

# **Concurrent Enrollment Policy**

## **1. Introduction**

Concurrent enrollment programs in Arkansas allow students to earn both high school and college credit simultaneously. These programs have evolved over time through legislative acts and subsequent policy refinements to provide accessible and quality higher education opportunities to high school students. Collectively, these policies reflect the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board's ongoing commitment to foster college and career readiness by integrating high school and postsecondary education. The intent is to:

**Ensure Quality:** Maintain rigorous academic standards by requiring concurrent courses to meet the same content and instructional standards as college courses, taught by highly qualified instructors.

**Promote Readiness:** Equip students with the academic skills necessary for success in postsecondary education and future careers, with a long-term goal of reducing college remediation rates and increasing college graduation rates across the state.

**Reduce Financial Barriers:** Mitigate financial barriers by providing scholarship opportunities and ensuring no student, parent, or guardian will be held accountable for the costs of tuition, fees, or materials associated with concurrent credit course participation.

**Increase Access:** Provide eligible high school students with opportunities to earn college credit, thereby accelerating their academic progress and potentially reducing the financial burden.

## **2. Arkansas Code and Concurrent Credit**

Arkansas Code §6-18-223 allows public high school students in Arkansas who have successfully completed the eighth grade to enroll in publicly supported community colleges or four-year universities. If they successfully complete these college courses, they are entitled to receive academic credit in both the institution of higher education and their public high school.

Arkansas Code §6-60-202 declares it state policy that qualified public or private high school students should be accepted for part-time enrollment in public institutions of higher education upon request.

Arkansas Code §6-16-1202, §6-16-1203, and §6-16-1204 detail implementation requirements and qualifications and training required for teachers of Accelerated Learning opportunities. For concurrent enrollment courses, the law specifies that

courses must be college-level, approved by the higher education institution, meet the same standards as post-secondary courses, and be taught by qualified instructors. The higher education institution is responsible for instructor support, student academic guidance, and access to resources.

### 3. Definitions

**Accelerated Learning** means an organized method of learning that enables students to meet individual academic goals and graduation requirements while pursuing higher levels of skill development, including without limitation the following coursework:

- A College Board pre-Advanced Placement and Advanced Placement course
- An International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme course
- A Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education course
- A concurrent credit course
- A substantively similar course or program approved by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education

**Pre-Advanced Placement** course is a middle, junior high, or high school course that specifically prepares students for an AP course.

**Advanced Placement** course is a high school course that prepares a student for a college AP test, incorporating required topics and approved by The College Board

**Concurrent Enrollment** is the enrollment of a high school student in a college course for high school credit and college-level credit. Concurrent enrollment allows students to obtain credit toward a high school diploma at the same time they earn college credit.

**Concurrent Credit Course** is a college-level course offered by an institution of higher education in Arkansas that upon completion would qualify for academic credit in both the institution of higher education and a public high school.

**Dual Enrollment Course** is the enrollment of a high school student in postsecondary education exclusively for college credit. High school students enrolled in a dual enrollment course may petition the district or high school to consider allowing the college-level dual enrollment credit to be considered for high school credit.

### 4. Authorization for Concurrent Enrollment Program

A college or university must be accredited by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) or be authorized by the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB) to participate in the State Concurrent Enrollment Program (CEP).

## **I. NACEP Accreditation Authorization for Concurrent Enrollment Program**

All colleges or universities with NACEP accreditation must provide written documentation to ADHE of the institution's NACEP accreditation status.

- A. A college or university accredited by NACEP has satisfied the requirements for initial authorization for Concurrent Enrollment Program participation, and must maintain NACEP accreditation for continued CEP participation; or
- B. A college or university with continued NACEP accreditation must submit written documentation to ADHE of its current accreditation status within 30 days of NACEP notification of reaccreditation to maintain AHECB CEP continued authorization.
- C. A college or university may request AHECB authorization to satisfy the requirements for continued CEP participation when NACEP accreditation expires or is revoked. The college or university must submit the written notification to ADHE no later than 30 days prior to expiration, requesting AHECB authorization for continued CEP participation.

