

New Research: Dual Enrollment May Have Unintended Consequences for Students

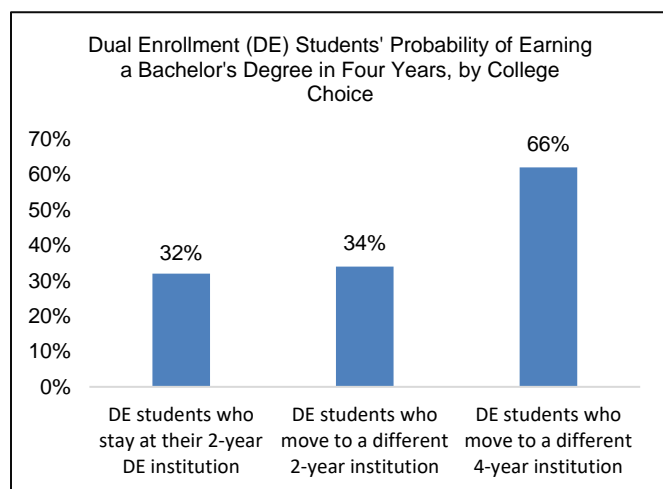
Half of students who participate in dual enrollment (DE) courses at 2-year colleges choose to matriculate at 2-year institutions following high school graduation, most of them opting to attend the same community college that offered their DE experience. For students who aspire to a bachelor's degree, "staying put" at the same community college can be detrimental to their goals. New research shows that **dual enrollment students who remain at their community college but aspire to a bachelor's degree are half as likely to complete a 4-year degree as similar dual enrollment students who matriculate at a 4-year college.**

Dual enrollment as a recruitment tool

Research demonstrates that 75% of institutions offering dual enrollment find these programs to be a valuable recruiting tool.¹ Community colleges that use dual enrollment programs as a recruitment strategy are successful – half of the students who participate in these courses in high school matriculate at a community college following and over 80% of those students choose the same community college where they participated in dual enrollment.² **It may be beneficial for community colleges when dual enrollment students stay put at their institution, but policymakers must consider whether it's in the best interest of students.**

Dual enrollment students may be half as likely to complete degrees on time

New research shows that only one-third of DE students who aspire to earn a bachelor's degree and matriculate to a 2-year institution after high school go on to complete their bachelor's in four years.³ By comparison, community college-based dual enrollment students who move to a 4-year institution



following high school graduation are twice as likely (66%) to complete their bachelor's degree on time. These results control for demographic and academic variables that drive degree completion outcomes. Dual enrollment students who aspire to a bachelor's degree may be able to double their chances of completing their bachelor's in four years by resisting the familiarity and recruiting efforts of their dual enrollment institution and instead matriculating directly to a 4-year institution following high school graduation.

¹ Kilgore, W. & A, Taylor (2016). Dual enrollment in the context of strategic enrollment management: An insight into practice at U.S. institutions. American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers. Washington, DC.

² Fink, J., Jenkins, D., and Yanagiura. (2017) What Happens to Students Who Take Community College "Dual Enrollment" Courses in High School? New York, NY: The Community College Research Center (CCRC), Teachers College, Columbia University.

³ Jagesic, S., M. Ewing, J. Wyatt, & J. Feng (2020). "Unintended consequences: Understanding the relationship between dual enrollment participation, college undermatch, and bachelor's degree attainment." SSRN working paper: <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3698991>.