

# A Proposal for Additional Accelerated Learning Standards

## INTRODUCTION

The term **Accelerated Learning Program** refers to a program that allows students to earn college credit while in high school. Note: It does not refer to the speed with which the learning takes place, but rather the acceleration of the movement along the K-20 continuum.

For the last few years, there has been increased attention to providing opportunities to earn college credit for all college-ready students in Oregon's high schools. As we broaden accelerated learning strategies, it is paramount that the credits students earn can be utilized at the higher education institution(s) at which they ultimately pursue a credential. To this end, institutions of higher education in Oregon have a history of coming together and establishing and holding themselves accountable to standards that promote high quality, transferable credits. A workgroup, established jointly by the Oregon university provosts and community college chief academic officers, was established in March 2015 to review these standards in light of new and emerging practices in accelerated learning.

Specifically related to accelerated learning, Oregon has two such sets of standards already in place. The first are the existing Dual Credit Standards, originally adopted in 2010. The second are the Credit for Prior Learning Standards, adopted in 2014. Each of these is relevant to the proposed new standards being established. They are described below and attached at the end of this document for reference.

### **Dual Credit**

Dual credit refers to a course that is

- a) offered during the day at a high school,
- b) taught by a high school teacher, acting as a proxy instructor for the college, who meets the qualifications to teach the course for the college/university, and
- c) sufficiently similar to the college/university course to enable the student to be described as "taking a course from the college or university." Dual credit courses are transcribed in a manner that is reasonably consistent with those of like courses at the college and without special designation.

Oregon Dual Credit Standards have been in place for a number of years and are modeled after, but not identical to, the National Association of Concurrent Enrollment Programs (NACEP) standards. Because Dual Credit involves taking a course from the college/university, the standards focus on the elements that are the responsibility of the sponsoring college/university for all courses offered and transcribed: curriculum, faculty, students, assessment, and continuous improvement (program evaluation). Following a revision in the national standards, the Oregon Dual Credit Standards were reviewed and revised in 2014.

Colleges and universities wishing to offer Dual Credit programs submit an application that documents how the institution's program meets these standards. The decision to offer or not to offer dual credit in any particular subject is determined by the college or university in partnership with the high school and in alignment with these standards.

### **Credit for Prior Learning**

Credit for prior learning refers to credit that has been awarded based on assessment of the identified learning outcomes for a course, irrespective of the means by which the individual gained the knowledge. As such, there are no requirements that students take a college/university course to earn credit in this manner. Credit for prior learning opportunities extend to all who may come to a college or university with knowledge, skills and abilities

gained through life or work experience, military or other training, independent study, or any other formal or informal learning opportunities. Although primarily designed to support adult students, there are options available to high school students to earn credit for prior learning and there are emerging models for accelerated learning that rely primarily on assessment of student learning.

Oregon has done significant, collaborative work to establish Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) standards for colleges and universities when assessing and documenting student learning attained prior to coming to the college or university. Oregon's CPL standards were adopted in 2014 and include credit awarded through

- a) Credit-By- Exam (CLEP, DANTES, etc.)
- b) Industry Certifications
- c) Institutional Challenge Exams and other exams
- d) Military Credit (ACE Credit Recommendation Service)
- e) Portfolios
- f) Professional Licensure
- g) Other forms of authentic assessment to award CPL credit

The Oregon CPL Standards were adopted in 2014 pursuant to House Bill 4059 (2012) and comply with the accreditation standards set by The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. They were developed to recognize and acknowledge that credit awarded for prior learning is granted only for evidence of learning and not solely on the basis of experience. Foundational to the CPL Standards is faculty involvement and use of their expertise to assess credit awarded to students. The decision to offer or not to offer CPL to students is solely determined by a college or university, which must formally adopt and use these Standards to award CPL if the institution decides to offer one or more types of CPL.

***In recognition of models that do not fit into the categories described above, the following new standards are proposed IN ADDITION TO the existing standards.***

#### **Proposed Additional Set of Standards – Dual Credit Teaching Partnerships**

While the Oregon Dual Credit Standards align with nationally recognized practices, they are quite specific about how to replicate the college or university course in the high school. This can limit other collaborative models that rely upon partnerships for delivery of the college or university course and assessment of student learning. The proposed Dual Credit Teaching Partnership standards address models by which the college or university course can be offered in the high school in partnership with and under the oversight of the sponsoring higher education institution.

