



FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Concurrent Education Program Rockford High School and Ferris State University

Concurrent enrollment provides high school students the opportunity to take college-credit bearing courses taught by college-approved high school teachers. It is a low-cost, scalable model for bringing accelerated courses to students in urban, suburban, and rural high schools. Students gain exposure to the academic challenges of college while in their supportive high school environment, earning transcribed college credit at the time they successfully pass the course. Concurrent enrollment also facilitates close collaboration between high school teachers and college faculty that fosters alignment of secondary and postsecondary curriculum.

Program Description

- Ferris State University general education courses offered at Rockford High School
- Classes taught by RHS faculty reviewed, approved, and prepared by FSU
- College courses are identical in content and rigor to classes offered on FSU campus
- Courses are offered during regular school day to fit the RHS schedule

Students

- Interested RHS students screened and recommended by RHS administration
- RHS students fully admitted to FSU based on 18 ACT or 19 on ACT plan test
- Must maintain 2.5 GPA to remain in program

Finances

- RHS faculty employed and paid by RHS as part of regular contract
- FSU reduced tuition to \$120 per credit, one third regular tuition rate ~~✗~~
- RHS pays student tuition

Current Success

- Pilot program began Fall 2013, 143 students enrolled
- Current Courses – English 150, Literature 150, Math 220 (Calculus 1), Math 230 (Calculus 2), Math 320 (Calculus 3), Career and Education Planning (CARE 102)

Advantages to RHS Students

- College study begins in the supportive home environment
- Students graduate with FSU transcript and up to 30 credits of general education courses
- Students can graduate with one year of college completed and without student debt

Future Plans

- Expand course offerings for second year of program
- Offer summer courses at Rockford High School

Senate Education Committee

May 14, 2014

Concurrent Education: Rockford High School and Ferris State University, A Model Partnership

David L. Eisler, President
Ferris State University

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you our work in concurrent education with Rockford High School. This is a wonderful partnership that results from the leadership and active engagement of Rockford School Superintendent Michael Shibler and his superb staff, especially Lisa Jacobs, who you will hear from later. From Ferris State University this represents the work of our Provost, Associate Provost for Student Success, myself and especially DeeDee Stakley, who you also will hear from later. This program reflects our shared desire to help students succeed and to effectively bridge the gap between high school and college.

There are many models for concurrent education. Frequently these create additional structures such as middle or early colleges, or require an additional year of study at the high school. Our work was based on the shared understanding that we would not create additional administrative structures, but instead work to meld the cultures together. This is not the simplest approach, and requires that both the public school and university work hard to understand each other. Our experience is that this has been highly effective, because it has built a true partnership.

The Program

Our work together is based on these shared understandings –

- We offer general education courses. These form the base of each student's college study and are the most easily transferred. The coursework offered at Rockford High School is of the highest quality, identical in content and rigor to the courses at any of our campuses. This is essential.
- The courses are taught by qualified Rockford High School faculty. These faculty are recommended by the school and then reviewed and approved by academic departments at Ferris State University. Faculty teach the identical syllabus, use the same testing materials, and receive special assistance from Ferris to prepare.
- Rockford students are reviewed and selected by the school system. They meet agreed upon entry requirements and are fully admitted to Ferris State University. Throughout the program they are closely monitored and supported by the high school.
- The courses are offered at Rockford High School during the regular school within the high school schedule.
- Ferris State University reduces its tuition to one third the normal rate and the Rockford Schools pay this tuition for the students.

Benefits for the Students

The very good news is our shared efforts are working and working well. We have just completed the first of the program and it has grown rapidly to include 143 students. There are strong benefits for prepared students from concurrent education.

- Students begin college study in the supportive and familiar environment of the high school with family support. They begin this study with teachers who they already know and who know them. Thus the chances for success are very high.
- Students can prove they are capable of doing quality college work. This is a source of pride and academic confidence they carry into their college experience after high school.
- As fully admitted college students they are building their college transcript and doing so with general education courses that are transferrable anywhere. This reduces time to degree and is done without the accumulation of any student debt.

- This effectively uses available space in the high school schedule and by blending the high school and college experience effectively bridges what can be a gap between them.

Benefits for the School System

We also believe there are positive factors for the public schools in this shared partnership model.

- It is a source of pride to the school system that they are now offering college courses to their students and that their students are succeeding.
- Rockford High School students are now college students and can enjoy the benefits of the college experience.
- For the extraordinary high school teachers selected to teach these courses it a source considerable pride and personal development.
- This is a collaborative, cost-effective approach which provides high quality instruction without additional administrative structures.

Closing Thoughts

Superintendent Shibler and I believe that this is precisely the way educators and the education community should cooperate. I salute him and his people for their willingness to make this a reality. We are truly grateful and proud to be his partners. What we have developed together is a model of which we are extraordinarily proud.

We are so very pleased to be helping students in this way. For both of us this is what is most important. Thank you for taking time to hear this testimony and consider how working together public schools and universities can help even more students.

This testimony and supporting materials are accessible online at <http://ferris.edu/president/presentations/2013-2014/index.htm>