

## METROPOLITAN COUNTIES, IOWA, DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAM PROFILE<sup>1</sup>

As previously described in the Accelerating Student Success Through Credit-Based Transition Programs October 2004 site profiles,<sup>2</sup> the CBTP in Iowa is composed of a partnership between Rural High School, Iowa Community College, and a local health care center, Regional Medical Center. Because Rural High School is small, the program includes students from multiple high schools in the area. The dual enrollment<sup>3</sup> program in Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, is focused on health careers and allows students to earn both college and high school credits simultaneously and prepare for a career in the health field.

Iowa Community College serves seven counties surrounding a metropolitan area.<sup>4</sup> In addition to the main campus, located in a major city in the center of its service area, Iowa Community College has five satellite campuses. These are part of the college's efforts to be accessible to all students in the area; without them, students in the far reaches of the seven counties would be an hour's drive from the college. The main campus is large, with manicured lawns and 26 academic buildings. It also has a number of agricultural fields, new sports facilities, an

equestrian center, and student apartments. In the fall of 2002, Iowa Community College enrolled 14,000 students. The student population was approximately 80 percent white.

Rural High School is located 45 minutes from the main campus of Iowa Community College. The high school enrolls approximately 400 students in grades nine through 12 and it is the only secondary school in its town. It is a single story building with two wings leading out from a central gathering area. Three percent of its students are African-American or Hispanic, and the rest are white. Eighteen percent of students are eligible for free or reduced lunch.

The dual enrollment program runs from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. each afternoon. Students leave high school in order to attend the program. During the second semester of the program, students complete clinical rotations in addition to their classroom studies, in order to practice their nursing skills.

In past years, the dual enrollment program has met at the Regional Medical Center, which is a small health care center only a few minutes drive from Rural High School. The Regional Medical Center has 25 beds, an emergency room, and outpatient services for

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<sup>1</sup> In order to give the study participants anonymity, the specific research sites were given pseudonyms. However, the name of the general program is used in some cases.

<sup>2</sup> Please see the Accelerating Student Success Through Credit-Based Transition Programs study's Web page on the U.S. Department of Education's Web site to download and view two-page profiles of each of the study's five case sites at: [www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/cclo/cbtrans/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/cclo/cbtrans/index.html).

<sup>3</sup> Please also see on the study Web page, listed above, the program description for more information on dual enrollment.

<sup>4</sup> This descriptive information is provided so the reader has a better understanding of the program environment.

the surrounding community. Classes were held at the medical center's cafeteria, which is a large, bright room on the first floor suitable for such activity. For the 2004–05 school year, a space shortage at the medical center resulted in the program changing its location. Classes now meet at a satellite campus of Iowa Community College, a 20-minute drive from Rural High School.

The Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program is one of nearly 200 dual enrollment programs overseen by Iowa Community College. Therefore, the college has an extensive administrative organization devoted to overseeing and coordinating dual enrollment opportunities in its service area. This includes four college-based administrators who serve as liaisons among the high schools, college academic departments, and employer partners. There is also an advisory board, through which industry professionals provide guidance to program administrators and staff.

There are two dual enrollment instructors teaching in the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program. The course instructor, who is also a registered nurse on staff at a local hospital, is responsible for day-to-day instruction and student evaluation. The clinical instructor is also a registered nurse, and is responsible for overseeing small groups of students as they practice their skills in workplace settings. Both instructors are considered employees of the college. At Rural High School, one of the two guidance counselors oversees the coordination of the dual enrollment program.

## Student Outreach

Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment staff use multiple methods to inform potential students about the program. Typically, Iowa Community College provides information to Rural High School, and Rural High School staff members use this information to encourage students to enroll.

Iowa Community College has created and produced a number of outreach materials, including glossy brochures and posters in order to attract students to the program. These materials highlight the benefits of program participation, explain the program, and provide information about enrollment. They are provided to the high school for display in the guidance office, classrooms and hallways. This information is also available to students through a Web site maintained by Iowa Community College. In addition, Iowa Community College provides high schools with information about the dual enrollment program that may be included in the high school's course of study guide.

Finally, Iowa Community College holds an annual recruitment day on the college campus to provide interested students with more information about the program. Prospective students can learn about the curriculum, watch a demonstration in which current students demonstrate their nursing skills, and have the opportunity to ask program administrators and instructors questions.

Although potential students receive information about the program from a variety of formal information sources, most recruitment efforts are informal. The

program relies heavily on guidance counselors seeking out students who may benefit from the program and encouraging them to enroll. Similarly, high school teachers (such as science teachers or the school nurse) often direct students with an interest in health careers to the program. Finally, Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment has a strong reputation in the Rural High School community. Many students are recruited into the program by the positive word of mouth that the program receives. Iowa Community College and Rural High School staff rely heavily on these informal recruitment mechanisms.

