

## PRESS RELEASE

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### ***Dual Enrollment Not Just for High Achievers: Early College Improves Outcomes for Disadvantaged Students, Study Finds***

**NEW YORK, NY (July 18, 2012)** – Once considered the exclusive province of college-bound high school students seeking more challenging classes, dual enrollment—in which high school students take college courses for credit—offers tangible benefits for students who are historically underrepresented in higher education, a new study from the Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University has found.

The three-year study of eight career-focused dual enrollment programs found that participating students demonstrated improved performance on a range of high school and college outcomes. Sixty percent of participants were students of color, forty percent came from non-English speaking homes, and at least one third came from families with no prior college experience.

The programs, located throughout California and created through partnerships between community colleges and local high schools, varied in structure and course offerings but all gave students in high school career-technical programs the opportunity to take college classes, and provided academic and non-academic supports. The programs were funded primarily with a grant from The James Irvine Foundation.

The study analyzed outcomes of approximately 3,000 dual enrollment students through spring, 2011, and found that the dual enrollment students were more likely to graduate from high school, enroll in four-year colleges, and persist in college than similar students who did not participate. Participating students also accumulated more college credits than non-participants, and this effect grew over time.

The findings are consistent with those from earlier CCRC studies indicating that participation in career-technical dual enrollment is associated with improved performance on a range of college outcomes, including persistence, credit accumulation and GPA. This study, however, is one of the first to demonstrate that dual enrollment is a promising intervention for students who might not otherwise enroll in college, and are at high risk of dropping out if they do.

Dual enrollment has become an increasingly popular strategy for improving college readiness for students—800,000 American high school students took a college course in 2002-03 (the last numbers available), and since then the numbers have grown. Until recently, however, dual enrollment had been reserved for higher-achieving students; in some states, students must have a minimum GPA to qualify.

To read the complete study, please visit: <http://www.concurrentcourses.org/publications.html>

**The Community College Research Center (CCRC)** (<http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/>) is the leading independent authority on the nation's nearly 1,200 two-year colleges. Founded in 1996, CCRC conducts research on the major issues affecting community colleges in the United States in order to identify practices and policies that expand access to higher education and promote success for all students.