## **II. Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board Authorization for Concurrent Enrollment Program**

To receive initial authorization through the state review process, developed in cooperation with the colleges and universities, and implemented by the Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE); a college or university must demonstrate that the college or university concurrent program meets or exceeds all requirements outlined in the AHECB Concurrent Enrollment Program (CEP) policy, outlined below.

AHECB approval will be granted to the college or university to offer concurrent credit courses for a period up to seven (7) years once the college or university has submitted a CEP proposal that has been reviewed and recommended for approval by a 3-member review team selected by the Concurrent Review Committee (CRC) and ADHE.

The initial proposal for offering concurrent credit must specify how the college or university concurrent enrollment program satisfies each component of the CEP policy by providing evidence of the following:

### **A. Faculty**

Each college or university must have a policy for selecting faculty to teach concurrent courses that meets AHECB, institutional, and accreditor guidelines.

Each college or university must have an official transcript on file for each instructor approved for concurrent courses which clearly indicates that the concurrent faculty member meets the requirements specified by the college or university.

Each college or university must have a description of the orientation process for all concurrent faculty and a sample of information that is provided to concurrent faculty during orientation. Each college or university must have a description of the plan to assure concurrent faculty receive appropriate, ongoing professional development.

## **B. Courses**

Each college or university must present a current list of proposed concurrent courses by course name, course number, and the associated Arkansas Course Transfer System (ACTS) course number (if applicable) and indicate any pre-requisite courses. All general education course offerings must follow the approval process for additions to the Arkansas Course Transfer System.

## **C. Syllabi and Course Materials**

Each college or university must have a policy regarding final approval of concurrent syllabi and course materials. The course content and instruction must meet the same standards and adopt the same learning outcomes as those developed for a course taught at post-secondary institution of higher education, including the administration of any departmental exams applicable to the course and the use of substantially the same materials and syllabus as is used at the college level.

## **D. Students**

Each college or university must verify that students have met admission criteria for the college or university and that the process conforms to AHECB guidelines.

Each college or university must provide an explanation of how grades are awarded and recorded with the college or university registrar and must provide documentation that the college or university course grading/awarding and course recording standards are followed for concurrent courses.

## **E. Student Guide for Concurrent Enrollment**

Each college or university must have a student guide for concurrent enrollment available to students and parents that outlines the college or university and school district participation requirements and includes

information regarding syllabi, academic standing, grading, links to ACTS, academic dishonesty, transcripts, current contact information for the concurrent enrollment liaison at the college or university, drop/withdrawal from class, academic due process guidelines, use of the college or university library, FERPA protections, policy for students with disabilities, sexual harassment policy, and student evaluation of instruction procedures.

## **F. Faculty Guide for Concurrent Enrollment**

Each college or university must have a faculty guide for concurrent enrollment detailing the syllabus requirements, FERPA requirements, academic dishonesty policy, grading system, access to input grades, grade changes, student academic due process, student evaluation of instruction, policy for students with disabilities, sexual harassment policy, contact information for the college or university concurrent liaison, child maltreatment and reporting policy, non-compliance policy, and process of faculty evaluation by the academic unit head from the college or university.

## **G. Assessment**

By academic discipline, a description of the process for assuring concurrent course content satisfies the requirements of the college or university academic unit. Examples may include common examinations, approval of concurrent tests by the college or university, common grading criteria, etc.

## **H. Evaluation**

Each college or university will analyze its student success, persistence, and retention data to determine to what extent concurrent credit courses are leading to student success.

## **I. Memorandum of Understanding**

The college or university must have on file a current written, signed Memorandum of Understanding with each high school with whom the college or university offers or desires to offer concurrent enrollment.

The Memorandum of Understanding must include the following:

1. The names and addresses of the college or university and the participating school district/high school
2. Academic calendar with which the college or university and the high school must comply
3. Guidelines and requirements for approval of instructors
4. Guidelines for approval and assessment of courses
5. Guidelines and requirements for admission and eligibility of students

6. Requirements for syllabi
7. Non-compliance statement
8. Length of time covered by the MOU and procedures for termination of MOU
9. Description of the concurrent course billing process.

The CRC evaluation report will be forwarded to the Arkansas Division of Higher Education for consideration of a recommendation for AHECB approval of the institutional concurrent enrollment program.

