

Summer 2012

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Recommended Citation

Kinnick, K. N. (2012). The impact of dual enrollment on the institution. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 2012(158), 39-47.
doi:10.1002/he.20013

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What are the benefits of dual enrollment for colleges and universities? Kennesaw State University's Dual Enrollment Honors Program serves students with a strong academic background in courses on the college campus. Using quantitative and qualitative measures, the director demonstrates the program's "value" to the university and also highlights concerns and challenges.

The Impact of Dual Enrollment on the Institution

Katherine N. Kinnick

As dual enrollment programs enter a period of growing maturity at many institutions, it is appropriate to ask about the impact of dual enrollment on the institution. Does dual enrollment strengthen colleges and universities, or does it sap their increasingly limited resources? Does it make them better places to teach and learn? Does it increase their standing in their communities? What are the pay-offs and trade-offs that colleges considering establishing or expanding dual enrollment programs should consider?

Proving the value of dual enrollment to the institution has become particularly important in recent years, as the recession has squeezed state budgets for higher education. Programs that

are not viewed as offering benefits to the institution become vulnerable in tough economic times. In addition, to operate effectively, all dual enrollment programs rely on the cooperation of a host of internal constituencies, from Admissions to the Registrar's Office to Financial Aid to academic departments. When these campus constituencies buy in to the mission of dual enrollment, a culture of support for policies and procedures conducive to daily functioning of dual enrollment programs can be built. For these reasons, documenting the impact of dual enrollment on the institution should be incorporated into the assessment efforts of dual enrollment programs.

Despite growing recognition of the value of dual enrollment on students' educational gains (see chapters by Allen & Dadgar and Karp in this volume), we know little from the extant literature about the impact of dual enrollment on institutions of higher education. A study commissioned by the state of Rhode Island (*Jobs for the Future*, 2006), addressed impact on the state's three public higher education institutions through interviews with key stakeholders, including college administrators, faculty, dual enrollment advisors, legislators and business leaders. College administrators saw dual enrollment as a strategy to increase the diversity of their student bodies, but expressed concern about their ability to assure the quality

of courses taught in high schools by high school faculty. College faculty shared these concerns, and also viewed dual enrollment as negatively impacting the institutions' revenues, because students paid only nominal fees. State education officials and legislators held positive views of dual enrollment, but expressed concerns about future funding. Business leaders were the most enthusiastic about dual enrollment, seeing it as a tool to move students through the educational pipeline into higher education and the workforce.

A survey of community college dual enrollment coordinators in Illinois (Barnett, 2003) found correlations between program size and perceptions of benefits to the institution. Directors of programs with the largest enrollments were more likely to agree that dual enrollment benefits the institution by enhancing student recruitment, that dual enrollment is relatively easy to initiate, and that it is a practice associated with aspirational institutions. The study did not establish a causal relationship between institutional attitudes toward dual enrollment and program size.

How we measure the impact of dual enrollment on the institution poses a number of questions. What are appropriate metrics for quantifying impact, and how do we isolate important, but more intangible, outcomes for the institution, like community goodwill, that are associated with dual enrollment

programs? This chapter explores the benefits and drawbacks of dual enrollment from the institution's perspective using the case of Kennesaw State University (KSU). KSU's experience is offered not as a "best practice," but as an example of issues and challenges faced by many dual enrollment programs seeking to demonstrate their value to their own institutions.

Dual Enrollment at Kennesaw State University

Program structure. Located north of Atlanta, Georgia, Kennesaw State University is the third largest university in Georgia, enrolling 23,000 students and 200 dual enrollment students for the 2011-12 year. DE has been available at KSU and other state institutions since the 1970s. Georgia requires all dual enrollment courses to be taught by faculty from post-secondary institutions. Students must be high school juniors or seniors.

In 1994, KSU adopted an honors model for its program, now called the Dual Enrollment Honors Program (DEHP). Programs of this type are intended to provide strong students with an academically challenging alternative to the high school classroom (Rogers and Kimpston, 1992). DEHP students must meet higher admissions standards than regular freshmen: a 3.0 GPA in high school academic courses and a combined score of 1100 on Critical Reading and Math portions of the SAT. DEHP draws students from seven public school systems and more than 30

different high schools and home school programs each year. Most students come from large comprehensive high schools with a strong college preparatory emphasis; a smaller number come from more rural counties with historically lower rates of college completion; a significant minority (currently 14%) are home-schooled students. Seventeen percent of students accepted for Fall 2011 identified themselves as persons of color.

