

# DUAL CREDIT

## What is dual credit?

A dual credit course is a college course taken by a high school student for which the student earns both college and high school credit.

High school students, usually at the junior and senior level, can earn college credit in their high school course if two basic conditions are met: (1) the subject matter of the course is based on the syllabus of the MSU Billings course for which credit is sought, and (2) the high school instructor possesses academic credentials and experience sufficient to be appointed as an adjunct faculty member of the sponsoring MSU Billings academic department to teach the course at the collegiate level. In short, a dual credit course must reflect the academic rigor of a college-level course and be taught by a fully qualified instructor.

## What are the benefits of enrolling in dual credit courses?

- **Dual credit courses are actual college transcribed courses.** These courses enable a student to make substantial progress towards a college degree before finishing high school.
- **Dual credit students are official college students having access to the full range of services offered by the University.** These include the Academic Support Center, Career Services, the Fitness Center, and the Library
- **Convenience.** Courses are taught at the high schools.
- **Close to home.** Students learn what college professors expect while still in familiar high school surroundings
- **Reduced Cost.** A dual credit course costs less than regular college courses.
- **Student Success.** Successful completion of college-level courses helps students be successful in making the transition to a college campus later. Students will have acquired the confidence to succeed academically in college.

## What are the academic expectations in a dual credit course?

Dual credit courses are interesting and challenging. Students will learn a great deal, but they are expected to work hard. On average, college students should plan to study at least two hours a week for every hour spent in the classroom or online. Thus, students taking a three-hour class should set aside a minimum of six hours a week to study. Some students will need to study more. Most students should schedule extra study time when exams are planned or course projects are due. Students should pay careful attention to instructors' grading systems and course syllabus.

All dual credit classes, regardless of the grade received, will be recorded on an MSU Billings transcript. Grades that students earn in a course will become part of their permanent college records. No one enrolls in a course planning to fail, but students who find themselves doing poorly in a class may wish to drop from the college course (not the high school course.) Students who withdraw before the official drop date will receive a W on their transcripts. A withdrawal is usually preferable to a grade of D or F. Students who need to drop should complete the appropriate paperwork before the last date for course withdrawal.

## What factors should be considered before enrolling in dual credit?

Students and parents should meet with high school counselors and teachers to evaluate whether dual credit coursework is appropriate. All dual credit coursework serves as a beginning to a student's college transcript. A college transcript that reflects solid academic performance is the gateway to further studies in post-secondary education, and it serves as a primary criterion for acceptance into many programs at colleges and universities. The importance of high academic achievement in dual credit courses and the benefits students gain to further their academic careers cannot be overstated. In other words, a student's performance in a dual credit class has implications for his or her future academic plans.

### Will dual credit courses transfer?

- Students must earn a “C” or better in these courses to be considered for transfer.
  
- Dual credit coursework that is approved as a part of the Montana Transferable Core Curriculum will be accepted and transferred between public colleges and universities in Montana. It assures the transfer of up to 30 semester credits for those students enrolled in courses prescribed within each of six areas at a participating host institution. The six areas are:
  1. Natural Science
  2. Social Sciences/History
  3. Mathematics
  4. Communication
  5. Humanities/Fine Arts
  6. Cultural Diversity

For additional information on transferability within the state of Montana and for individual campus listings of courses that satisfy the MUS Core please refer to:

**<http://mus.edu/transfer/MUScore.asp>**

- Colleges and universities outside the state of Montana and private institutions within the state are not bound by the same credit transfer policy. Acceptance of transfer credits is always at the discretion of the receiving institution. **Students and parents are encouraged to contact the college or university of their choice for more specific information before enrolling in a dual credit course.**
  
- The acceptance of dual credit coursework by another college or university does not necessarily mean that transcribed credits will meet requirements for a specific major field of study or program.
  
- Those students planning to apply to another college should list MSU Billings as a college attended on applications and request that official transcripts be sent from MSU Billings Admissions & Records Office to verify previous college work.
  
- Those students planning on playing collegiate sports should consult with their guidance counselors and the NCAA Clearinghouse to ensure compliance, [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org).

### What assistance is available for students with disabilities?

Accommodations for students on an IEP taking dual credit coursework at their home high school campus are the responsibility of the local high school.

**For more information, contact:**  
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