Providing an overview of the volume, this chapter summarizes the evolution of dual enrollment programs over the past decade and discusses the role dual enrollment can play in the nation’s college-completion agenda.

Why Dual Enrollment?

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This volume focuses on the designs and goals, policies and practices, and short- and long-term outcomes of programs that enroll high school students in college courses for college credit. Commonly referred to as “dual enrollment” programs—participants are enrolled at both the high school and college—these programs belong to a broader category commonly referred to as “college transition programs” (U.S. Department of Education 2003a). Dual enrollment and its counterparts, such as “dual credit” and “concurrent enrollment,” are known as “credit-based transition programs” (Bailey and Karp 2003), a category that includes International Baccalaureate programs (IB), Advanced Placement (AP), and early college high schools.

In 2005, the U.S. Department of Education published statistics on dual enrollment participation based on a national survey (Kleiner and Lewis 2005). In their review of postsecondary institutions offering dual enrollment opportunities, the survey authors defined college course-taking either (1) as part of a program, which is “an organized system with special guidelines that allows high school students to take college-level courses” (Kleiner and Lewis 2005, 1), or (2) as an individual high school student enrolling on her own in a college course. The survey found that, in 2002–2003, 57 percent of all Title IV degree-granting institutions offered dual enrollment within or outside of a structured program. At that time, 98 percent of public two-year institutions offered some form of dual enrollment, compared to 77 percent of public four-year institutions. The survey also indicated that 40 percent of private four-year institutions and 17 percent of private two-year institutions offered courses for college credit to high school students. Overall, the authors estimated that 813,000 high school students took a college-level course during that time. As of this writing, a new study of the national scope of dual enrollment is underway, with an expected publication date of summer 2012 (Personal communication with Stephanie Marken of Westat, December 2011).
Much has happened in the world of dual enrollment since 2002–2003. More states have added policies to govern program implementation, the school reform and standards debate has escalated, and college completion has become the dominant topic in a national conversation around the position of the United States in the global economy. The authors included in this volume represent a variety of perspectives on dual enrollment and the broader theme of preparing high school students for postsecondary success. They include researchers who have investigated various aspects of dual enrollment for the better part of the last decade and administrators who oversee local programs. Collectively, their work in this volume demonstrates the opportunities and long-term possibilities that come from linking high school and college more intentionally so that students are better prepared to confront the academic, social, and financial challenges that await them after high school.

The College Completion Agenda

In fall 2003 under the framework of No Child Left Behind, the U.S. Department of Education held a one-day summit and published a series of issue papers intended to promote a dialogue on the topic of school transformation (U.S. Department of Education 2003c). One primary theme addressed at the conference was accelerating high school students’ transition into work or additional education; the initiative urged high schools to “work with higher education and the business community to define the necessary knowledge and skills for success after high school, to make sure students know what those requirements are, and to give students every opportunity to acquire them” (http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/hsinit/trans.html).

Conversations around higher education have focused recently on both the beginning and endpoint of college: the number of students entering in need of remediation and the stagnant—if not declining—completion rates. For example, President Obama’s call to increase college graduation rates by 2020 was the foundation of the American Graduation Initiative he proposed in 2009. Delivering his speech in suburban Detroit, the president made a significant gesture when he spotlighted the role community colleges would play in the nation’s economic recovery. Although funding for the full initiative never materialized, conversations about college readiness and completion have escalated, as seen through the likes of the American Diploma Project on the one end, which seeks to strengthen the rigor of high school courses, and Achieving the Dream on the other, which focuses on student success in community colleges. Dual enrollment bridges these initiatives.

Of course, low rates of degree completion are not only a community college issue. For example, of all the students who graduated from Chicago Public Schools in 1998 or 1999 and entered a four-year college immediately after graduation, only 35 percent earned a bachelor’s degree within six years.
A study by the National Center for Education Statistics (Berkner et al. 2002, iv) reinforces the dilemma: “Among all beginners at 4-year institutions in 1995–96, 51 percent completed a bachelor’s degree within 6 years at the first institution attended.” Accounting for transfer, the rate was 58 percent. And for recent high school graduates and also accounting for transfer, it was 64 percent. By comparison, of the community college students who indicated an intention to earn some postsecondary degree (75 percent of all students in the study), 31 percent earned either an associate’s or a bachelor’s degree after six years.

