



## Frequently Asked Questions STC's High School Programs & Services Dual Credit Programs

### **What is Dual Enrollment?**

Dual enrollment is a general term that refers to programs that allow high school students to enroll in college courses while still enrolled in high school. Dual enrollment programs exist throughout the United States.

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### **What is Dual Credit?**

Dual credit is a process through which a student may simultaneously earn both high school credit and college credit for successfully completing a college course that provides advanced academic instruction beyond, or in greater depth than, a corresponding high school course. The “dual credit” earned is both college credit and high school credit for one course.

At South Texas College, eligible high school students can earn academic college or career and technology credit toward a post-secondary certificate or degree. Students admitted to the program must meet the same requirements as all other college students. College credit earned upon successful completion of a course may be applied toward an associate degree at South Texas College or may transfer to other colleges and universities.

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### **What is the difference between dual enrollment and dual credit?**

Dual enrollment means that while still in high school a student is also enrolled in one or more courses at a college, but not necessarily earning both high school credit and college credit for a course. Dual credit means a student is earning both high school credit and college credit for a course. Students may earn college credit through dual enrollment, but may only earn both high school credit and college credit simultaneously for a course through the dual credit agreement between the high school and the college.

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### **Can any student enroll in college courses for dual credit?**

No. Dual credit students must be enrolled in a partnering high school, the Academies Program, or a designated Early College High School (ECHS), and have met the STAAR (EOC) or TSI standard scores. Students must complete the enrollment process and participate in a dual credit orientation at the partnering high school or online. The *Dual Credit Program Enrollment and Support Services Manual*, by the Student Affairs & Enrollment Management Division, is available online and provides students, parents, faculty, administrators and high school counselors with details about the dual credit and registration process.

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### **Is there a difference between the dual credit course and a college course taught at STC?**

Dual credit courses are college courses. Students should understand that the amount of work necessary to succeed in dual credit courses may be greater than that of high school courses. In addition, dual credit courses become a part of a student's permanent college record and transcript.

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### **How many college courses for dual credit may a student take?**

Under HB 505 effective beginning with the 2015-2016 school year, the THECB may not make any rules which limit the number of dual credit courses or hours in which a student may enroll while in high school or limit the number of dual credit courses or hours in which a student may enroll each semester or academic year. Colleges may create dual credit rules irrespective of the new laws that were enacted. The prohibition of rules is specifically directed at the THECB.

At South Texas College, dual credit students may not enroll in college level courses until the spring semester of their 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and then limited to no more than two (2) courses for that semester from an approved list of recommended courses. All 10<sup>th</sup> grade students will be limited to only two (2) dual credit courses per semester, and 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students should not exceed 16 credit hours per semester, for a total of 68 attempted credits, with the exception when pursuing the Engineering degree; as stated in the College's **Board Policy #3232 Dual Credit Student Eligibility Requirement**. Exceptions to these rules will require the approval of High School Programs & Services (HSPS) and the Dual2Degree Department or the ECHS Director on the Course Overload form.

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### **Who is responsible for the content of a course offered for dual credit?**

Because the course is a college course, the college is responsible for the content. However, because the high school is also awarding credit, the school district is responsible for ensuring that the student has an opportunity to master the requirements set for the high school credit for the course. The district may do so through a review of the course syllabus as it is taught at the partner institution. If it is determined that all the high school requirements are not included in the course, the district may work with the institution of higher education to augment the course and/or may provide supplemental instruction.

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### **Will dual credit transfer to other four-year colleges and universities?**

Not all dual credit hours earned at STC may be applied toward the completion of a 4-year degree. Some degrees require academic courses. STC offers both academic and career and technology courses. Students should understand that while college credit for all courses will be for credit at STC, not all courses are transferable. Students should inquire at institutions of interest to learn which courses will transfer.

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### **Why does STC have these programs?**

STC's vision is to create a better quality of life for our communities and does this through promoting student success, excellence, innovation, community, professionalism, collaboration, and integrity. The Dual Credit Program creates the opportunity for developing a college-going culture for the community so that higher education is not only expected, but is also a viable possibility.

