers to see what others are doing and get new ideas." One Faculty Coordinator noted that CCC could better support them by, "offering more opportunities for us to meet one-on-one with our partners beyond the classroom. For example, creating a mutually agreed upon PD." A CCC administrator said, "It would be great to provide more college content-specific resources from the departments for teachers. More invitations and opportunities for them to engage on campus." The Dual Credit Course Teams being established in Fall 2021 will address this need.

» PROMISING PRACTICE

Illinois Central College utilizes their CTE funding to support additional PD opportunities such as attending conferences together and site visits to the college. This use of funding has created a more "hands-on" environment where dual credit instructors and Faculty Coordinators work closely together to support dual credit courses and move early college credit offerings from the college to the high school.

Quarterly District-Wide Cohort Meetings

CCC should provide regularly scheduled, quarterly cross-college, district-wide, discipline-specific professional development for high school instructors and Faculty Coordinators that is collegial, reciprocal, and equity-centered, and focused on expanding content knowledge and pedagogical components. Bringing together discipline-specific high school instructors and college faculty from across the district and across colleges will allow sharing of materials and best practices specific. It may even assist CCC with cross-college course calibration for better consistency.

Meeting dates should be established and communicated at the start of the school year to ensure they align with CPS and CCC calendars, taking into consideration when grades and other data is due at both institutions. Meeting attendance should be required and tracked, and an alternate date should be offered for those unable to attend, if possible. Substitutes should be provided if meetings are not during high school professional development days. Exit slips should be offered after each session to understand what instructors learned and what they would like to be the focus of future sessions. Content should address at least the following:

- » IAI expectations.
- » Opportunities for high school instructors to see the types of texts and activities used at the college-level.
- » Joint examination of student artifacts to document assessment of student learning.
- » Norming using common course assessments and/or rubrics.
- » Discussions of the challenges faced in the dual credit classroom.
- » Course revisions and/or course assessment requirements for specific courses.
- » Guidance on accommodations for diverse learners.
- » Other topics to respond to high school instructor needs.

» PROMISING PRACTICE

Harper College has established a focused PD session where Faculty Coordinators and dual credit instructors norm around the assessments and review sample student work to develop a common understanding of expectations for college-level quality and rigor.

Additional Learning Opportunities

High school instructors also are interested in attending CCC discipline-specific meetings and observing CCC faculty teaching. Some departments say they invite high school instructors to meetings, though the instructors generally do not attend. While some CCC faculty believe high school instructors do not attend because their schedules don't allow it, others say they have not been invited. One Faculty Coordinator noted, "We have not invited them to our department meetings but I think that is a change I would propose in the future." High school instructors

say they are not aware of invitations. "I am not invited to the college's discipline-specific meetings. If I were invited I would definitely attend so that I could get a better idea of what's happening in the department and then I can mirror as best as I can in my classroom."

To ameliorate this miscommunication, Faculty Coordinators should be notified of college discipline-specific meetings, department meetings, and other opportunities, and should be responsible for inviting high school instructors. As one CCC administrator noted, "It needs to be more institutionalized to have them invited consistently." Likewise, Faculty Coordinators should periodically attend a grade level, PLC, or ILT meeting at the high school to better understand the high school context. One high school instructor suggested, "I think it would be very helpful for mentor professors to attend a grade level, PLC, or ILT meeting at the high school if possible. This may be helpful for professors to experience what is going on in the high school." CCC and CPS should consider including a virtual option for these meetings when feasible, to allow easier attendance.

» PROMISING PRACTICE

Austin Community Colleges offers "tea time" sessions for their Humanities and Communications Faculty Coordinators and dual credit instructors to create an informal space to share and collaborate on best practices and challenges.

Course Packets

While high school instructors have access to master syllabi, some are outdated and there is not a standardized process for submitting syllabi for approval. One high school instructor suggested, "An online database or place to access the approved curriculum would be helpful. The syllabus that I have was

provided by another CPS teacher, modeled after something she received from a prior CCC instructor." High school instructors said they would benefit from additional course information and guidance including resources developed by other high school instructors that are already adapted to fit the high school setting. One high school instructor noted, "I'd love to see some additional structures and model assignments or exams that students could engage in." Another noted, "Providing a variety of sample assignments, assessments, and rubrics would be helpful so that we are creating materials comparable to those created by CCC faculty members." In response, the Dual Credit Course Teams will develop course packets for each course, accessible through SharePoint and/or Google drive, which may include:

- » A standard syllabus template that both reflects the expectations of CCC and is appropriate for a CPS dual credit course,
- » Standardized learning objectives or master syllabi (and IAI requirements if applicable),
- » Examples of CCC course syllabi,
- » Model syllabi from high school dual credit courses that reflect the structure and flow of high school contexts,
- » Resources from current and former high school instructors that demonstrate how the course has been adapted to a high school setting,
- » Links to repositories and materials,
- » Model scope and sequence,
- » Unit guides,
- » Sample assessments, and
- » Guidance and enrichment activities for high school instructors to utilize during the supplemental time when the dual credit course has ended.

