Research Study of Texas Dual Credit Programs and Courses:

CREDITS

American Institutes for Research

20 North Wacker Drive, Suite 1231`
Chicago, IL 60606-2901
800-356-2735 • 312-288-7600
www.air.org

Gibson Consulting Group, Inc.

1221 South MOPAC Expressway, Suite 355
Austin, TX 78746
512-328-0884
www.gibsonconsult.com

Contributing Authors

American Institutes for Research

Lawrence B. Friedman, Ph.D.
Lisa Hoogstra, Ph.D.
Andrew Swanlund
Shazia Miller, Ph.D.
Manyee Wong, Ph.D.
Daniel O'Brien
Natalie Tucker

Gibson Consulting Group, Inc.

Greg Gibson
Joseph Shields
Cheyanne Rolf
Elissa Yeates

Submitted to

Texas Education Agency
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701-1494
Phone: 512-463-9734

Executive Summary

characteristics of these students and their high schools; (2) data obtained from telephone surveys of responding key administrators or staff from a purposive sample of IHEs, LEAs, and high schools, the design for which involved sampling from 12 dual enrollment "clusters" made up of IHEs, LEAs, and high schools throughout the state that supply and make use of courses for dual credit through contractual relationships with each other; (3) extant data from THECB on the number of student semester credit hours attempted by high school students enrolled in college courses for dual credit; and (4) supplementary course and financial data on dual credit program costs and revenues collected from the study sample of IHES, LEAs, and high schools.

providers of courses for dual credit within the state; 48 high schools and their corresponding LEA were sampled. Administrators from all 15 sampled IHEs completed surveys. A total of 36 administrators from sampled LEAs and 34 administrators or staff from sampled high schools completed surveys. For the supplemental course and financial data collection, 14 IHEs (11 community colleges and three universities), 22 LEAs, and 24 high schools provided usable data (defined as data that were complete and reasonable).

To examine the state context of dual credit programs and courses (research objective 1), statewide data from the 2007–08, 2008–09, and 2009–10 academic years were analyzed to determine the extent to which there has been growth in enrollments in courses for dual credit. Additional analyses examined the characteristics of students who enrolled in courses for dual credit; the school characteristics that are predictive of enrollment in courses for dual credit; the types of courses that available to, and taken by, students for dual credit; and the performance of students in these courses and on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). Survey data from sampled IHEs, LEAs, and high schools provided additional data on the perceived quality of courses taken for dual credit; the various modes of delivery for these courses (e.g., at a community college, four-year university, high school, or via distance education); and the institutional policies and requirements that exist with regard to dual credit student eligibility and supports (e.g., student advising/counseling, financial support) and dual credit faculty benefits.

To examine the funding for and cost of dual credit programs and courses during the 2009–10 academic year (research objective 2), extant data from THECB and supplemental course and financial data from sampled IHEs, LEAs, and high schools were examined to (1) provide statewide funding estimates for courses for dual credit; (2) identify the instructional cost of courses for dual credit per student credit hour; (3) examine the variance in the cost of courses for dual credit by type of IHE and various attributes of high schools; and (4) determine the cost effectiveness of courses for dual credit by delivery mode.

A summary of key findings from the study is presented below. A set of policy recommendations on dual credit programs and courses that are based on these findings (research objective 3) is then presented.

enroll in academic courses, students must satisfy the more rigorous dual credit eligibility standards on TAKS or meet Texas Success Initiatives (TSI) requirements.[1]

Student Performance. The findings regarding student performance in courses for dual credit were generally positive. Virtually all students (99.9%) who enrolled in courses for dual credit were reported as completing these courses, and most (94% or more across different subjects) also received passing grades for the affiliated high school course. At least 95% of students who were enrolled in courses for dual credit in 2009–10 also met basic TAKS proficiency standards in all subject areas on the 2010 TAKS.

The percentage of students who were enrolled in courses for dual credit in 2009–10 and were commended on the 2010 TAKS varied both by course type and TAKS subject area. Overall, a smaller percentage of students who were enrolled in computer science courses and career or technical courses for dual credit received a commended rating on TAKS subject area assessments compared with students who were enrolled in other courses. For example, among students who were enrolled in career or technical courses, 29% were commended in reading, 27% were commended in math, 18% were commended in science, and 54% were commended in social studies. In contrast, among students who were enrolled in mathematics courses, 67% were commended in reading, 70% were commended in math, 48% were commended in science, and 85% were commended in social studies. These differences again reflect differences in student eligibility requirements between academic courses and career or technical courses and computer science courses.

The percentage of students who were enrolled in courses for dual credit and who met dual credit eligibility standards or TSI exemption standards in English language arts and mathematics also varied by course type and TAKS subject area. Dual credit eligibility standards and TSI exemption standards are defined in relation to student performance on the TAKS. In particular, to meet standards to take academic courses for dual credit in reading- and writing-related areas, students need to score at least 2200 on TAKS English Language Arts and receive a score of at least 3 on their written essay. To take mathematics courses for dual credit, students need to score at least 2200 on TAKSEe oe [(ac)-2(ag)-3(m0.003

possibility of inadequate demand for the supply where students did not enroll in courses or programs for dual credit for which they had an opportunity to enroll. For instance, it is likely that the proportion of students in some schools who were not inclined or were not encouraged to enroll in courses for dual credit was higher than the proportion in other schools differing in location, size, or performance.

The state has three areas where it can focus its efforts to promote students' interest and ability to access quality dual credit programs and courses. It can focus on increasing student interest and ability, on improving high school campuses' activities to increase student interest and support student efforts, and on improving LEAs' support for student and campus efforts. It is suggested that the legislature support the identification and dissemination of promising practices in each of the three areas, and possibly incentivizing implementation of these practices as well. Promising practices worthy of consideration for support in the three areas include the following:

1. Increasing student interest and ability
   - Increasing the proportion of Grade 11 and 12 students who meet or exceed the academic performance standards of the Texas Success Initiative
   - Increasing the knowledge of dual credit value and options, enrollment procedures and timelines, subsidies, and courses available
2. Improving high school campus activities
   - Increasing student interest in courses and programs for dual credit
   - Disseminating dual credit information and counseling students into appropriate courses and programs
   - Scheduling and arranging the logistics of programs and courses

- Incentivizing strategies to reduce the cost for students and their parents or guardians of enrolling and participating in a course for dual credit, such as book recycling programs, bulk purchases of books, carpooling, and discount gas coupons

This study relied extensively on existing data about the courses and programs for dual credit delivery, their providers and participants, and their costs and framing policies from TEA and THECB. Their support for this study is an example of their close and productive relationship in developing, operating, and using the results of their complementary data systems to gain a better understanding of courses and programs for dual credit. The continued successful development and expansion of these courses and programs for dual credit as well as increases in effectiveness and efficiency through the above recommendations or otherwise will require more extensive, robust, and systematic data collection and analysis against performance metrics, and reporting and application of findings from the analysis. A final recommendation is for the Legislature to support the further development, analysis, and use of such data.