Concurrent Enrollment Tool Kit, Week 6: Understanding University Writing Styles

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Time Frame 10 minutes

Essential Question(s)

Begin the meeting by greeting the student by name and inquiring about their classes and how they are going. Ask questions about the writing assignments they have had in their concurrent enrollment course(s) or high school courses such as:

- Do you get the paper done in advance or wait until the due date is close to complete the paper?
- Have you used a prescribed writing style correctly such as MLA, APA, etc.? Do you know how?
- Do you proofread your writing before turning it in?
- What kinds of typos or other mistakes do you notice in your writing?

Provide the student with a copy of the attached **Tips for College Writing Infographic**. This conversation can help set the foundation for students to think about the distinction between high school and college writing, especially if they have historically done well in their high school English classes. When discussing this type of writing, emphasize the difference in standards between high school and university or college writing. Before concluding the meeting, make sure the student does not have any outstanding questions.

Summary

Week 6 of the Concurrent Enrollment Tool Kit is designed to introduce students to strategies for writing at the college level, emphasizing the different commonly-used writing styles and the importance of proofreading. Students will be provided with a handout that outlines tips to improve their writing.

Learning Goals

- Assist students in identifying the writing style used in their university course(s).
- Guide students in analyzing how they think about planning for writing assignments.

Attachments

- CE Tool Kit, Week 6.docx
- CE Tool Kit, Week 6.pdf
- Tips for College Writing Infographic—CE Tool Kit, Week 6 - Spanish.pdf
- Tips for College Writing Infographic—CE Tool Kit, Week 6.pdf

Materials

- CE Tool Kit, Week 6 handout (attached)
- Tips for College Writing Infographic (attached)
- Course syllabus (paper or digital copy)
- Student planner (recommended)
- Pen/pencil

Topic Focus

How should we think about writing?

One of the major challenges for students in their transition to university-level courses is to expand upon how they write. Though students may have been successful in writing in their high school classes, university courses will include new expectations. Writing at this level includes:

- The ability to apply different writing styles, according to the type of course they take
- Developing new strategies for success
- Proofreading to result in a well-polished essay

Discussion Starters

Consider starting the discussion by asking:

- What sorts of writing assignments you have had in the course so far?
- Does this course have a lot of writing you need to do?

Discussion Questions

To guide this week's discussion, consider asking some of the following questions:

- Generally, how confident do you feel in your writing for your courses?
- Have you done well with written assignments in your high school classes?
- How about in your university/college course?
- Do you have a specific process that you use for your writing assignments?
- Do you factor in extra time to proofread your essays?

Next Steps

To prepare for next week, ask students to:

- Consider the strengths in their writing and where they excel.
- Consider the areas for improvement in their writing and where they could improve.
- Bring their My Goal handout for next week.

Research Rationale

Research shows a clear and strong link between concurrent enrollment and increased student academic performance (Jones, 2014; Dingess, 2018). Several studies have also found that students who participate in concurrent enrollment have time to acclimate to the college environment and thus earn higher grades in their postsecondary careers (Allen & Dadgar, 2012; Dingess, 2018). This opportunity to build momentum also provides an avenue for those students who might carry complex social and educational challenges from high school as they transition into the university setting (Wang et al., 2015). A consistent concern with students as they transition from high school to PSE is that many of them might have difficulty in fully acclimating to the rigor and expectations of university-level coursework (Taylor, 2015; Vargas et al., 2017). This is especially apparent when looking at students who identify as first-generation college students, as they might feel overwhelmed by everything from student support to the specifics of financial aid (Lee et al., 2022). Concurrent enrollment offers a bridge between the familiarity of high school and the frontier of higher learning, building on the initial benefits of concurrent enrollment in high school to build toward greater academic momentum fueled by a smooth transition from high school to university (Wang et al., 2015).

To expand on the inherent benefits associated with concurrent enrollment programs, these programs are most successful when students are provided with extra guidance in how to navigate this new academic environment (Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020). Though students in concurrent enrollment programs might be high-performing, it is helpful to remember that they are still high school students and stand to benefit from “wraparound” services that counselors can provide as a bridge between high school and university-level expectations (Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020). Whether partnering directly with specific higher education institutions as part of the concurrent enrollment program or not, wraparound services can still be designed with the university course expectations in mind.

These tool kits are designed as conversation starters to provide the kind of ongoing support that allows concurrent enrollment students to be most successful (Johnson et al., 2021; Lile et al., 2018). Spanning a range of topics between goal setting and writing expectations, each conversation serves as an opportunity for relationship building and mentoring with students. For students who might not know which questions to ask or which resources to look for, these tool kits can help concurrent enrollment coordinators set a foundation for success for students to draw on after high school.

Resources

Allen, D., & Dadgar, M. (2012). Does dual enrollment increase students' success in college? Evidence from a quasi-experimental analysis of dual enrollment in New York City. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 11-19.

Dingess, E. (2018). The impact of the number of dual enrollment credits on racial minority students' completion time at five Virginia community colleges. ODU Digital Commons. https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/efl_etds/68

Johnson, J. M., Paris, J. H., Curci, J. D., & Horchos, S. (2021). Beyond college access: An exploration of the short-term impact of a dual enrollment program. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory, & Practice*, 1–23.

Jones, S. (2014). Student participation in dual enrollment and college success. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, *38*(1), 24-37.

Lee, J., Fernandez, F., Ro, H. K., & Suh, H. (2022, January 4). Does dual enrollment influence high school graduation, college enrollment, choice, and persistence? *Research in Higher Education, 63*, 825-848. https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s11162-021-09667-3.pdf

Lile, J. R., Ottusch, T. M., Jones, T., & Richards, L. N. (2017). Understanding college-student roles: Perspectives of participants in a high school/community college dual-enrollment program. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 42*(2), 95–111. https://doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2016.1264899

Taylor, J. L. (2015). Accelerating pathways to college: The (in)equitable effects of community college dual credit. *Community College Review, 43*(4), 355-379. https://doi.org/10.1177/0091552115594880

Vargas, J., Hooker, S., & Gerwin, C. (2017, November 1). Blending high school and college can sharpen the focus of each. *Phi Delta Kappan, 99*(3), 13-18.

Wang, X., Chan, H., Phelps, L. A., & Washbon, J. I. (2015). Fuel for success: Academic momentum as a mediator between dual enrollment and educational outcomes of two-year technical college students. *Community College Review, 43*(2), 165–190. https://doi.org/10.1177/0091552115569846

Witkowsky, P., & Clayton, G. (2020). What makes dual enrollment work? High school counselor perspectives. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 44*(6), 427-444.