

Illinois Dual Credit Task Force Goals

Goal One: Ensure Quality

To ensure dual credit course quality, consistency of dual credit courses with other college courses, faculty qualifications, and student preparation, the Task Force recommends:

1. Establish standards which will apply to all dual credit programs in Illinois by rule or code.

Standards help to ensure a minimum level of quality in program offerings. At this point, only community colleges are held to the standards in the Illinois Community College Board Administrative Rules. Independent colleges or public universities who may develop dual credit programs are held to no state level dual credit standards. Establishing standards which all dual credit courses must meet and which demonstrate consistency with other course offerings will alleviate concerns about course rigor voiced by senior institutions that are reluctant to accept dual credit courses. ICCB standards would act as the base with other appropriate standards added.

2. Provide administrative mechanisms to ensure these standards are applied and monitored.

For the State to ensure common standards are met by all institutions offering dual credit programs, oversight must be established.

Goal Two: Improve Access, Equity, and Educational Attainment

To ensure equitable access to dual credit programs and expand opportunities for dual credit as a tool for achieving educational attainment, the Task Force recommends:

1. Improve affordability.

Costs of dual credit programs need to be offset for many institutions and students to improve access for all qualified students.

2. Expand eligibility.

Narrowly defined restrictions on eligibility can preclude many qualified students from participating in dual credit programs.

3. Improve attainment.

Dual credit programs can play an important role in facilitating degree attainment to construct them so that they maximize opportunities for students.

4. Increase awareness of dual credit where it is being offered.

A concern for students is that they may not know about dual credit programs and the advantages they can provide.

Goal Three: Increase Accountability

To improve collection of information that will better inform policymaking related to dual credit and to strengthen evidence-based accountability, the Task Force recommends:

1. Establish a quantitative data-collection system for dual credit participants.

Illinois has no links in the data collected between a student's secondary and postsecondary records. A few states have created data integrated systems that better inform policymaking. Data collection and appropriate analysis is essential to demonstrate the effects that different programs have on a variety of educational outcomes.

2. Require independent institutions to submit data regarding program participation.

Currently, independent institutions are not required to provide information on dual credit. Data collection from all institutions in the state is essential to demonstrate the effects that different programs have on a variety of educational outcomes.