



SUMMARY OF ACCELERATION PROGRAMS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

(excerpts from *Florida's Counseling for Future Education Handbook*)

Florida provides many ways for students to earn college credit for materials learned in high school, such as advanced placement, dual enrollment, credits by examination, and the International Baccalaureate Program. Most of these programs are available free or at minimal cost to the students. School counselors help students by encouraging them to take advantage of these programs, and they work with district leaders to expand programs and opportunities for students enrolled in their school district. More information regarding these and other opportunities is available in the *Florida's Counseling for Future Education Handbook* online at www.FACTS.org under the category Advising Resources.

Advanced Placement Program

The College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) program is a nationwide program consisting of over 30 college-level courses and exams in subjects ranging from art to statistics offered at participating high schools. Students earning a "qualifying" grade on an AP exam can earn credit or advanced placement for their efforts. According to the College Board, ". . . More than 2,900 universities and colleges worldwide grant credit, advanced placement, or both to students who have performed satisfactorily on the exams, and approximately 1,400 institutions grant sophomore standing to students who have demonstrated their competence in three or more of these exams." (College Board 2000) Studies have shown that students, who complete a solid academic core, including advanced courses, are more likely to be successful in college. Many school counselors have found that AP courses provide the challenging content necessary to engage all types of learners.

International Baccalaureate Program

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma program is a rigorous pre-university course of study, leading to internationally standardized examinations. The program is designed as a comprehensive two-year curriculum that allows its graduates to fulfill requirements of many different nations' education systems. As with the AP and dual enrollment programs, students completing IB courses and exams are eligible for postsecondary education credit. The award of credit is based on scores achieved on IB exams. Students can earn up to 30 postsecondary semester credits by participating in this program at the high school level. Approximately 40 Florida high schools currently participate in the IB program, with the students participating at no cost. For more information on the IB program, visit the International Baccalaureate Organization at www.ibo.org.

Advanced International Certificate of Education Program

Like the International Baccalaureate program, the Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) program is an international curriculum and examination program modeled on the British precollege curriculum and "A-Level" exams. Several public schools in Florida have begun offering AICE courses and exams and public postsecondary institutions around the state provide college credit for successfully passed exams. For more information on AICE, visit www.cie.org.uk and click on "Qualifications and Awards."

Dual Enrollment and Early Admission

Dual enrollment allows eligible high school students to enroll in postsecondary courses for which the student earns credit towards high school graduation while at the same time earning credit toward a college degree or vocational certificate. Participating students are exempt from the payment of registration, matriculation, and laboratory fees. Students are permitted to enroll in dual enrollment courses on a part-time basis during school hours, after school, or during the summer term. Early admission programs are similar to dual enrollment except that students enroll in postsecondary courses full-time on college campuses and earn credits simultaneously toward a college degree and high school graduation. All 28 public community colleges in Florida participate in dual enrollment. The dual enrollment program serves a broad range of high achieving students, not just the top academic performers in a school.

The State Board of Education, based on the recommendations of the Articulation Coordinating Committee, recently identified the specific dual enrollment courses that meet high school graduation requirements and assigned a specific amount of high school credit that must be granted for each dual enrollment course. These courses must be accepted by all high schools in Florida in accordance with the State Board of Education list. In addition, school districts offering dual enrollment through a local articulation agreement must provide information regarding postsecondary dual enrollment courses that meet high school graduation requirements.

Florida Virtual High School

With support from the Florida Department of Education, Florida Virtual School was established in 1997 to create and make available quality on-line high school curriculum, including Advanced Placement courses. Florida Virtual School can be a great resource for students with limited access to AP offerings in their traditional schools. To learn how to access AP courses through the on-line Florida High School, visit www.flvs.net. Adult Education-Many district school boards offer adult education program course credit opportunities to high school students which may be applied to requirements for high school graduation, subject to school board policies.

College Level Examination Program (CLEP)

Students with strong content background in a subject area can earn credit through an examination program administered by the college they attend. One such program is the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP). Students participating in the CLEP are awarded credit on the basis of scores achieved on an examination. Candidates for the CLEP may include students who have completed an AP course, but did not take or earn a qualifying score on the AP exam. Other students who may have had several high school courses in one particular area may wish to take a CLEP exam. CLEP offers another option for students to earn postsecondary credit for their efforts at the high school level.