DEHP students take their courses on the KSU campus and are integrated with the general student population. Students may take any number of classes up to a maximum of 17 credit hours. During the 2010-11 school year, 48% of DEHP students took a fulltime load of 12 credits or more; most of these students did not attend any classes at their high schools. DEHP allows students the option to take college honors classes. Half of the students chose to take honors courses in 2010-11; of these, the average number of honors courses completed was 2.2. To earn dual credit, students must choose courses from a state-approved list of courses that are assigned a high school course code.

Funding. Two state funding programs offset the cost of dual enrollment in Georgia. The Accel program, originally tied to the state's HOPE Scholarship and funded by lottery revenues, was decoupled from HOPE for the 2011-12 year and is now funded through a state appropriation. Accel is available to public, private and home-schooled students, and currently pays 100% of

tuition, some mandatory student fees, and a textbook allowance of up to \$150. Move on When Ready (MOWR) funding, initiated through legislation and implemented for the first time in 2010-11, pays colleges from the state department of education's budget at the high school per-student FTE rate. All public colleges in Georgia are required to participate in MOWR and to accept the FTE amount as payment in full for tuition and mandatory fees. MOWR prohibits students from taking any courses at the high school and requires that students take 12 credits of college coursework each semester. DEHP is also partially subsidized by KSU through waiving of several mandatory fees, typically for services not used by DEHP students, such as a study abroad fund. Because of these fee waivers, Accel and Move on When Ready currently provide similar levels of support, meaning that most students will pay only the equivalent of textbooks and lab fees.

Administrative structure. The DEHP program is housed in an academic department, University Studies, which serves as an umbrella for a variety of academic enrichment programs, ranging from learning support courses to the Undergraduate Honors Program. DEHP is coordinated by a staff of two: a faculty member (this author), who receives a reduced teaching load to serve as program director, and a secretary. These individuals coordinate all aspects of the DEHP program, including recruitment, academic

advising, orientation, initial processing of funding applications, communication with high school counselors, and coordination with academic departments and the offices of admissions, the registrar, and financial aid.

Measuring impact on the institution

Like many states, Georgia has no systematic data collection program to gather information on dual enrollment from colleges and universities. KSU's efforts to measure program impact have been initiated internally, and findings are generally disseminated only at the campus level. Data is derived from campus databases and student and faculty surveys. It is reported in an annual assessment report, and is also used to complete program review documentation required periodically by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools as part of the reaccreditation process. In addition, the data is sometimes requested by KSU's administration to aid in decision-making related to program policies and funding.

KSU's experience reflects a number of methodological and pragmatic challenges for programs seeking to document impact on the institution. Many dual enrollment programs are coordinated by individuals who do not have research backgrounds or statistical expertise. In addition, the daily demands of running the program may leave little time for assessment efforts. Data-

gathering may fall to offices of institutional research with limited staff and competing priorities.

KSU has found that the criteria emphasized by regional accrediting bodies in assessing academic programs provide a useful framework for assessing dual enrollment. Such program reviews are typically concerned with evidence of program quality, productivity, and viability. At KSU, evidence of positive impact is strongest in the areas of student recruitment, as well as retention, progression and graduation. While this is not surprising given the honors focus of KSU's program, previous research confirms that time-to-degree is shortened for dual enrollment students in a variety of program models (Blanco, Prescott & Taylor, 2007; Kleiman, 2001; McCauley, 2007). DEHP's impact on institutional viability from a financial standpoint is an area of strategic vulnerability shared by programs whose state funding formulas require institutions to absorb some program costs.

Program quality. KSU's assessments help build a case that dual enrollment adds to the quality of the institution as a whole in three primary ways: through recruitment of high-achieving students; through enhancement of the classroom environment; and through positive impact on the image of the university as a school of choice. Data show that the DEHP program is an effective tool to attract students of high

academic ability. Among students accepted for the Fall 2010 semester, the average SAT score (Critical Reading and Math portions only) was 1205, compared to 1074 for other first-year students. Data from the past five years shows that consistently, a third of DEHP students readmit to the university as freshmen. Exit surveys of 2010-11 students indicate that 43% of readmitting students say that their participation in DEHP led them to consider attending KSU when it had not been among their college choices before.