### **Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment Program Application Process**

Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment is an open-access program that seeks to include all juniors and seniors interested in health careers. The college-based administrators of the program have made a deliberate choice not to require a minimum grade point average or standardized test score.

However, because the program is academically demanding and requires a high level of maturity from the students (particularly when interacting with patients), Iowa Community College asks that the staff members at Rural High School undertake an informal screening process. They expect that the guidance counselors will discourage students with poor attendance records or past disciplinary actions on record from participating in the program.

Additionally, in order to ensure that dual enrollment students are able to succeed in

their college courses, Iowa Community College and Rural High School require that all dual enrollment students successfully complete a biology course and a wellness course prior to enrolling in the program. These courses provide students with the content knowledge necessary to succeed in college-level health courses. They are not, however, explicitly linked to the college curriculum used in the dual enrollment program.

Students who wish to participate in the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program must complete an application form. This form is essentially a registration form, on which students are asked to indicate their name, contact information, and the semester during which they would like to begin participation. This information is submitted to Iowa Community College. At the same time, students must register through Rural High School for the program, as they would for any other high school course.

### **Program Orientation Process**

Each fall, the course instructor of the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program conducts an orientation for the students enrolled in the program during the first week of classes. The instructor gives the students explicit instructions regarding program expectations, including the strict attendance policy, grading policies, and immunization requirements. During this time, the instructor also describes the curriculum and gives an overview of program activities.

## College Course Registration Process

Once students elect to enroll in the program, they commit to taking seven college courses. These courses fulfill the prerequisites for most health careers programs at Iowa Community College.

As noted earlier, high school registration for the program is the same as registration for any other high school course. With regard to college registration, over the summer, Iowa Community College sends students enrolled in the program through the high school an information packet and registration forms. The students must return the registration forms to the program instructor during the first week of the classes. The instructor, in turn, submits the completed forms to Iowa Community College.

## College Credit Curriculum and Program

Students in the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program earn 10.5 college credits by taking seven college courses: Professionals in Health, Health Skills 1, Health Skills 2, Basic Medical Terminology, First Aid Concepts, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) for the Health Care Provider, and Nurse Aid. Students who successfully complete the Nurse Aid course are eligible to sit for the national licensing examination to become Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs). Upon passing the exam (which they must sign up for independently of the dual enrollment program), students may become employed as CNAs.

As a group, these courses provide students with a basic background for a variety of

health professions, including nursing, dental hygiene, and physical therapy. The curriculum exposes them to the types of health professions they may enter, as well as the knowledge they need to succeed in these fields. Students learn basic anatomy and medical terminology, as well as many skills required of health professionals, including basic patient care. Students also learn immediately practical skills, including CPR and first aid.

The courses taught through the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program, particularly the Nurse Aid course, require students to participate in clinical practice. This includes working, under supervision, at Regional Medical Center and at a local nursing home. During their clinical practice, students practice waking patients, bathing them and bringing them breakfast, as well as taking their vital signs. For this clinical experience, Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment students are expected to arrive at the hospital at 6:30 a.m. in order to complete their duties prior to school. The students also spend three eight-hour shifts at the nursing home as part of their clinical training, which allows them to experience the hours and demands placed on CNAs working in long-term care. On days that they conduct their clinical rotations, students are excused from their afternoon class session. During both clinical experiences, students are expected to perform specific competencies, or skills, under the eye of an instructor. They are graded on their performance of these competencies, and must perform them successfully in order to be eligible to take the CNA examination.

## Exhibit A-4: Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment Program–Health Careers Academy Sample Course Sequence

Semester	Courses
1	Professionals in Health (2 college credits) Health Skills I (1 college credit) First Aid Concepts (.5 college credit) Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) for the Health Care Provider (.5 college credit) Basic Medical Terminology, part I (credit earned after completion of part II)
2	Health Skills II (1 college credit) Certified Nurse Aid (3 college credits)–includes 40 hours of clinical practice Basic Medical Terminology, part II (2.5 college credits for both semesters)

Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program instructors use the same textbooks and cover the same topics that instructors do at Iowa Community College. Students also are held to the same standards as their college-aged counterparts.

However, the structure of the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program results in a different organization of instruction than typically occurs at the college. Rather than offering the students seven discrete courses, Iowa Community College nursing faculty have worked carefully to combine them into a seamless curriculum covering multiple courses simultaneously. Students in the program attend class every day (in contrast to a college student who might only have class three days a week). Therefore, on any given day, students in the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program may spend 15 minutes studying medical terminology, 45 minutes learning about professionals in health, and another 30 minutes practicing first aid skills. The following day, students may spend 60 minutes on medical terminology and 30 minutes covering the Health Skills I curriculum. This structure allows the

Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment instructor and students to make connections across the subjects, to spend more time on subjects that are difficult, and to eliminate redundancies among the courses.