### **Continued Authorization**

A college or university with AHECB initial authorization for the Concurrent Enrollment Program can offer courses for concurrent enrollment for a period of up to seven (7) years unless the AHECB requires a follow-up review within the 7-year timeframe and/or the NACEP accreditation has expired.

The college or university must submit a CEP Continued Authorization Proposal that will be reviewed for approval by a 3-member review team selected by the Concurrent Review Committee (CRC) and ADHE. The CEP Continued Authorization Proposal will serve as the institution's request for AHECB Reauthorization.

ADHE will make a recommendation to AHECB for continued authorization or a recommendation for discontinuation of the institutional concurrent enrollment program.

## **5. Criteria for Conflict Resolution from AHECB Policy**

Institutions that seek to offer concurrent courses at the same high school and cannot reach agreement between each other, either informally or with a written Memorandum of Understanding, will appeal to the ADHE Commissioner. After receiving a written request from each affected institution that includes pertinent information and data, the ADHE Commissioner will mediate the conflict. If the affected institutions reject the decision of the ADHE Commissioner, the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board will hear evidence, consider staff recommendations, and make a final determination.

In order to determine the merits of presented arguments, the ADHE Commissioner and Board members will require in writing from each institution the following information:

- Mission of institution
- Willingness of institution to offer the course
- Capability of institution
- Type of courses/programs proposed
- Cost to students

- Desire of the community or local school district
- History of off-campus offerings in the geographical area or at the high school
- Evidence that this course offering will not result in unnecessary duplication of courses/programs
- Evidence that the course offerings will not result in overextension of state's resources
- Other relevant information as determined by the institutions, ADHE Commissioner, and/or AHECB members

Although the "30-Mile Rule" is not a criterion used to resolve institutional conflicts regarding off-campus or concurrent offerings, the AHECB does not look favorably on an institution that encroaches on the service area of a second institution.

## **6. College and University Concurrent Course Ownership**

Any course offered for concurrent credit must meet the same standards as college courses offered by the college or university. Students can earn college credit and/or up to one unit of high school credit for successful completion of each concurrent course that is a minimum of 3 semester credit hours.

High schools may have concurrent agreements with more than one college or university; however, there should not be unnecessary duplication of concurrent course offerings.

Institutions of higher education must demonstrate "ownership" of any course offered for concurrent credit for which students are reported. Ownership means the administration must exercise direct oversight of all aspects of the concurrent course, including participation in the faculty selection, orientation, professional development, and evaluation processes. Ownership of courses means that the college or university will:

- Provide the instructors with appropriate training and orientation in course curriculum, assessment criteria, course philosophy, and administrative requirements after approval of the instructors to teach the college or university courses.
- Ensure that instructors receive continuing collegial interaction with college faculty through professional development, required seminars, and site visits. These interactions will address topics such as course content, course delivery, student learning assessment, in-class evaluation, and professional development in the field of study.
- Ensure that students have the opportunity to utilize institutional resources including the college or university library and academic advising on the college or university campus.

The instructor teaching the college course for concurrent credit must:

- Use the approved college or university course syllabus,
- Use the same textbook or a textbook with aligned content and course learning outcomes as approved by the college or university,
- Adopt the same learning outcomes and assignments as those developed for the course offered on the college or university campus with limited exceptions approved by the college or university, and
- Use the same course grading/awarding standards as those on the college or university campus. If departmental exams are used in college or university campus courses, then those course exams must be used at the high school site.

Simply awarding college credit to students who are enrolled in concurrent courses offered by a sponsoring college or university does not meet the principle of “course ownership” as described above.

## **7. General Education Courses**

General education courses offered for concurrent credit should be listed in the Arkansas Course Transfer System (ACTS). Students taking general education courses that are not part of the Arkansas Course Transfer System must be informed by the institution and high school that the course may not transfer to another college or university.

## **8. Career and Technical Education Courses**

Students enrolled in Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses that are included in the MOU agreement between the school district and college or university can be awarded college credit and/or up to one unit of high school credit for successful completion of each CTE course that is a minimum of 3 semester credit hours, as delineated in the MOU agreement.

## **9. Co-Requisite Remedial/Developmental Education Courses**

*(College or University Participation Optional)*

High school students may only enroll in remedial/developmental education in English, reading, and/or mathematics for concurrent credit if they are simultaneously enrolled in the corresponding college-level course in the same subject area. These types of courses, also known as co-requisite remediation, can allow students to access college-level material while receiving necessary support.