Surveys of honors faculty at the end of each term suggest that DEHP students enhance the learning environment in the college classroom by being good role models for other students. Survey data compiled since 2008 finds that 86% of faculty indicate that DEHP students are more capable than typical first-year students, and 79% agree that they are more mature than typical first-year students. They describe DEHP students as hard working, attentive, prepared for class, and good natured. Ninety-three percent of faculty rate their level of satisfaction in teaching honors courses attended by DEHP students as high or extremely high. "It appears [DEHP] has some of the best and brightest students, which reflects well on both the participants and KSU," wrote one faculty member. Because of the quality of the students, faculty report being able to experiment with new

assignments and activities, which further enrich the classroom environment.

DEHP also bolsters public perceptions of the quality of the university. Student exit surveys indicate high levels of satisfaction with the program. A majority (73%) indicate that the quality of instruction at KSU is better than the quality of instruction at their high school. Nearly 90% of participants say that they would recommend DEHP to younger high school students. There is evidence that they follow through: a quarter of prospective students who attend an Honorview information session say they heard about DEHP through a friend or relative. This word of mouth is especially meaningful when it comes from peers with reputations as top students. If top performers choose to attend KSU rather than the high school, and then in many cases readmit to KSU, then KSU must be worthy to be considered a "destination" school by other students. Similarly, local publicity about DEHP students who are valedictorians, National Merit Finalists, or have other unique accomplishments confers credibility on the program and on KSU. Positive relationships developed with school personnel through DEHP build the image of KSU as actively engaged and committed to its community.

Program productivity. How does dual enrollment contribute to the institution's retention, progression and graduation goals? Research sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education

(Adelman, 2006) found that completion of 20 credit hours before the end of the first year of college is a strong predictor of timely college graduation, and recommends expansion of dual enrollment programs so that all high school students can enter college with six credits under their belts. DEHP participants well exceed this goal, completing an average of 19 credits hours with an average GPA of 3.48 prior to high school graduation during the 2010-11 academic year.

As noted previously, a third of DEHP students readmit to the university following high school graduation, providing a pipeline for KSU's Undergraduate Honors Program and graduate programs. Former DEHP students who graduated from KSU from 2008-2011 earned higher GPAs than other students who began college as freshmen in the same term. The average cumulative GPA for DEHP students at the time of college graduation was 3.4, versus 3.2 for other students. In addition, former DEHP students are significantly more likely to graduate in four years than other students. Of students who began as full-time freshmen from 2003-2006, 64% of students who had participated in DEHP graduated within four years, versus 12% of other students. Former DEHP students are also more likely than the general student population to enroll in graduate programs and complete masters degrees at KSU (5% of former DEHP students versus .002% of students entering KSU in the same terms).

A limitation of this data common to many case studies of dual enrollment (Karp & Jeong, 2008) is that it compares DEHP students to the general student population, rather than to students whose admissions scores indicate that they are of similar academic ability. While controlling for academic ability would be ideal, this is not something DEHP staff has yet been able to accomplish given current campus resources and expertise.

Program viability. Program viability is concerned with future demand for the program and financial sustainability given current and projected costs and revenues. Previous research has found that dual enrollment yields greater positive effects on the enrollment and revenues of two-year colleges than four-year colleges (Mokher & McLendon, 2009). Proving the value of dual enrollment from a financial standpoint is a particular issue for four-year institutions in Georgia, which are mandated to offer dual enrollment since the passage of the Move on When Ready (MOWR) bill in 2009, but take a financial loss on each MOWR student compared to other students. This is because the state's payment amount at the student's high school FTE rate (\$1,439 per semester in 2010-11), is only about half of current tuition and fees at most four-year institutions. At KSU in 2010-11, the loss was \$1,096 per MOWR student, per semester. (Two-year institutions, with lower tuition and fees, tend to break even under MOWR funding). For this reason, as well as concerns that

high school students may not have the maturity for full-time college work required by MOWR, some Georgia institutions have set extremely high admissions standards for MOWR students, which have the effect of limiting enrollment. KSU also takes a loss (\$254 per student per semester in 2010-11) on students choosing Accel funding. If KSU were to discontinue its current fee waivers for DEHP students, Accel students would be responsible for more than \$500 in fees per semester, which could be expected to reduce enrollment. It should be noted that KSU's losses are offset by the fact that DEHP students are included in KSU's enrollment headcount for state formula funding. For the 2010-11 year, this funding was approximately \$3,700 per student. In short, dual enrollment's impact on the university's bottom line is tenuous, and as in other states, current economic conditions and legislative priorities are not likely to increase state funding for dual enrollment.