Strategies that can contribute to both goals—that is, better preparation and therefore higher college completion rates—begin in high school. Dual enrollment embodies the college transition agenda from its unique position in the middle space—or gap—between high school achievement and college readiness. Implemented for several decades by individual institutions across the country to introduce high academic achievers to local higher education opportunities, dual enrollment today has taken on several goals, one of which is to provide access and support for students traditionally at risk of educational failure. The 2005 study estimated that 5 percent of the 2,050 institutions nationally that offered structured dual enrollment programs served this population (Kleiner and Lewis 2005); the recent survey covering the 2010–2011 academic year includes a series of questions focused specifically on whether there has been growth in programming to serve these students.

Dual enrollment fits into the larger framework of college readiness as described by Conley (2005, 2007, 2010). In a recent study funded by MDRC, Rutschow and Schneider (2011) highlight dual enrollment as a promising strategy with regard to remedial education. And with respect to completion, Adelman (2004, 2006) and Swanson (2008) have described the potential benefit of earning college credit prior to matriculating as a regularly enrolled college student. However, although research on dual enrollment has generally been positive, the body of work is not exhaustive. Much of it comes from a few sources: the Community College Research Center at Teachers College, Columbia University, and Jobs for the Future, a nonprofit education and workforce development organization in Boston. Allen (2010) provides a comprehensive literature review of the subject, including experimental studies that show correlation between dual enrollment and postsecondary success.

On the whole, researchers agree dual enrollment would benefit from deeper investigation (Bailey and Morest 2006; Rutschow and Schneider 2011). These sentiments echo a call by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (U.S. Department of Education 2003b, 2) dating back to the earlier conversations at the U. S. Department of Education for more research on dual enrollment: “While dual enrollment programs have the potential to help students enter and succeed in postsecondary education, there are many factors that still need to be explored. More information is needed on:
1. How many and what types of students participate in dual enrollment;  
2. What program features are most common;  
3. Whether these efforts support the transition and persistence of students in postsecondary education; and  
4. How state policies influence program structures and practices.

With these questions in mind, this volume is intended to serve both as a resource for those interested in dual enrollment and as a forum for fostering further conversations about these programs.

**Policy and Program Practices**

The American Youth Policy Forum, a nonprofit professional development organization based in Washington, DC, has been documenting state policies around dual enrollment for many years and hosted a forum on dual enrollment in 2005 (http://www.aypf.org/forumbriefs/2005/fb102805.htm). Recent figures concerning the policies and funding structures for dual enrollment (Barnett and Stamm 2010) indicate that forty-six states have policies governing these programs, with twelve states making participation mandatory for public higher education institutions. It is the role of post-secondary institutions and local school districts to determine how to enact these policies for high school participants.

Dual enrollment comes in many shapes and sizes, but at its foundation is college course-taking. Some programs invite students to the campus to enroll in a course populated with matriculated college students; others combine students from several high schools into one classroom on the campus. In order to provide the widest access to dual enrollment, many programs have high school students participate in college-credit courses that are offered at the high school and taught by a high school instructor who is appointed as a college adjunct. This latter model is common to programs that have been accredited by the National Alliance for Concurrent Enrollment Programs (NACEP), a professional organization with 180 postsecondary members and 41 high schools and school districts. As of fall 2010, thirty-one public two-year colleges, twenty-one public four-year universities, and five private four-year colleges and universities had been accredited according to the organization’s standards (http://nacep.org/about/mission-and-history/). A distinguishing feature of NACEP (2011) is that member organizations offer college courses during the school day.

In his keynote address at the NACEP 2011 national gathering hosted by the University of Connecticut, David Conley emphasized the important role dual enrollment plays in helping students become college and career ready. His presentation highlighted salient issues for program administrators, such as scalability and quality control. These and a host of other issues are the focus of the diverse chapters included here.
How We Have Organized the Volume

In this sourcebook, researchers and practitioners discuss the impact of dual enrollment programs on student achievement, institutional practice, and the role of higher education in improving K–12. We have divided Chapters Two through Ten into two sections. The chapters in the first section explore dual enrollment from a variety of angles. To begin, Allen and Dadgar in Chapter Two illustrate the results of the most rigorous study of dual enrollment to date and suggest a potential causal relationship between dual enrollment participation and postsecondary performance. Chapters Three and Four illustrate how dual enrollment effects important transformations in student participants and college instructors. For example, Karp posits that students in dual enrollment participate in anticipatory socialization and are able to learn the role of the college student in advance of matriculation. Meanwhile, Hughes and Edwards demonstrate how the dual enrollment classroom is improving pedagogy and curriculum in California institutions. Their findings are consonant with the curriculum and instruction goals of Achieving the Dream, the national nonprofit organization whose primary goal is to help community college students complete a degree.