Nothing in this concurrent policy, shall require a college or university or school district to offer remedial/developmental education courses in English, reading, and mathematics for concurrent credit.

A high school student enrolled in college or university co-requisite remedial/developmental education courses in English, reading, and/or mathematics for concurrent credit must be notified verbally and in writing by the high school principal or designee that while remedial/developmental courses may be used as co-requisites they do not earn college credit and do not count towards graduation requirements.

#### **10. AP/Concurrent or IB/Concurrent Blended Courses** *(College or University Participation Optional)*

Advanced Placement (AP) courses are high school courses in which students are required to take the AP Exam and make the requisite score in order to receive college credit from an Arkansas institution of higher education.

The merging of AP or IB courses and general education college courses is allowed under certain circumstances, and these merged courses will be referenced as blended AP/concurrent or IB/concurrent courses.

- Colleges and universities that offer blended AP/concurrent or blended IB/concurrent courses must ensure that these blended courses meet all the requirements of concurrent courses as set forth in this concurrent enrollment policy.
- The AP course guidelines specified by the College Board in its published course description must be incorporated into the blended AP/concurrent course syllabus, and the core IB program requirements must be incorporated into the blended IB/concurrent course syllabus.
- The blended AP/concurrent course syllabus must be submitted by the high school teacher for approval by the College Board AP Course Audit; and the school district must have on file the written documentation of the College Board approval of the blended AP/concurrent course syllabus. A copy of the blended AP/concurrent course syllabus currently approved by the College Board must be submitted for college or university approval during the concurrent instructor/course approval process. A copy of the blended IB/concurrent course syllabus also must be on file at the school district.
- There also must be written documentation on file of the students who took the IB assessment with the assessment data provided to the college or university upon request.

- Students can earn at least three semester credit hours of college credit and one unit of high school credit for successful completion of one blended AP/concurrent or blended IB/concurrent course only if the student registers for concurrent course credit at the beginning of the term. (A minimum score on the AP exam or IB assessment is not required for the student to earn college credit for the blended AP/concurrent or blended IB/concurrent course.)
- Students enrolled in these blended AP/concurrent or blended IB/concurrent courses must meet all college or university requirements included in this concurrent enrollment policy.
- Any high school that cannot furnish data on blended AP/concurrent or blended IB/concurrent test takers (during an ADE/ADHE concurrent enrollment program audit) will not be approved for the continued offering of blended AP/concurrent or blended IB/concurrent courses.

## **11. Instructor/Faculty Qualifications and Credentials**

An instructor teaching concurrent courses must meet the requirements of the institution of higher education that is offering the course, the requirements of accrediting organizations, and the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Institutions authorized to offer concurrent enrollment in Arkansas should work closely with accreditors and consider the 2023 Higher Learning Commission “*Institutional Policies and Procedures for Determining Faculty Qualifications Guidelines*” or other relevant accreditor standards to assure requirements for reasonable policies and procedures are met.

An instructor's credentials shall be approved by the academic unit or chief academic officer of the institution of higher education offering the concurrent credit course, per §6-16-1203. Any instructor approved by an institution of higher education must possess relevant credentials, experience, and qualifications necessary to teach from the syllabus approved by the institution granting the course credit.

For the purpose of teaching a concurrent course under this policy, an individual under contract with the school district as a teacher will not be considered an adjunct faculty member of the college or university; although, they must be reported as an academic rank of adjunct faculty to AHEIS.

## **12. Instructor/Faculty Background Checks & Child Maltreatment**

College or university faculty who teach concurrent courses, regardless of modality (and/or faculty and staff that have direct, official contact with the high school student), must have a criminal background check every five (5) years and complete the child maltreatment training course as required of public-school teachers. Background checks and child maltreatment course completion records must be kept

on file at the college or university. It is the responsibility of the institution of higher education to adopt reasonable policies and procedures to comply with this requirement.

### **13. Concurrent Course Enrollment**

#### **Concurrent College Admission**

High school students enrolled in general education concurrent courses will be those who have successfully completed the eighth grade and are admitted to the college or university. Each college or university must specify the concurrent admission requirements for high school students.

