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Last updated April 23, 2020

Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) Guidance on Oregon High-School-Based College Courses during COVID-19

This guidance applies to public high school student enrollments through a partnership in Dual Credit (DC), Sponsored Dual Credit (SDC), and Assessment Based Learning (ABL) programs, and is also recommended for private high schools partnering directly with a community college or university to offer DC/SDC/ABL coursework.

Questions and Answers

Q1. As high school courses move to Pass/Incomplete (P/I) grading for the remainder of the academic year during this pandemic, what does the move mean for the grading of high school based college courses offered in partnership with Oregon public institutions? Are the college courses also required to be P/I?

A. The college course grading, including whether the course will be available for P/NP/I, is decided on a case by case basis by the college or university. Teachers are allowed to award letter grades for college courses taught in the high school where the college or university partners have retained letter grades in their courses, while the student receives a pass/incomplete on their high school transcript.

Q2. Can a high school student decide to drop a postsecondary course?

A. Yes. A high school student may decide to drop a postsecondary course during the COVID-19 disruption in learning. The student would drop the postsecondary course according to the established drop/withdrawal policies of the postsecondary institution. During this time, higher education institutions are encouraged to develop flexible drop/withdrawal policies for high school students that align with college student policies for the same term.

Q3. How will a withdrawal from a postsecondary course impact future financial aid eligibility?

A. Course withdrawals, incompletes, failing grades, etc., can impact future college financial aid eligibility. A student should consult with the dual credit coordinator for the postsecondary institution where they're taking college coursework and the financial aid office of the postsecondary institution they plan to attend regarding the



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impact of 2020 course withdrawals on future financial aid eligibility. During this time, higher education institutions should extend any flexible withdrawal, incomplete, and course grade and completion deadlines for college students, to their high school enrolled students as well.

Q4. Can a college/university modify, temporarily or otherwise, course policies for students who wish to drop the postsecondary course?

A. Yes. This should be determined locally with consideration given to regional accreditation standards and U.S. Department of Education guidelines, and whether all students can successfully complete the postsecondary course through the alternative arrangements established by the postsecondary institution. The [standards](#) support a key alignment: the high school students receive comparable academic arrangements as the college students.

If an institution decides to modify policies, it must do so equitably for all students. Postsecondary institutions and high schools should actively engage with each student and work together to ensure there is no educational harm to students due to this pandemic.

Q5. Will there be changes to the State Standards for DC/SDC/ABL to help facilitate high school student completion of their college coursework?

A. 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 beginning in winter/spring 2020. 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.

Q6. What about seniors participating in high school based college credit courses? What happens if high school is finished for them?

A. College credit enrolled seniors may have completed their high school requirements but still have requirements to work on in order to complete their college credit courses.



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Q7. If Oregon high school seniors are held harmless for their spring 2020 P/I grades in Oregon public university admissions, why aren't all Oregon public postsecondary institutions adopting P/I grading for DC/SDC/ABL to align with this practice?

A. The DC/SDC/ABL course grading policies are determined by colleges and universities. Many college courses will retain letter grading for spring 2020. In some cases, students will have the option to select P/NP or I grading options on their transcript for spring 2020. P/I grades do not always serve students when it comes to college course transferability, applicability to major coursework, or admission to advanced study or specialized CTE programs. Nationwide, many colleges and universities are instituting greater flexibility for transfer of spring 2020 courses with "P" grades due to the worldwide COVID crisis.

Q8. If a high school building closes temporarily, but the postsecondary institution continues delivering coursework, is a high school student expected to continue to participate in the postsecondary course if enrolled through DC/SDC/ABL?

A. Yes, ideally. Even though the student is/was also receiving high school credit, the course is ultimately a postsecondary course and the partnership will determine expectations for the postsecondary credit. The partnership should make every effort to support ongoing student participation in the course and the partnership should continue to support students in continued learning according to ODE's [Distance Learning for All](#) guidance.



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