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### **What is an Early College High School (ECHS)?**

An ECHS is a school designated by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) that provides the outreach, curricula, and student learning and support programs that enable the participating student to combine high school courses and college-level courses during grades 9 through 12. Students in an ECHS are able to complete the Recommended High School Program or the Distinguished Achievement Program while earning up to 60 semester credit hours toward an associate or baccalaureate degree by the time they graduate from high school. All ECHSs must be approved and so designated by TEA (Texas Administrative Code §102.1091 and §4.153). An ECHS works on the premise that every student deserves the opportunity to attend college, including underserved students. An ECHS consists of a small cohort of students of often no more than 100 students per grade level and students are admitted based on motivation, being first-time-in college, and low-socioeconomic level—not on test scores and past academic performance. These students will undergo a rigorous curriculum with instructional and learning support. The curriculum between high school and college is blended and well-aligned so that student learning is accelerated.

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## What are the Academies?

Academies are two-year dual credit programs. High school students may apply to enroll in an Academy as juniors and earn an associate degree by the end of their senior year of high school. Academy program structure is designed to allow students to take high school courses in the morning and dual credit college courses in the afternoon at STC. South Texas College has the following academies:

- DEMESA - Dual Enrollment Medical Science Academy
  - DEEA - Dual Enrollment Engineering Academy
  - DECSA - Dual Enrollment Computer Science Academy
  - DECJA - Dual Enrollment Criminal Justice Academy
  - SCADE - School to Career Academy in Dual Enrollment
    - Welding
  - DEBBA - Dual Enrollment Business Administration Academy (First Cohort Fall 2017)
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## What is the difference between Dual Credit, the Academies, and Early College High School (ECHS)?

Each program serves different student populations. Dual Credit, as a whole, affords students with the opportunity to complete coursework in a number of subjects. Most often, public schools are able to offer some of the core curriculum to any student who qualifies. On the other hand, the Academies are designed for academically high achieving students who already know what field of study they want to focus on. The Academies are two-year Dual Credit programs for students who are interested in earning an associate degree at STC. ECHS is designed to reach students who might be at risk of not attending college otherwise. It offers an opportunity to earn a high school diploma and two years of college credit. More importantly, the transition from high school to college is eased by blending high school and college curriculum into a cohesive unit.

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## What is Dual2Degree?

South Texas College leads the state in providing dual credit opportunities to over 16,000 high school students. STC partners with numerous area high school sites, middle schools, and elementary schools to promote a “college-going” culture through dual credit courses and academies, dropout recovery programs, early college high schools, and college enrollment initiatives. South Texas College’s Dual2Degree designation encompasses many activities, programs, and initiatives all in support of transitioning dual credit students from high school to South Texas College.

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## Where can more information be found about Dual2Degree initiatives?

The *Dual Credit Program Enrollment and Support Services Manual* created by the STC Student Affairs & Enrollment Management Division provides students and parents, faculty, administrators and high school counselors with details about the dual credit registration process and support services. This manual can be accessed through the link at: <http://studentservices.southtexascollege.edu/outreach/index.html>.

Also available online is the STC brochure entitled, “Dual2Degree HB 5 Career Pathway Framework – From Dual Courses to Career Opportunities.” This brochure provides detailed information on implementing these initiatives and can be accessed at: <http://academicaffairs.southtexascollege.edu/highschool/guides.html>.

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### **What steps do teachers at partner schools take to apply to teach as dual credit faculty for STC?**

High school teachers should work with their administrators to get their support before applying to STC to teach dual credit courses. The current process for applying to teach as Dual Credit Faculty can be found in the *Dual Credit Programs Instructional and Quality Standards Manual*.

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### **Will Dual Credit Faculty have an academic mentor from STC that they can contact with questions?**

The primary STC academic contact for dual credit faculty is the STC department chair. STC instructional departments can assign faculty members to take on the role of dual credit mentors. These contacts are vital to the success of dual credit courses and to help insure that these courses compare in rigor and quality to courses taught on campus.