A Dual Credit Teaching Partnership refers to a course that is

- a) offered during the day at a high school,
- b) taught by a high school teacher in partnership with a college/university faculty member who meets the qualifications to teach the course for the college/university, and
- c) sufficiently similar to the college/university course to enable the student to be described as “taking a course from the college or university.” Dual credit teaching partnership courses are transcribed in a manner that is reasonably consistent with those of like courses at the college and without special designation.

The proposed Dual Credit Teaching Partnership standards are modeled after the Oregon Dual Credit Standards. They broaden the options for offering college or university courses at the high school by providing explicit standards for partnerships to ensure appropriate expertise and alignment. This allows a high school the

opportunity to work closely with a college or university to offer these courses even though it may not have teachers who individually meet the qualifications for teaching the college or university courses.

Because this model involves “taking a course from the college or university,” the standards focus on those elements that are the responsibility of the sponsoring institution for all courses offered and transcribed: curriculum, faculty, students, assessment, and continuous improvement (program evaluation). These draft standards were developed by the Accelerated Learning workgroup in the context of the bigger picture of how colleges and universities offer courses and the importance of consistency wherever offered and however delivered.

### **Proposed Additional Set of Standards – Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning**

Both the existing Dual Credit Standards and the proposed new Dual Credit Teaching Partnership Standards apply to accelerated learning models in which the college or university course is taken by the students while in high school. However, a number of models are emerging that focus primarily on earning credit based on demonstrations of attainment of the learning outcomes associated with that course. The proposed Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning Standards address models in which students who participate in collaboratively designed high school courses have the opportunity to earn credit for a college or university course by demonstrating attainment of the student learning outcomes

Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning includes

- a) an enhanced high school course(s) offered at the high school and taught by a high school teacher,
- b) a focus on student attainment of specific, targeted student learning outcomes, and
- c) the opportunity for students to demonstrate that they have attained those student learning outcomes and thereby earn credit for a course from the sponsoring college or university. Courses and credit earned through Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning programs are transcribed with a special designation.

Unlike the Dual Credit and Dual Credit Teaching Partnership programs, where the emphasis is on “taking a course from the college or university,” Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning focuses on partnerships between the college or university to enhance the high school curriculum and provide opportunities for the student to demonstrate attainment of the student learning outcomes associated with a college course. As such, standards for these models focus primarily on those elements that provide assurance of and document student learning that occurred outside of taking a course from the college or university.

While this is precisely the premise behind CPL and the opportunities it provides, existing CPL standards do not contemplate the types of alignment and partnership activities between high schools and postsecondary partners that define some of the emerging models of accelerated learning. The principles that underlie the CPL standards are applicable and visible in the proposed Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning Standards. However, the robust nature of the Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning partnership would indicate that these models are not what one generally associates with CPL and hence a set of standards and more descriptive designator is warranted.

## **PROPOSED ACCELERATED LEARNING STANDARDS**

### **DUAL CREDIT TEACHING PARTNERSHIPS**

#### **Curriculum:**

(C1) - College or university courses administered through a Dual Credit Teaching Partnership Program are catalogued courses and approved through the regular course approval process of the sponsoring college and/or university. These courses have the same departmental designation, number, title, and credits as their college counterparts, and they adhere to the same course descriptions and student learning outcomes.

(C2) - College or university courses administered through a Dual Credit Teaching Partnership Program are administered in a manner that is reasonably consistent with like courses at the sponsoring college or university and recorded similarly on the official academic record for the sponsoring college or university.

(C3) - College or university courses administered through a Dual Credit Teaching Partnership Program reflect the pedagogical, theoretical and philosophical orientation of the college's or university's sponsoring academic departments.

(C4) - The syllabi for college or university courses administered through a Dual Credit Teaching Partnership include clearly defined learning outcomes and student expectations and are reviewed and approved by the academic faculty in the partnership from the college or university department/program where the credit will be awarded.

(C5) - Credit for college or university courses administered through a Dual Credit teaching Partnership Program are awarded based on documented student achievement consistent with the student learning outcomes and course content.