#### **Concurrent Course Registration**

All high school students enrolled in the concurrent course must meet the same requirements for completion of the course whether the student is registered for college credit or not. The concurrent course withdrawal process and procedures must be implemented in accordance with established college or university guidelines.

#### **Concurrent/Dual Course Placement**

To ensure successful placement in concurrent English, math, and reading intensive courses, institutions are encouraged to consider a variety of factors beyond a single standardized test score. Procedures and standards for placement are outlined in the Higher Education Coordinating Board Student Placement Policy.

- A college or university may allow simultaneous enrollment in college-level credit and developmental courses.
- The board and administration of any campus may elect to set minimum scores for enrollment in college-level mathematics and English composition courses based on established and documented criteria, which demonstrate the students' ability to succeed.
- All concurrent students shall be assessed for placement into credit-bearing courses by at least one of the following methods:
  - An objective examination
  - Previous coursework and/or career training
  - Measures supported by sufficient analysis of predicted student success

The placement assessment should reflect a better than 75 percent likelihood of the student's ability to earn a "C" or better grade in the course in which the student is placed. A student's reading level should be strong enough for them to earn a "C" or better in courses that require substantial reading such as courses in the sciences, humanities, and social sciences. Ideally, students should possess a readiness for credit-bearing courses and the institution admitting them should develop and refine a system to determine this.

### **Data Reporting** *(via Student Information System)*

All institutions are required to collect and report placement exam/assessment scores for the purpose of AHEIS reporting although a minimum score is not required.

### **Payment of Tuition and Fees**

The college or university will establish tuition and fee rates for concurrent students.

The high school student or the student's parent or guardian shall not be responsible for tuition, fees, or materials for participation in a concurrent credit course. If the costs for a college or university course(s) are paid by the public school district, a college or university scholarship, a grant, or a private foundation a signed agreement must exist between the public school district, the external entity or foundation, and the Arkansas state-supported college or university.

The tuition rate for a concurrent credit course offered by a public school district or open-enrollment public charter school in partnership with an institution of higher education shall not exceed the standard tuition rate and fee structure of the institution of higher education providing the concurrent credit course.

For every one (1) academic credit hour provided by an institution of higher education, the agreed amount:

- Must not be more than two and one-half percent (2.5%) of the per-pupil amount established under §6-20-2305 that is allotted per student each year and,
- Must not be less than one-half percent (0.5%) of the per-pupil amount established under §6-20-2305 that is allotted per student each year.

Institutions may leverage the following sources to satisfy costs associated with tuition, fees, or materials:

- ACCESS to Acceleration Scholarship Program funds, or
- Funding from the school district where a student is enrolled, or
- Other consideration agreed to by the public school district or open-enrollment public charter school and institution of higher education, or
- Any other available sources as determined by the Division of Higher Education

An institution of higher education shall not receive funding for concurrent credit courses for tuition at secondary vocational centers under § 6-51-301 et seq. if the institution of higher education is already receiving funding designated for vocational

center aid. Nothing in this policy shall preclude money flowing to the secondary centers under Arkansas Code §6-51-305.

More details on funding for concurrent enrollment may be included in AHECB financial aid policy.

#### **14. Partnership Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

A written and signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) must exist to reflect the various expectations, obligations, and responsibilities of all parties.

The MOU must be reviewed annually, and the college or university must provide to the high school a list of all college courses that may be offered for concurrent credit during the school year. The unit of high school credit that will be awarded for each college course must be noted for each concurrent course along with the high school course replacement/substitution. The high school/school district or the college or university can modify or terminate the written, signed concurrent agreement during the annual review period.

High school students who desire to enroll in a college or university must first be recommended by their high school principal or designee.

High school students enrolled in college courses for concurrent credit purposes must be advised about the potential limitations concerning the transfer of college course credit.

The college or university must provide the school district with a student guide for concurrent enrollment that the high school must distribute to students and parents that outlines the college or university and school district requirements for student participation. The high school will assure that the student and parent acknowledge that the student will participate in the concurrent program in accordance with the stated college or university and school district participation requirements.

Concurrent program requirements and guidelines required for course instruction must be provided by the college or university to the school district and concurrent instructors.

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