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### **What are CRNs?**

CRN stands for course registration numbers. STC's Registrar designates a unique number that identifies the time, days, instructor and location of every course section. The CRN is entered on the enrollment form to make sure that students are enrolled in the correct course and section.

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### **Why does STC need faculty to approve their class roster by the deadlines?**

It is critical for faculty to verify that their roster is correct in the College's information system (JagNet) and that they provide the high school dual credit contact with a list of discrepancies, so errors can be corrected in time for the 12<sup>th</sup> Class Day Census Verification. Rosters become official after 12 days into the term, and school districts will be billed for these students when using an STC Faculty. Students taking dual credit classes expect to receive college credit. If a student is missing from the class roster, they will not be eligible to earn college credit for the course.

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### **How can faculty review their class rosters and submit final grades?**

JagNet is the portal to course and student information and much more. Login to JagNet to access the "Faculty" tab where faculty can verify class rosters as well as submit final course grades electronically.

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### **Will Dual Credit Faculty have an opportunity to attend orientation, STC department meetings, or professional development workshops at STC?**

STC is committed to providing professional development opportunities for Dual Credit Faculty. Professional development events facilitate communication between Dual Credit Faculty in numerous districts and the college. Dual Credit Faculty can find out more about professional development opportunities from the STC Office of Professional & Organizational Development and from STC chairs. In addition, Dual Credit Faculty should attend any required STC department meetings during the semester.

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### **Will someone from STC be observing Dual Credit Faculty teaching class?**

Dual Credit Faculty can be observed as part of the faculty evaluation process. Guidelines for the observation process are detailed in the STC faculty evaluation plan and in the *Dual Credit Programs Instructional and Quality Standards Manual*.

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### **Is it necessary for Dual Credit Faculty to use the college syllabus?**

Dual Credit Faculty agree to use STC's syllabus, learning outcomes and approved textbooks. This is done to insure course quality standards, consistency, and rigor across disciplines. Faculty must submit a course syllabus/outline for each course to the STC chair at the beginning of each semester. As a model, a master course syllabus will be provided for each course taught.

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### **Is it necessary to use college-approved textbooks?**

Instructors teaching transferable academic classes agree to use college-level textbooks that have been approved by the STC chair for the course. For dual credit classes this would be the STC approved textbook. With the approval of the STC chair, the state-approved AP textbook may be used. Instructors should share the AP text information with their respective STC chairs. The textbooks must be available to dual students on the first day of the college class. According to the established MOU, College-approved textbooks purchased by a school district may be used for a minimum of three years from the date of the purchase. An Early College High School is allowed to use textbooks for at least four years from the date of purchase or as mutually agreed upon by both institutions. Chairs may request a change of textbook earlier than three years, if the textbook is for a technology-based course.

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### **What is the student course evaluation process?**

It is College policy that students are given the opportunity to evaluate their courses and instructors, and this includes dual credit courses. Instructions for completing these online evaluations will be available for students each semester during the last weeks of the semester. An analysis of the student course evaluations will be available to the instructor and the appropriate Academic Dean at the College.

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### **Do faculty have reporting responsibilities when critical student performance information is needed by high schools?**

South Texas College is committed to serving the students and communities of South Texas through collaborative work with school districts in the College's service area. This includes sharing critical student performance information when needed for high school reporting. Guidelines for sharing student performance information have been developed by Academic Affairs and are available to faculty through their STC department office.

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### **Can faculty share critical performance information electronically with high school counselors and/or administrators?**

Sharing student information electronically should be minimized and done only when it would not be compromised. When sending information through email, it is important to send the message only to the intended recipient at their official school email address. When at the high school teaching class, the information can be provided directly to a school counselor or administrator.

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### **Where can I find more information about High School Programs and Services and the Dual Credit Programs?**

Visit the webpages for the High School Programs and Services Department for information on all its programs at <http://academicaffairs.southtexascollege.edu/highschool/> and to access links to reports, research, guides, and the *Dual Credit Programs Instructional and Quality Standards Manual*.

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