The outlook for program viability is brighter from the standpoint of demand. Rapid enrollment growth (38% annually) over the last three years indicates strong interest in the program, which is likely to increase as the generous MOWR funding program becomes more widely known. There is demand from high schools which have cut course offerings due to state budget reductions, particularly in the area of foreign languages, or which have students who have exhausted the curriculum in a

particular subject. There is demand from home-schooling families looking for traditional, in-class instruction in particular subjects.

At the same time, public high schools have several disincentives to participate in dual enrollment, as they lose FTE funds for dual-enrolled students and lose enrollment from Advanced Placement courses, which lowers their ranking and prestige on a state "Education Scoreboard" that rewards schools for AP enrollment but not for dual enrollment (*Dual Enrollment, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate in Georgia*, 2008). Anecdotal evidence suggests perceptions among some counselors that AP courses are considered more favorably in college admissions decisions than dual enrollment, and that dual enrollment will remove the best students from the high school. Counselors may also dislike the paperwork and counseling time required for dual enrollment students. Nearly a third (31%) of DEHP students noted in their exit survey that their high school counselors discouraged their participation in dual enrollment, and in most cases, encouraged them to take AP courses instead (see also Klopfenstein in this volume).

From a community relations standpoint, dual enrollment is a hero to families whose students have suffered from bullying or cliques in the high school; to the student who can continue to take Chinese after it has been cut by the high school; to the

student who can pursue advanced math after she has “maxed out” the high school curriculum; to the elite athlete or performer who can arrange a flexible schedule to accommodate training; and to families who save thousands on college expenses. The ad hoc testimonies of these parents and students when they encounter KSU officials in the community cannot be underestimated. KSU’s exit surveys indicate that the most highly rated factors in students’ decisions to participate in dual enrollment were to “get out of the high school environment” (75%); “reduce the cost of a college education” (66%); and “reduce the amount of time spent in college or grad school” (66%).

Challenges to DEHP’s viability relate to stresses caused by rapid enrollment growth campus-wide and institutional buy-in. Parking and classroom space are at peak capacity. Department and college-level administrators may not see dual enrollment as relevant to their program goals. They may view DEHP students as taking seats from majors or students who need to graduate. Departments facing faculty shortages and under pressure to increase class sizes may resist providing faculty to teach small honors sections populated by DEHP and honors students. Commitment to dual enrollment from top administration is needed to overcome these internal challenges. While these issues are ongoing, DEHP assessment results have been helpful in gaining top administrative support.

Conclusion

The KSU example shows that relatively simple program assessments can provide evidence that dual enrollment programs positively impact their institutions. Proving positive impact may be particularly important for four-year colleges, which nationally are less likely to offer dual enrollment (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005) and may see it as less aligned with their missions. The current environment faced by KSU and many DE programs reveals internal tensions caused by enrollment growth and resource scarcity, and external tensions between higher education and public school systems that are exacerbated by state funding formulas for dual enrollment. While proving impact of dual enrollment should be a priority in this environment, KSU's experience highlights the challenges of measuring impact without systematic support for data gathering and analysis.

The assessment measures employed by KSU are clearly just a starting point. The existing literature emphasizes the need for more sophisticated methodologies that can prove cause and effect relationships and overcome selection bias, a problem when more able students choose to participate in dual enrollment (Allen, 2010). Such research requires funding and expertise beyond most dual enrollment program staff. Although the gold standard of random assignment of subjects to dual enrollment and non-dual enrollment groups is rarely feasible, scholarship must control

for academic and demographic characteristics of students, a limitation of KSU's data.

In Georgia, the lack of statewide data-gathering on dual enrollment means that each institution may come up with different metrics for measuring program outcomes, if they are measured at all. Leading researchers (Karp & Jeong, 2008) have called for all states to collect comprehensive data, and for institutions to hire personnel with the ability to use it. Lacking state coordination, communication among institutions is needed to share best practices in program evaluation. While the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) is a resource for programs that use high school teachers to teach college classes, there is no similar organization for colleges with different dual enrollment models. The wide variety of program formats nationwide (see Chapter 1 of this volume) often makes it impossible to compare "apples to apples" and generalize findings. A final issue that remains relates to dissemination of information gained from assessment efforts. What are the most effective ways for dual enrollment programs to get this information to key internal and external stakeholders and policymakers?

In states where colleges and universities are mandated to participate in dual enrollment, assessing the impact on the institution may seem like a moot point. Even in this

circumstance, however, proving the value of dual enrollment to the institution is critical to internal support for dual enrollment, with implications for resource allocation, policy decisions, and advocacy for the program to other units on campus that can facilitate internal cooperation.

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