



## Frequently Asked Questions - College Credit in High School

September 28, 2020

This FAQ document is intended to answer some of the frequently asked questions about college credit in high school. The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) staff aim to help partners better understand and navigate the complex set of changing circumstances related to COVID-19 and Fall 2020 enrollment. Please send any additional questions about college credit in high school to the HECC, [erin.weeks-earp@state.or.us](mailto:erin.weeks-earp@state.or.us) and/or ODE, [lillian.white@state.or.us](mailto:lillian.white@state.or.us). We are here to support partnerships between K-12 and higher education.

### 1. Students' questions

#### **Which college courses are most beneficial for high school students to take?**

Advisors, counselors, and registrars are ready to help students navigate their way through direct enrollment in college courses – while still paying attention to high school diploma requirements. In selecting which courses to take before enrolling or choosing a major, students will benefit from paying special attention to the universally transferable courses that are included in Oregon's Core Transfer Maps.

#### **What are Core Transfer Maps?**

The [Core Transfer Maps](#) are groups of eight classes that add up to at least 30 credits. When the full set of eight courses are successfully completed at an Oregon community college, they are guaranteed to transfer as a block to any Oregon public university, and they will count toward that university's core bachelor's degree requirements.

#### **Last year my high school offered enrollment in college courses, is that still happening?**

Yes, college credit partnerships continue this fall, through remote and online learning. We recommend that you talk to your high school teachers and school counselors about enrolling.

#### **Can high school students enroll directly in college courses?**

High School students can enroll directly in college courses through colleges and universities, without going through their local high school, but it is important that students stay enrolled in high school and receive credit towards their High School Diploma. Remember that high school completion (or equivalency) is required for entry into most certificate and degree programs, and is required to qualify for federal financial aid in college.

## 2. Grading

### **With remote learning continuing, can students expect to get letter grades?**

Most K-12 and higher education partners are planning on assigning letter grades. During the 2020-2021 academic year, grading decisions are made by local school districts for high school courses and higher education faculty for college courses. Students with questions about their GPA and other academic records should consult with teachers and school counselors.

## 3. Schedules –

Note: Partners can reference each school plan on the ODE website [School Blueprints for 2020-2021](#).

### **How are instructors planning to adapt their partnership courses to the “Comprehensive Distance Learning” high school schedules?**

College and University faculty partners will look at the schedule and the instructional hours in the high school schedule to ensure all the student learning outcomes for their specific course can still be met. Upon agreement in the teaching partnership, course articulations can continue.

### **Why are districts creating plans that cause learning to be interrupted by a term?**

District schedules that break up the learning into two parts are anticipating that in-person learning might resume and students will be able to access each of their subjects both remotely and in person.

### **Will there be changes to the State Standards for Dual Credit, Sponsored Dual Credit, and Assessment Based Learning to help facilitate high school student completion of their college coursework?**

No. The [standards](#) support a key alignment: the high school students receive comparable academic arrangements as the college students. There have been, and will continue to be, many adjustments to college course requirements. Those adjustments are designed for student success and equitable continued learning. College and university partners should apply the same academic policies, including any modifications for COVID-19, to their college enrolled and high school enrolled students. Postsecondary institutions and high schools should actively engage with each student and work together to ensure there is no educational harm due to this pandemic.

## 4. Funding

### **What is important to know about fees and tuition charges this fall?**

When students choose to enroll through direct enrollment, the tuition due may not be discounted the way it is for high school based college credit. Additionally, online courses require a level of infrastructure and technology that generally sets tuition rates higher than the rates for on campus courses. School counselors, teachers, and program coordinators should be proactive and ensure that a different fee structure does not negatively impact access to college credit opportunity.

5. Equitable access to college credit courses

**With all of the changes, how can education partners keep equity at the center of college credit partnerships?**

Districts, higher education institutions, and state education agencies are working together to ensure that access to college credit opportunities during high school continues to be a strong pillar of teaching and learning in high schools:

- Ensure students all know about the opportunities through school or district-wide promotion
- Seek out and understand new opportunities while paying attention to new fees
- Pay attention to enrollment processes, including academic placement, to ensure they are inclusive
- Monitor and seek solutions for increased access to college credit opportunities including, but not limited to, lack of access to reliable wi-fi or computers

6. Pre-requisites and Placement

Student readiness for credit-bearing college courses in writing and mathematics may be determined through placement tests, previous academic achievement, and other measures. Students can find information about each institution's placement process on the college or university website.

**How should partnerships conduct placement, given the 2020 disruptions to learning?**

Placement into college courses in high school must continue to align with campus practices. Placement policies are determined at the institutional, department and course level. Note that there is broad agreement around multiple measures of placement, as research shows these are the most equitable and successful mechanisms that departments can use. Partnerships will continue to share solutions and innovations for academic placement for Fall 2020. Even with multiple measures in academic placement, creative approaches are necessary because students in Oregon do not have recent letter grades or assessment scores to use in multiple measures. Teacher and student recommendations are emerging as starting places for placement this year.

7. Teacher Professional Learning Communities, and continued collegial interaction

**Do partners still have to organize professional development and collegial interaction for faculty and teachers? Yes!**

**How will professional learning be possible in the remote learning environment?** Faculty collaboration and professional learning can proceed on virtual platforms. Continued engagement with faculty is still required to meet the state standards.

8. Planning for 2021

**Do public universities in Oregon still require the SAT for admissions and scholarships, since there haven't been test opportunities in Oregon due to COVID-19 closures?**

No, Oregon Public Universities do not require test scores for new students seeking admission in Fall 2021. Similarly, new students who don't have/send test scores will still be considered for scholarships, including most that are awarded automatically utilizing set criteria. Contact your public university for details on scholarships.