» PROMISING PRACTICE

As soon as a new dual credit instructor is approved to teach a course, the College of Lake County provides a structured course packet to them that includes standardized learning objectives or master syllabi (and IAI requirements if applicable), sample syllabi (from dual credit courses), links to repositories and materials (model scope and sequence, unit guides, sample assessments, etc.).

Process for Syllabi Approval

While high school instructors have access to master syllabi, some are outdated and there is not a standardized process for submitting syllabi for approval. As described previously in the paradigm shift of collaboration, the syllabi submission and approval processes should clearly identify expectations for any college-specific instructional or assessment requirements (for example a portfolio or capstone), and there should be multiple options for syllabi approval including:

- » Adopting an existing sample,
- » Using a colleague's approved syllabus, or
- » Submitting a new syllabus.

V. OBSERVATIONS

The context of the observation process should shift from a mentor/mentee relationship to one of mutual learning. To accomplish this there should be an increase in the opportunities for high school instructors to observe CCC faculty teaching the course, either in-person or remotely. As one Faculty Coordinator noted, "Allowing them to visit and observe teaching in college classrooms moves it from surveillance to sharing of teaching contexts collaboratively." Likewise, the current observation tool should be revisited and adjusted to reflect a mutual learning process and the specific context of a dual credit classroom. As one Faculty Coordinator said of the tool and process, "It could be better. I think the high school teacher may see it as punitive, or telling them how to teach their class. We need to be sure it is communicated what and why we have the observation process." The process should allow Faculty Coordinators and high school instructors to calibrate their expectations of student work and learn from watching each other's pedagogy in practice. Since teaching styles vary between high school and college instructors, observations should be grounded in strategies for engaging in college-level content during activities that facilitate conversations.

» PROMISING PRACTICE

While the College of Lake County has a formal process and expectations established for observations, dual credit instructors can request additional observations at any time from their Faculty Coordinators.

Process

A formal process should be established and expectations communicated for scheduling observations so they take place

during a typical lesson and not during non-teaching time such as an assembly or student group work period, and the high school dual credit liaison should facilitate building entry for the Faculty Coordinator (or virtual participation if the class is remote). Faculty Coordinators should provide high school instructors with a copy of the observation form in advance so together they can define the exercise, establish goals, and engage in meaningful dialog before and after the observation. As one high school instructor suggested, "It would be nice if Dual Credit teachers could receive a copy of the tool the mentor professor will use prior to the observation in order to know what benchmarks will be used in the observation." The Faculty Coordinator and high school instructor should meet within 30 days of the observation to share their reflections. As one Faculty Coordinator said, "It's always best to catch them right after so that everything is fresh on their minds." Discussions should be in the context of the college classroom and based on the goals shared by the high school instructor. Part of the undertaking should involve examining student work from the observation lesson and discussing how it does or does not meet college standards for rigor and quality. One high school instructor suggested, "Something that I haven't done, but would make them more useful, is including student work in the post-observation meeting. This could help ground that conversation and discuss possible ways to improve instruction." A standard process should be established for how results are shared and with whom, including administrators from CCC and CPS Office of College and Career Success.

New vs. Returning Instructors

There should be different observation schedules for new and returning dual credit instructors. Observations for returning instructors should occur at different points throughout the course to allow for feedback on different units. All high school instructors, but especially new dual credit instructors, would benefit from observations earlier in the semester so there is time to adjust their practice. The Dual Credit Implementation Committee can develop new guidelines for these schedules.

» PROMISING PRACTICES

Ivy Tech Community College observes new dual credit instructors their first year but has incorporated a more flexible model that observes experienced dual credit teachers every two years.

As much as schedules will allow, Faculty Coordinators at the College of Lake County meet with dual credit instructors immediately following the observation to reflect and have a conversation while the experience is still top of mind.

VI. CENTERING STUDENTS

The student dual credit experience should be prominent to ensure it is integral to all processes and a critical component of the continuous improvement cycle. Recommendations for more fully centering students fall into three main categories: (1) Collecting and using student insights and feedback, (2) incentivizing student engagement, and (3) supporting student learning.

