



# Concurrent Enrollment Tool Kit, Week 9: Preparing for Midterms



Sherry Franklin, Laura Halstied  
Published by K20 Center

*This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons CC BY-SA 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)*

**Time Frame** 10 minutes

## Essential Question(s)

- Help students understand how to best prepare for midterm exams.
- Guide students in using helpful tips to study for midterm exams.

## Summary

Week 9 of the Concurrent Enrollment Tool Kit is designed to provide students with tips to help relieve anxiety over preparing for and taking their midterm exam(s).

## Learning Goals

Begin the meeting by greeting the student by name and inquiring about their classes and how they are going. Ask the student how they feel about their upcoming midterm exam.

Inquire if they know the format of the exam and if they are allowed or need to reference any materials.

Go over the **Preparing for Exams** handout with the student and recommend that they study in a way that best fits their learning style. Encourage them to try their best and to reach out to their professor with any questions or concerns.

Before concluding the meeting, make sure the student does not have any outstanding questions.

## Attachments

- [CE Tool Kit, Week 9.docx](#)
- [CE Tool Kit, Week 9.pdf](#)
- [Preparing for Exams—CE Toolkit-Spanish.pdf](#)
- [Preparing for Exams—CE Toolkit.pdf](#)

## Materials

- CE Tool Kit, Week 9 (attached)
- Preparing for Exams handout (attached)

## Topic Focus

### **What are midterm exams and how do you prepare for them?**

Midterm exams take place halfway through the course, in the middle of the semester. They will usually cover everything in the course up to that point and can be in many different formats. Midterms can be 20% or more of a student's final grade. Consequently, it is very common for students to experience testing anxiety over their midterm(s).

Encourage students to use notes from class as well as past exams and quizzes when they study. It can be difficult to find time to study when students have multiple classes and extracurricular activities, so encourage students to establish a study schedule for themselves to stay on track.

## Discussion Starters

Consider starting the discussion by asking:

- When is your midterm exam?
- Have you reached out to your professor about your midterm exam?
- How do you normally study for upcoming tests?

## Discussion Questions

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

- What percentage of your final grade is your midterm exam?
- Do you know what it will cover and the format it will be in?
- Do you have a group or a study buddy to work with?
- What materials do you need for the exam?
- How many hours do you study per week?
- What materials could you use to study for this midterm?

## Next Steps

To prepare for next week, ask students to:

- Set up their study schedule for two weeks prior to the midterm exam.
- Plan to study for 1–2 hours each study session.
- Practice self-care.

## 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](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.