

Bishop Neumann High School

College Coursework Overview

Definitions: Dual Credit vs. Concurrent Enrollment

Dual Credit – A dual credit course is a college class offered to high school students. Upon successful completion, the student accrues both high school credit towards a high school diploma *and* postsecondary credits that may lead to a certificate, associate’s degree or bachelor’s degree. Dual credit courses are available as a result of a partnership between a local high school and postsecondary (college and/or university) institution.

Common Dual Credit Choices:

Academic Transfer – These courses are identified as general education or academic transfer credits including: mathematics, science, literature, history, social sciences, etc.

Career Education (CTE) – These courses are specific to a career-based college major or program of study or a career academy.

Advanced Placement (AP) – These courses are not dual credit courses but are nationally standardized programs developed by the College Board, the organization that administers the SAT college entrance assessment. High schools must use AP certified teachers and courses to offer this program. High school credit is achieved by passing the course. College credit is achieved by paying a testing fee and passing the test at the acceptable score. Each postsecondary institution determines what the acceptable passing score is for their college. Fee waivers are available for income based need.

Concurrent Enrollment – Enrolling and receiving college only credit, for a college course taken by a high school student is considered concurrent enrollment. Concurrent college credit courses do not award high school credit. Some colleges offer concurrent credit programs for high school students. Students are not required to graduate from high school upon enrolling in some postsecondary institutions; however, federal financial aid is not available to currently enrolled high school students.

Facts to Consider When Choosing College Coursework

Are you academically ready for the rigors of college coursework? A college course should enhance a student’s resume, but not at the expense of other resume-enhancing activities. Take time to consider the increased academic demands a college-level course will require of you. Make sure you are ready for the demanding work a college class will require, or it could hurt your chances at college acceptance and scholarships down the line. These grades will be a part of your permanent record.

Will the college coursework transfer to the institution of your choice? Students need to be thorough in their investigation of whether or not college credit earned in high school will transfer to the college they ultimately intend to attend. Students should consider if courses will fulfill degree program requirements or electives. Additionally, students should determine if grades earned in coursework will be considered part of their GPA once in college. Some colleges limit the number of transfer credits accepted from other institutions when determining degree requirements. Number of credits don't always transfer at the same value. For example, hours earned at a community college may not equal the same number of hours at a university.

Can you afford the added cost? Many of the college courses offered to high school students are done so at a reduced rate. This can make the courses very affordable and a cost-effective way of getting ahead. The Access College Early (ACE) Scholarship Program helps students pay tuition and mandatory fees. To qualify, the student or student's family must be approved to participate in one of the federal need-based government programs (i.e. Free or Reduced lunch program, Supplemental Security Income, TANF, SNAP, or WIC), or have experienced an extreme hardship that affects family income. More information can be found at <https://ccpe.nebraska.gov/ACE>.

If you earn enough credits, will you still be considered a freshman or an upper classman? Students should check with colleges you are interested in attending to see if they will still be considered for freshmen scholarships, especially if they are earning more than 12 credit hours while in high school. Additionally, will you be required to declare a major earlier if you have completed enough credits while in high school? Earning 15 or more credits may put you in a position to declare your major earlier than you are ready.

New Website Provides Information on Coursework/Credit Transferability

A new website developed by the University of Nebraska in collaboration with the Nebraska State College system and Nebraska community College Association provides students in the state with a convenient "one-stop shop" for researching course transferability between Nebraska's public higher education institutions.

The site's searchable database offers information on 64,500 courses and what schools will accept those courses toward a degree. This includes the four NU campuses, the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, the three state colleges, and eight community and tribal colleges. Students looking to transfer coursework/credits to a Nebraska institution from another regional and/or private institution can also find course equivalency information on the site. The site aims to help Nebraska students better understand their options, plan for their future, and stay on the path to a college degree so they can be successful in the workforce.

More information can be found at <http://transfer.nebraska.edu/default.aspx>. Additionally, questions about admissions can be directed to the institutions' admissions offices, which are listed on the Transfer Nebraska site, <http://transfer.nebraska.edu/Contacts.aspx>.