*For reference, in comparison to existing Dual Credit Standards for curriculum: Applies three existing Dual Credit Standards to Dual Credit Teaching Partnerships. Modifies C1 to add reference to student learning outcomes and modifies C2 for clarity and specificity. Adds new standards applying to Dual Credit Teaching Partnerships in C4 & C5*

#### **Faculty:**

(F1) - High School teachers teaching college or university courses as part of a Dual Credit Teaching Partnership are approved and authorized by the sponsoring college or university.

(F2) - Teaching partnerships demonstrate that the aggregate of the faculty roles within the partnership provides appropriate expertise in the content or professional area, and performs the duties, responsibilities and functions of traditional faculty, through clearly stated criteria, qualifications, and procedures.

(F3) - High school teachers teaching college or university courses in a Dual Credit Teaching Partnership have access to essential academic resources comparable to those of the sponsoring college or university as deemed appropriate by faculty in the department/program where credit will be awarded.

(F4) - The college or university provides high school instructors in Dual Credit Teaching Partnerships with training and orientation in course curriculum, assessment criteria, course philosophy, and Dual Credit administrative requirements before authorizing the instructors to teach the college or university courses.

(F5) - The sponsoring college or university has a well documented process for regular, ongoing, and substantive interaction between high school and college or university faculty in Dual Credit Teaching Partnerships to address student learning outcomes, course content, delivery, and assessment to maintain consistency across course sections offered by the college or university. This interaction occurs at least once a quarter/semester\* and includes a site visit at least annually.

\*College or university faculty partners may determine that more or fewer interactions are appropriate, based on the level of expertise of the instructor and experience working in teaching partnerships. However, in all cases, the interaction must occur at least annually.

(F6) - High school teachers teaching college or university classes as part of a Dual Credit Teaching Partnership receive feedback for continuous improvement to ensure that student learning outcomes, course content, and assessment are consistent with the institution's course, including annual teaching observations for at least three years, and thereafter following institutional practice.

(F7) – Dual Credit Teaching Partnership Program policies at each sponsoring college or university address teacher non-compliance with the college's or university's expectations for courses offered through Dual Credit Partnership Programs (for example, non-participation in Dual Credit Teaching Partnership Program training and/or activities).

*For reference, in comparison to existing Dual Credit Standards for faculty: Modifies two of the four existing Dual Credit Standards to apply them to Dual Credit Teaching Partnerships. Adds new standards specific to Dual Credit Teaching Partnerships in F1, F2, F3, F5, and F6.*

### **Student:**

(S1) - The college or university officially registers or admits Dual Credit Teaching Partnership Program students as degree-seeking, non-degree seeking, or non-matriculated students of the college or university and records courses administered through a Dual Credit Program on official sponsoring college or university transcripts. Registration, grading, and transcription procedures and timelines are reasonably consistent with those for other students taking the same courses from the sponsoring college or university.

(S2) - Colleges or universities outline specific course requirements and prerequisites for students in Dual Credit Teaching Partnership Programs.

(S3) - High school students in Dual Credit Teaching Partnership Programs are provided with a student guide that outlines students' rights and responsibilities as well as providing guidelines for the transfer of credit.

*For reference, in comparison to existing Dual Credit Standards for students: Modifies existing Dual Credit standards to apply to Dual Credit Teaching Partnerships and adds specificity in S1.*

### **Assessment:**

(A1) - Dual credit teaching partnership students are held to comparable standards of achievement of student learning outcomes as those expected of students in on-campus sections.

(A2) - The college or university ensures that Dual Credit Teaching Partnership Program students are held to comparable grading standards as those expected of students in on-campus sections.

(A3) - Dual Credit Teaching Partnership students are assessed using comparable methods (e.g. papers, portfolios, quizzes, labs, etc.) as their on-campus counterparts.

*For reference, in comparison to existing Dual Credit Standards for assessment: Identifies existing three Dual Credit standards as applying to Dual Credit Teaching Partnerships. Calls out student learning outcomes in A1.*

### **Program Improvement:**

(E1) - The college or university conducts an end-of-term student course evaluation for courses offered through a Dual Credit Teaching Partnership Program. The course evaluation is intended to influence program improvement rather than instructor evaluation. Names (of the instructor or students) should not be included in the evaluation.