It is important to note that, while the seven courses in the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program are not taught according to the same structure or schedule as they would be at Iowa Community College, the content and course expectations are identical to those at the college. Iowa Community College has created in-depth course syllabi and instructors' guides for each course. These guides include PowerPoint presentations that instructors may use during class and provide detailed information regarding the knowledge and skills that students should have at the end of each course. Each instructor is provided with, and expected to closely follow, these curriculum guides. Additionally, Iowa Community College has created companion student guides, which provide outlines of each lesson and highlight the expected learning outcomes.

### *Award of Credit for Courses*

Although the courses at the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program are taught together, dually enrolled students receive discrete grades on their college transcripts for each of the seven courses. Students may fail one course (Basic Medical Terminology, for example) but pass the others; this is reflected on their college transcript. At the high school level, however, students receive only one grade—an aggregate of their college course grades—each semester.

**At the high school.** The dual enrollment instructor submits an end-of-semester grade to the high school counselor. The counselor enters this grade onto students' transcripts. Students receive only one high school grade per semester, an indicator of their overall performance in the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program, which is counted as elective credit. Students receive one high school credit per quarter (four credits total).

**At the college.** Students are awarded credit for each course they successfully complete. The instructor enters students' grades into Iowa Community Colleges' grading system, which is accessible online. Once the grades have been entered by the instructor, they appear on students' college transcripts.

### **Support Services**

Students in the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program have access to a variety of support services. These activities are facilitated by the program's location at the Regional Medical Center and the satellite campus, as well as by the

employment of a practicing nurse as its instructor.

### *Academic Support*

Students who encounter academic difficulties with their college-level course work have a number of ways to get assistance. First, the high school is responsible for providing tutoring and supplementary academic assistance. Students, particularly those with learning disabilities and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), receive assistance from the high school resource center. These students also receive the same academic accommodations (for example, additional test time) for their dual enrollment course as they do for their high school courses. At the high school, the guidance counselor and the school nurse also provide academic assistance to those students who need it.

Because the college-level classes offered through the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program are small in size (usually around 20 students) and meet daily, the students develop a strong rapport with their instructor. Frequently, the instructor offers academic assistance to students who need additional help; this is typically provided on an as-needed basis.

Finally, students in the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program have access to all academic support services available at Iowa Community College. These resources include tutors and academic advisors. Because the college is approximately 45 minutes away from Rural High School, however, it is not always convenient for

students to access these services. Instead, they rely heavily on high school-based academic support.

### *Career Awareness*

Because the focus of the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program is on preparing students for a wide range of health careers, the program explicitly addresses career awareness, exposure, and preparation.

The curriculum covered by the program's college courses helps students explore a variety of health-related occupations. In particular, the Professionals in Health course provides an overview of the professional opportunities in health "from physicians to occupational therapy." Additionally, students learn about career opportunities during their clinical rotations at the Regional Medical Center and the local nursing home.

All students in the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program participate in at least one job shadow and have the opportunity to participate in up to four additional job shadows. These day-long events give students an opportunity to explore one or two health occupations in-depth. They are coordinated through Iowa Community College's Workforce Learning Center (WLC), a nonprofit organization housed at and supported by the college. The WLC coordinates work-based learning opportunities for all high school students throughout the seven-county region. Occasionally, the course instructor uses her professional connections to provide interested students with additional job

shadowing opportunities at the Regional Medical Center.

### *Career Preparation*

Career preparation is explicitly addressed in a variety of ways. As with career exploration, the program's curriculum provides instruction in career skills. The Professionals in Health course includes lessons on the job skills and professional habits for success in the health careers. These include emphasizing the importance of personal responsibility, conscientious performance of job tasks, and ensuring patient confidentiality. Students also learn how to fill out a job application for health-related occupations and have the opportunity to engage in mock job interviews.

Students also develop career skills through their clinical rotations. During these experiences, they are expected to behave as a practicing nurse's aide would, including treating patients with a high level of respect, watching for patients' safety, and performing their duties in a responsible, caring manner. Throughout both the class curriculum and the clinical experiences, the instructor provides instruction regarding job skills and expectations, job hunting strategies, and professional behaviors.

Students in the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program also have access to a variety of career preparation services. The guidance counselors at Rural High School work with the students to develop a career plan, which includes identifying career goals and the educational experiences needed to achieve those goals.

Students in the program also may use all of the career-related services at Iowa Community College, including job placement centers.

