

City College of San Francisco Academy and Pathway Dual Enrollment Program¹

Overview

In 2008, the City College of San Francisco (CCSF) partnered with four high schools—Burton, Lincoln, Mission, and Wallenberg—to expand their long-standing career-technical education (CTE) dual enrollment program and enroll greater numbers of minority and low-income students. City College has the following goals for the program:

- Increase the number of underrepresented students in high school career pathways and dual enrollment courses.
- Improve academic outcomes for dual enrollment students.
- Increase college course offerings in a variety of career fields.
- Provide professional development for dual enrollment faculty and staff.

Most of the partnership's dual enrollment courses take place on the CCSF campus. The courses are taught by college faculty, and high school students are integrated with college students.

Implementation

The CCSF program director uses an approach she calls “systems plus customization.” All the participating high schools use a standardized system for student orientation and registration, but course offerings and student supports are modified to fit each high school's population and programs. This approach has been particularly effective, enabling the partners to consistently assess what does and does not work at a particular school and apply new strategies to achieve better results.

Student Recruitment

The partners have applied a variety of strategies to increase the numbers of underrepresented students in the program. Because it is career-focused, the dual enrollment program draws from students in the high schools' CTE pathways. However, in some schools, students in the career pathways have traditionally not reflected the schools' overall demographics. For this reason, in addition to recruiting students from CTE pathways into dual enrollment, the partners make an effort to recruit a greater range of 9th graders into those pathways.

Participating high schools use a standardized system for orientation and registration, but courses are modified to fit each school's population.

¹ The CCSF Academy and Pathway Dual Enrollment Program was part of the James Irvine Foundation's Concurrent Courses Initiative, which from 2008 to 2011 provided support to eight secondary and postsecondary partnerships in California to develop, enhance, and expand career-focused dual enrollment. The initiative was managed and evaluated by the Community College Research Center. This case study only refers to the dual enrollment partnerships participating in the Concurrent Courses Initiative. CCSF has other collaborative efforts with additional San Francisco high schools.

Previously, most of CCSF’s dual enrollment students were from Lincoln High School, which has the highest achieving students among the participating schools. CCSF has made special efforts to recruit students from Mission and Burton High Schools, which largely serve low-income and minority populations. Program staff have increased enrollment at these schools by opening dual enrollment courses to juniors; providing preparatory courses for the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), which students must pass in order to qualify; assigning dedicated staff to work with the schools; and implementing high school–based student success courses. CCSF representatives also attend high school parent nights to disseminate information about dual enrollment and the college’s many CTE programs.

Students attend an orientation at the college, where they meet with counselors and take a campus tour.

Enrollment

The San Francisco program has a systematic enrollment process. Each semester, students receive a dual enrollment catalog from the college, which lists course offerings by CTE field. The catalog includes information about important dates, academic resources, and the enrollment process.

At the beginning of each semester, students complete an online application, often with the help of CCSF staff at their high school, and then attend a daylong orientation at the college campus, for which they receive half a college credit. At this event, students hear from guest speakers, meet with a counselor, take a tour of the campus, and get information on textbooks and other logistical matters.

Course Offerings

Over the past three years, the partnership has expanded their offerings from five courses to 36 courses across several career fields. CCSF also offers CAHSEE prep and other courses for which students may earn high school credit but not college credit.

Dual Enrollment Offerings (Fall 2010)		
COURSE LIST		
<p>CAHSEE Prep Courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Math CAHSEE Prep Course English CAHSEE Prep Course <p>Construction Trades</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carpentry in Residential Construction Electrical in Residential Construction <p>Engineering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intro to Engineering & Tech Lab Freehand Drawing Intro to Architecture <p>Environmental Horticulture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetables and Herbs Intro to Flower Arranging <p>Hospitality and Tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destinations—Cities Destinations—Great Trips 	<p>Information Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer Networking Orientation/Design & Graphics Intro to Mac Graphics Survey of Print Production Orientation/Multimedia Computer Skills for Multimedia <p>Academy of Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intro to Business Ownership & Operations Intro to Accounting International Business <p>Health and Science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Science Women’s Health Issues Briefings in Biotech Basics of Cell Culture 	<p>Fire Science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Safety—First Responder Intro to Fire Science <p>Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concepts of Criminal Law Intro to Admin of Justice Principles Of CA Criminal Law Intro to Careers in Law <p>Teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pediatric CPR and First Aid Pediatric Preventative Health Education Advanced First Aid

While most courses take place on the college campus, the college remains flexible about course location. Since Burton High School administrators were reluctant to allow students to leave the campus early to take college courses, fearing it would encourage other students to cut class, the college agreed to offer a success course at the high school. CAHSEE courses are offered at both high school and college locations and take place during the summer, after school, and on weekends.

The program counselor uses social media and texts to remind students of important dates and encourage them to study.

Student Support Services

The program staff established systems to monitor students' progress and provide them with support throughout the semester. The program counselor visits the first session of each course and holds weekly office hours on the college campus, during which students can voice concerns to her in person. The counselor uses social media to keep in touch with students, with a LISTSERV and a Facebook page to keep students abreast of ongoing activities. She also sends out frequent text messages and emails to remind students of important dates or to encourage them to study for exams. As a result of these efforts, the program counselor is well known and visible to students.

Plans to hire CCSF students to mentor dual enrollment students were never realized, and early efforts to arrange for tutoring also fizzled. However, recently the program engaged a well-regarded Bay Area tutoring provider, Tutorpedia, to work in the CAHSEE classrooms and with individual students.

High School/College Collaboration

In 2009, CCSF and San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) staff partnered to create a CTE Professional Development Day, featuring speakers from CTE fields, conversations on curricular alignment, and information about dual enrollment. The event familiarized high school CTE instructors with the college's course offerings and encouraged them to become more invested in the dual enrollment program. The college also hosted monthly professional development meetings for college faculty with high school students in their courses. Topics included academic intervention strategies and adolescent development.

The increased connections among secondary and postsecondary administrators and faculty also led to new joint initiatives. For example, the project director convened a group of high school and college instructors to work on connecting math content and instruction from middle school through college. Through her dual enrollment (DE) work, the project director also became familiar with adolescent intervention strategies and sponsored workshops on the strategies for college faculty.

Challenges

Because students' college transcripts are sent to the district's central office instead of the high schools, high school administrators and counselors tend not be aware of how students are doing in their college courses. As a result, the responsibility of providing student supports often falls on the college. Students should sign a form allowing college instructors to send their grades directly to their high schools, which can then play a more active role in providing supports.

The weak fiscal situation in the state also poses challenges. While the program coordinator requests spots in classes for dual enrollment students, regularly matriculated CCSF students get registration priority, and reserving seats has become more difficult as courses are eliminated due to budget cuts.

Sustainability

The expansion of CCSF's dual enrollment program was supported by a James Irvine Foundation grant, which has now ended. Grant funds paid for staff costs, catalog printing, and orientation events. In order to guarantee seats for dual enrollment students, the program sometimes pays for college courses; the grant also covered some of these costs.

The college staff is aggressively pursuing new grant funding. The state will provide \$400,000 over several years, and a grant from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office pays for the CAHSEE courses. The National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering has provided funding for Burton students to enroll in engineering courses at the college with the goal of preparing them to attend a university. Program staff members believe that pursuing additional sector-specific grants will be a fruitful fundraising strategy.

Finally, the district, the college, and the city together received a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which supports the process of formalizing dual enrollment policies and practices at CCSF, improving curriculum alignment between district high schools and CCSF, and ensuring a robust system of support for students.

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