Collecting and using student insights and feedback should include creating multiple opportunities to gather, analyze, and learn from insights and feedback of students on their experiences in dual credit courses. As one Faculty Coordinator said, “it would be useful to have more student input/feedback on their experience in the classroom and whether they feel like they have learned or been given tools to help them succeed in their courses.” One obvious opportunity is the course evaluation process. While some high school students have the opportunity to submit a course evaluation, the process is not formalized and the results are not systematically gathered, shared, and analyzed. One high school instructor told us, “The student course evaluations do happen and get submitted in a sealed

envelope. I’ve never seen them in all of the semesters that I’ve taught dual credit.” A Faculty Coordinator said, “I am not aware of students completing any course evaluation.” An online process should be established that allows even students who don’t use the CCC email system to access the evaluation form.

Completed evaluations should be directed to a central point of contact to be redistributed to the appropriate Faculty Coordinator and high school instructor to drive discussion on course adjustments. An anonymized evaluation report should be produced and shared with CCC Early College Coordinators, CCC Department Chairs, and the CPS Office of College and Career Success for improvement purposes. The Dual Credit Implementation Committee should consider additional uses for evaluation results including implications for mandatory professional development and continuing engagement of the high school instructor. Consulting the existing CCC evaluation sharing process as a model may be useful. Course evaluation questionnaires should be revised to go beyond the teaching style of the high school instructor to probe students for insights and feedback on the curriculum and course materials as well as how their identity and self-perception as college-going students may have changed as a result of taking a college-level course.

» PROMISING PRACTICE

The College of Lake County sends out a class climate survey through the content area departments that is then sent out to student emails associated with the college. Survey results are then sent back through the department to the dual credit instructors for review.

Incentivizing student engagement with CCC resources and opportunities will increase students chances of success and more fully connect them to the college experience. We heard

from stakeholders that most high school students do not regularly access their CCC email and most are not aware of the resources and opportunities available to them at CCC. To improve student engagement, incentives such as raffles and prizes can be offered to students for accessing CCC resources including completing milestones in the CCC application process, using a CCC resource, attending a CCC event, or meeting with support personnel such as financial advisors, admissions staff, or personnel in the transfer office. Further, the supplemental CPS calendar time after dual credit courses end can be used to engage students with CCC staff from various departments to advise students on the next college course in the sequence, meet with the writing lab to develop scholarship essays, or advise students on how to access and use the library. Structures also can be established to engage students in CCC opportunities outside of activities directly related to their courses. For example, a February 2021 Black History Month challenge for CCC students was extended to dual credit high school students.

» PROMISING PRACTICE

A representative from the College of Lake County's College Readiness department visits each dual credit classroom to provide information and guidance on the college credit students are earning through their dual credit course and how that can be transferred to College of Lake County and other postsecondary institutions as applicable. When allowable, these visits are done in-person but were completed virtually during the 2020-2021 school year. College and Career Navigators at the high school are also invited to the dual credit courses to provide further support and guidance on how credits can be applied and transferred to postsecondary.

Supporting student learning includes a recommendation to explore a peer-to-peer mentorship model for current CCC students to provide expertise and guidance to high school students as they navigate their transition to college. It also includes incorporating support for diverse learners by providing guidance to high school instructors on how to facilitate students' IEPs while adhering to CCC ADA expectations. High school instructors noted that they need guidance on modifications and accommodations that meet college-level expectations for supporting diverse learners, including assistance in making students aware of extra supports available at CCC.



VII. TECHNOLOGY

New technology systems can facilitate improved alignment between high school instructors and Faculty Coordinators by creating consistent, automated processes for activities such as syllabi approval, site visits, and student evaluations. They also can track and collect observation notes and other interactions and exchanges for analysis. Further, a “bridge” system across existing separate technologies for student/instructor emails, learning management systems, and resource repositories would allow CPS and CCC staff to access materials more easily. One Faculty Coordinator noted, “We need one system that is compatible with CPS and CCC,” and another said, “One problem is the different types of platforms used by both institutions (CPS & CCC).” The system bridge should include access for charter schools, which are not on the central CPS email system.

CCC and CPS staff frequently cited navigating multiple systems with different or no access based on their email addresses as a challenge and high school students do not consistently access their CCC emails. While a process exists to link the two it is not widely used. In response, CCC is launching an outreach campaign to increase the number of CPS instructor and student emails linked to CCC email addresses and it will provide guidance on linking CPS emails to CCC as part of the high school instructor onboarding process.

» PROMISING PRACTICE

Both Elgin Community College and Ivy Tech Community College have implemented the DualEnroll.com platform that integrates processes, approval workflows, emails, log-ins, document repositories, and reporting across the colleges and partnering school districts.



The Dual Credit Course Implementation Committee has begun to meet to address the recommendations. EdSystems will continue to attend and support the Committee as it transitions to become an ongoing and integral part of Chicago Roadmap efforts. EdSystems will provide more intensive support for the Dual Credit Course Teams through the fall and winter as they meet monthly to review current materials and determine additional resources to be developed for the course packets for distribution in Spring 2022.