### *College Transition*

Students in the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program are given multiple resources to prepare them for the transition to college. First, Iowa Community College offers a number of on-campus events that expose students to the college campus. These events include the program orientation, as well as Transition Night during which students may visit the college and attend a “program fair” in order to learn about the academic opportunities available at the college and interact with college faculty and staff. Finally, students attend an end-of-year celebration at Iowa Community College.

Iowa Community College considers all students in the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program to be regularly matriculated Iowa Community College students. As such, students in the program may receive a college ID, which gives them access to the college’s library, sports facilities, and special events. However, students must visit the main college campus in order to get this ID; as noted earlier, the distance between the college and Rural High School makes it difficult for many students to take advantage of this program feature.

As Iowa Community College students, dual enrollment students also have access to all of the college services related to admissions and matriculation. They may meet with college enrollment counselors in order to receive

assistance in registering for additional college classes. Students in the program also are considered returning students, rather than new students, the fall after program completion. This enables them to register early for their classes. Because many prerequisites for majors in the health careers have long waiting lists, early registration is helpful in ensuring that those who wish to continue in the health care field are able to take the courses that they need.

Finally, students in the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program are given information about and encouraged to apply for scholarships for students in health-related programs by their program instructor.

### **Professional Development**

State policy requires that all community college adjunct instructors engage in college-sponsored professional development. Health academy instructors participate in these activities, which include workshops on curriculum writing and lesson planning.

In addition, the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program asks instructors to engage in course-specific professional development activities. All new instructors attend a program orientation, during which program coordinators and curricular specialists provide information about the curriculum and instructional expectations. All instructors also attend three meetings a year. These meetings focus on curriculum, instruction, and any other related issues, such as discipline strategies or diversity in the classroom. These meetings

are run by staff members in Iowa Community College's Health Careers Department and may also include guest speakers.

Finally, program staff based at the college visit each dual enrollment class at least once during the year. These visits are used to provide feedback to the instructors and to help them improve their teaching. They serve as informal professional development opportunities.

## **Funding**

### *Full Time Equivalent (FTE) and Average Daily Attendance (ADA)*

By law, all high schools in Iowa must pay for students to take dual enrollment courses if an equivalent course is not available at the high school. However, in order to support interinstitutional collaboration and encourage technical education, Iowa has developed a special funding formula for technically-oriented dual enrollment programs. The state reimburses Rural High School at 1.48 times the average daily attendance rate for each student enrolled in the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program.<sup>5</sup> The high school uses this additional funding to pay Iowa Community College for the costs it incurs in running the program, including the instructor's salary, books, supplies, and staff time for program administration. The 1.48

funding Rural High School receives from the state does not cover the entire cost of the program, and so it must find additional money for the program elsewhere in its budget.

The college does not receive FTE funding for students in the Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment Program.

### *Fees and Textbooks*

The Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment program is extremely low cost for students. Tuition, books, and fees are paid for by Rural High School, as per its agreement with Iowa Community College. Students are expected to return their textbooks; if they would like to keep them, they must pay for the books themselves. Students also must buy their own hospital scrubs to wear during their clinical rotations. The college provides the scrubs to students at a reduced price.

State policy stipulates that, if students fail their dual enrollment courses, they must reimburse Rural High School the cost of their participation in the program.

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<sup>5</sup> Iowa Code 2003: Section 257.11

## Exhibit A-5: Metropolitan Counties, Iowa, Dual Enrollment Outcomes, 2003–04

<b>Student Outcomes<sup>a</sup></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The total enrollment at Rural High School was 392 students, with 75 (19 percent) eligible for the National School Lunch Program’s free or reduced price lunches.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The senior class included 82 students, and the junior class included 97 students.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ All 82 seniors graduated from Rural High School in the 2003–04 school year. The four-year graduation rate for this class was 95.7 percent.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ During the 2003–04 school year, three students (all 12th-graders) from Rural High School, were enrolled in the Health Careers Academy. One student was eligible for the free and reduced price lunch program.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ All 3 Rural High School students enrolled in the 2003–04 Health Careers Academy completed their fall 2003 and spring 2004 courses with either an A or a P (pass).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Each student enrolled in the Health Careers Academy earned 10.5 credits during the 2003–04 school year. The total number of credits earned by Rural High School students for the 2003–04 school year was 31.5 credits.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ One hundred percent of the students from Rural High School enrolled in the Health Careers Academy in 2003–04 planned to attend college after graduation in order to pursue a nursing degree.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Two of the three students enrolled in the Health Careers Academy enrolled at Iowa Community College’s associate degree in nursing program in fall 2004. The third enrolled in a local four-year college.</li> </ul>

<sup>a</sup> All data come from school staff and were not externally validated.