

## FACILITATOR MODEL FOR DUAL CREDIT

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Few direct dual credit options exist for high schools working with major universities. Purdue University piloted a program, ACCESSS Purdue, in the fall of 2020 using a *facilitator model* approach with five high school teachers. This model provided students an opportunity to earn directly transcribed college credits for a course that is a pre-requisite for all Polytechnic majors and is one of three courses necessary for a minor in design thinking. The facilitator model addresses many of the suggested changes to current dual credit models, including: ensuring credit transfer and articulation, affordability, accessibility, collaboration with the high school and college, and student supports. By addressing these barriers, successful incorporation of this model is likely to influence an increased enrollment and success of all students, including advancing equity for low-income and minority students.

The facilitator model differentiates itself from other dual credit models by providing intensive summer professional development and weekly on-going communication and support between the university and the secondary school instructors. This results in accountability for a fidelity of implementation, allowing students to earn directly transcribed college credits to major universities, as the same expectations and coursework are provided. Student work throughout the semester is validated daily by classroom teachers and periodically through ‘checkpoints’ by post-secondary instructors.

A qualitative case study was chosen to explore the needs of districts and teachers as facilitators of the college curriculum through both a summer professional development and ongoing support throughout the fall semester. Roughly 80 hours of qualitative data were collected and analyzed from five high school teachers including multiple interviews, focus groups, observations, questionnaires, and artifacts to draw conclusions on the needs and recommendations for implementation of a facilitator model dual credit course through the first year of the ACCESS Purdue program. Both axial coding techniques and code-recode procedures were used to analyze the data. Findings support frequent communication, student feedback, and flexibility for teachers to scaffold and modify curriculum. Formal analysis is under way to investigate student self-efficacy, as well as supports for teachers utilizing the facilitator model.

The facilitator model differs from other dual credit models in the frequency of communication between the university and the high school. Our group of teachers met for 40-50 minutes weekly during a common time throughout the school day to discuss student progress, university alignment, checkpoints, strategies, and focus points for upcoming lessons. Teacher interview data suggested that while these meetings were recorded, having them synchronously was essential. On the facilitator model, one teacher noted “I know where to go. I don’t feel like I’m alone on my raft. I feel like I know where to send questions and emails and someone’s looking out for our students.” Synchronous meetings allowed for direct answers to questions and teacher-to-teacher communication around the curriculum.

Literature about the facilitator model suggests that teachers as facilitators provide the initial feedback for students, encouraging corrections and modifications before submitting their work to each checkpoint. Students also indicated a positive impact on preparing for postsecondary education in end of course surveys. One noted, “It gave me a sense of what a college course would feel like, so I feel very prepared.” As teachers frequently meet with a course coordinator from Purdue, questions and clarifications helped ensure alignment with university expectations. Our teachers also noted the advantages of a common time to collaborate with each other. As more schools participate, a greater network of expertise can be established for support with various approaches and scaffolding of the curriculum.