# Concurrent Enrollment Tool Kit, Week 15: Preparing for Finals

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**Time Frame** 5-10 minutes

## Essential Question(s)

- Recall how students studied for the midterm exams.
- Guide students in developing a study plan for their final exam(s).
- Assist students in calculating grades for the end of the semester.

## Summary

Week 15 of the Concurrent Enrollment Tool Kit is designed to review tips for preparing for final exams and the end of the course.

## Learning Goals

- CE Tool Kit, Week 15 (attached)
- Preparing for Exams handout (attached)

## Attachments

- CE Tool Kit, Week 15.docx
- CE Tool Kit, Week 15.pdf
- Preparing for Exams—CE Tool Kit, Week 15 - Spanish.pdf
- Preparing for Exams—CE Tool Kit, Week 15.pdf

## Materials

**How can we prepare for a final exam and the end of a course?**

Final exams can be in a variety of formats. Some finals are traditional exams, others can be presentations or projects. A final exam is a student's opportunity to demonstrate that they have learned and retained the content from the course. Like midterm exams, finals can be 20% or more of a student's final grade.

To prepare for the end of a college course, students need to complete all their missing assignments and turn in extra credit, if needed. Encourage students to find what grade they need to make on the final to obtain the desired grade. This can be done by using an online final grade calculator. Discovering what grade students need on their final(s) can relieve stress and help them focus on passing the course.

# Guiding Notes

Begin the meeting by greeting the student by name and inquiring about their classes and how they are doing. Ask the student how they feel about their upcoming final exam and the end of the course.

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

Go over the attached **Preparing for Exams** handout with the student. (This is the same handout used in Week 9 for midterm exams). Discuss what worked well when they were studying for their midterms. Recommend that they study in the way that best fits their learning style.

Encourage them to try their best, manage their time wisely, and to reach out to their professor with any questions or concerns.

Ask the student if they have any missing assignments that could negatively impact their final grade and if they can complete them before the end of the course.

Using an online final exam grade calculator, help the student determine what grade they need to make on the final to obtain their desired course grade.

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

# Discussion Starters

Consider starting the discussion by asking:

- When is your final exam?
- What plans do you have for studying for your final?

# Discussion Questions

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

- Do you know what content the final will cover and the format it will be in?
- What worked well when studying for your midterm exam?
- What didn't work well when studying for your midterm exam?
- Do you know what grade you need on your final to obtain your desired final grade?
- Do you have any missing assignments you need to turn in?

# Next Steps

To prepare for next week, ask students to:

- Set up their study schedule for the final exam.
- Chunk study sessions (1-2 hours).
- Turn in all missing assignments.
- 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

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.