In Chapters Five and Six, administrators of two programs—one for honors students, the other focusing primarily on high school students in the academic midrange—demonstrate how the definitions of success for dual enrollment might change depending on the program goals and how they are measured. First, Kinnick highlights the impact of the Kennesaw State University Dual Enrollment Honors Program on this Georgia institution. Next, Kim describes dual enrollment across New York City, illustrating how an intentional and thoughtful use of data reveals that meeting certain program management priorities might mask problems in other areas.

The final chapter of the first section, Chapter Seven, observes dual enrollment alongside another popular college-level transition program: Advanced Placement (AP). Using Texas data, Klopfenstein and Lively suggest that dual enrollment and AP might better serve different populations, highlighting the value of providing different pathways. As indicated in some of the preceding chapters, the authors’ suggestion that there are several different college preparatory pathways resonates with the idea of “matching”—helping students make the most rigorous selection based on their capabilities, as described by Roderick et al. (2008) and Bowen, Chingas, and McPherson (2009) in reference to the college application process.

The second section of the volume explores models that build upon the foundation of dual enrollment with the goal of strengthening school–college partnerships. The initiatives described in these chapters embrace a more robust framework for supporting college transition than a program design based primarily on a single course, sometimes referred to as the “singleton” model (Bailey and Karp 2003). Venezia and Voloch in Chapter Eight introduce programs
intended to support high school seniors who are on track to graduate but have not met the benchmarks for remediation exemption in two state systems: the California State University (CSU) system of four-year colleges and The City University of New York (CUNY). For CUNY, this means taking the remedial activities that had been offered through dual enrollment and incorporating them into the school day. Other states are pursuing similar work. For example, the Southern Regional Education Board is reviewing the progress of six states in its region that are implementing senior-year transition courses in math and English. The organization's Website provides resources that will help schools align senior-year curriculum with college and career readiness.

In Chapter Nine, Edmunds shares initial lessons learned from North Carolina's extensive experiment with early college high schools. These schools are not only changing the trajectory of traditionally underrepresented populations, they are also influencing conversations around the importance of partnerships between K–12 and higher education.

**Dual Enrollment and New York City**

Chapters Two, Three, Six, Eight, and Ten reference programs in CUNY, a system whose seventeen undergraduate campuses run a coordinated dual enrollment program referred to collectively as College Now. College Now links the country's largest urban education systems, and this unique partnership between the New York City Department of Education and CUNY has provided a rich environment for experimentation and research. In recent months, educational administrators in the state of Massachusetts, from the city of Chicago system, and even at private institutions such as Ohio Dominican University and Duke University, have reached out to CUNY for input on dual enrollment implementation. Education being local, however, it is impossible to single out any one program for replication in another context, as CUNY practitioners have learned in the past eleven years.

Considering that New York State is one of only a handful of states that does not have a dual enrollment policy, CUNY programs are afforded great flexibility yet warrant genuine uncertainty with regard to program implementation and funding. Even so, as indicated by CUNY's executive vice chancellor and university provost (Logue 2010), a “system approach” to higher education provides a space for experimentation and the possibility of scaling successful practices. With this in mind, Chapter Ten describes how the insights of dual enrollment administrators and faculty provided an understanding of the obstacles faced by the typical community college student and contributed to plans for The New Community College at CUNY. Meade highlights how the lessons learned from implementing a systemwide approach to dual enrollment helped inform several aspects of the model, from the design of the first-year program to the use of data to inform academic and student services in order to build the university's first new college in 40 years.
Conclusion

Geography, institutional desire and capacity, policy: All play important and often competing roles in this work. It is difficult to know what pieces are missing in college readiness if postsecondary institutions are not engaged with students—and schools—before matriculation. In the final chapter of the volume, Chapter Eleven, we tackle some of the tensions inherent in the field of dual enrollment, from the role of K–12 education in the college or university mission to questions of what happens in a college classroom. We suggest that the space inhabited by dual enrollment is useful for addressing larger issues of postsecondary practice.

References


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