*For reference, in comparison to existing Dual Credit Standards for evaluation: Identifies the existing Dual Credit **Evaluation** standard as applying to Dual Credit Teaching Partnerships. Changes the name of this section from **Evaluation** to **Program Improvement**.*

## **PROPOSED ACCELERATED LEARNING STANDARDS**

### **PROFICIENCY-BASED ACCELERATED LEARNING**

#### **Standard 1: Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning Requisites:**

1.1 For those areas in which Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning is awarded, each institution shall develop institutional policies and procedures for awarding credit in response to the Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning Standards. The procedures must ensure credit is awarded only for high quality college-level competencies. The policies and procedures must be transparent to all students, faculty, staff and stakeholders.

1.2 Academic credit will be awarded and transcribed only for those courses formally approved by the institution's curriculum approval process(es). Credit must be directly applicable to meet requirements for general education, a certificate, a degree or electives as outlined in college publications. Credit may be awarded through portfolio or other forms of authentic assessment.

1.3 The college or university provides high school instructors in Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning Programs with ongoing training and orientation in course learning outcomes and assessment criteria and expectations.

*For reference, in comparison to existing CPL standard 1: Modifies the two existing CPL Standard components for Requisites to apply to Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning. Adds new standard regarding instruction and training in postsecondary course learning outcomes.*

#### **Standard 2: Evidence-Based Assessment**

2.1 Each institution shall provide a guided process to assess student learning and to provide the required evidence for awarding credit. Through the Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning partnership, students will have the opportunity to demonstrate attainment of the course-specific learning outcomes associated with the credit to be awarded.

2.2 Evidence shall be evaluated by appropriately qualified teaching faculty.

2.3 All Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning credit must be based on sufficient evidence provided by the student. Evidence required by the institution must be based on academically sound assessment methods, including, but not limited to, institutionally developed tests, final examinations, performance-based assessments, demonstrations, presentations, and portfolios.

*For reference, in comparison to existing CPL standards: Modifies the three existing CPL Standard components for Evidence-Based Assessment to apply to Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning.*

#### **Standard 3: Tuition and Fee Structure:**

Each institution shall develop a tuition and fee structure for Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning that is transparent and accessible to all students, faculty, staff and stakeholders. The basis for determining direct and indirect costs may include but are not limited to the following.

- Costs for student services to guide the student and to support the assessment process
- Costs associated with faculty workload for the evaluation of Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning

- Costs associated with recognizing and supporting faculty and staff who are involved in partnership and assessment processes including any costs related to training and staff development
- Costs related to transcribing credit
- Costs related to scanning documents or archiving material
- Costs for developing a portfolio infrastructure and conducting portfolio assessments
- Other costs associated with assessments as identified by the institution

*For reference, in comparison to existing CPL standards: Modifies the existing CPL Standard for Tuition and Fee Structure to apply to Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning.*

#### **Standard 4: Transferability and Transcription:**

4.1 Institutions that award Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning shall work with receiving institutions to promote transferability of credits earned.

4.2 Each receiving institution shall determine the transferability of Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning credit granted from other institutions.

4.3 Documentation used to support credits awarded will be maintained as part of the student's official institutional academic record to ensure compliance with standards set forth by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, Northwest Commission on Colleges and University, and state administrative rules.

4.4 All Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning credit that is awarded institutionally must be transcribed to comply with applicable state, federal regulations and accreditation policies and standards. Notations on the transcript should identify Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning.

*For reference, in comparison to existing CPL standards: Modifies the four existing CPL Standard components for Transferability and Transcription to apply to Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning.*

#### **Standard 5: Transparency/Access:**

5.1 Institutional Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning policies and expectations shall be clearly communicated to high school students, faculty, staff and stakeholders. The following information shall be included:

- Institutional Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning contacts
- Available Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning opportunities and preparation requirements
- Tuition and Fee Structure(s)
- Risks to students and the cost of assessment where credit may not be awarded
- Information about the effects of accelerated learning credits on financial aid
- Information regarding the applicability of Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning credits towards certificate or degree programs

5.2 Processes must be in place for a student to request Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning credit based on processes established by the high school and sponsoring college or university for Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning designated courses.

*For reference, in comparison to existing CPL standards: Modifies the two existing CPL Standard components for Transparency/Access to apply to Proficiency-based Accelerated Learning.*