

College Credit Plus / Dual Enrollment: An Offer You Can't Refuse?

As parents begin to consider educational options for the high school years, they often ask about College Credit Plus (CCP) or Dual Enrollment at a community college or university. On the surface, it appears that this is a tremendous opportunity. First, it is free. Second, it makes it possible to complete the same classes for both high school and college credit. And third, it holds out the promise of providing academic challenges and opportunities for those inclined to pursue them. This sounds like an offer you can't refuse.



However, at Providence Extension Program (PEP), we believe that you should not be so quick to judge. These are some points that you will want to carefully consider as you weigh options for educating your high school student:

- **CCP or Dual Enrollment will not provide a Christian education.**
We say this at the risk of stating the obvious. Among Christian home schooling families, the number one reason for choosing to educate your child at home is to give them a Christian education. This will not be provided at a government-run, secular institution. Many of the instructors have an anti-Christian bias. Certainly, there is a time when it may be appropriate for your child to encounter such bias. However, we would argue that it would be better to continue to equip your child to interact biblically with such a bias during the high school years.
- **CCP or Dual Enrollment will not facilitate significant involvement in your child's life and education or present opportunity for teachable moments.**
Legally, the public college or university has no accountability to parents. Professors and administrators are not legally permitted to talk to you about your child's grades or coursework unless your child gives them written permission. Communicating with, helping, and providing immediate feedback to students are usually not the highest priorities of college professors and instructors, as many of them are at the university primarily to do research. Test grades may be the most personal form of communication a student has from a professor or instructor and, often, they come weeks after the test was given.
- **CCP or Dual Enrollment often does not live up to the promise of providing academic challenge.**
Community college and freshman/sophomore university classes often are not academically challenging to the well-prepared high school student.
- **CCP or Dual Enrollment grades go on your child's college transcript.**
This means that a poor grade earned in a CCP or Dual Enrollment course will remain on your child's college transcript, lower their grade point average, and make your child less competitive for college scholarships and graduate school admission, should your child choose to pursue it.
- **CCP or Dual Enrollment is not universally accepted.**
Colleges do not universally accept CPP or dual enrollment courses, especially for out-of-state students. There is the possibility that credits earned through CCP or Dual Enrollment during high school may not be accepted at the college or university ultimately attended by your student. Therefore, consider if CCP or Dual Enrollment is worth the sacrifice of a quality education in high school.
- **CCP or Dual Enrollment is not realistic preparation for life.**
What if your child surpasses all expectations, completes two years of college while in high school, and graduates from college at nineteen or twenty? It's not far-fetched to imagine. Consider this: what kind of "real world" responsibility is an employer going to give a nineteen or twenty-year-old, even if he is a college graduate? And, at what cost? We would argue that the very desires that you had for your child when you set out to homeschool is the cost for this achievement.
- **CCP or Dual Enrollment will not equip your child to live as a Christian and provide him or her with the tools to make biblically grounded decisions.**

Now, you may be saying, “All of this sounds good, but what am I going to do about getting my child into college?”

PEP is a stronger alternative to CCP or Dual Enrollment, providing the college advantage for home schooled students. Consider:

The majority of PEP's graduates have had little difficulty getting into college.

Our vision is “to fulfill the Great Commission by discipling a new generation of students to have a passion for glorifying God through their ability to think as freemen, to reason biblically, and to discern and communicate Truth to all areas of society.” PEP’s rigorous college preparatory curriculum gives solid preparation for being accepted into and succeeding at leading colleges and universities. Take a look at “Life After Providence Extension Program” under ‘College Prep’ at www.pep1.org to see where our graduates have attended.

Many of PEP's graduates have received substantial scholarships at leading institutions.

The experience of our families has been that investing those last two years of secondary education in PEP has paid off, not only by students being better prepared for college than if they had dual-enrolled, but financially as well.

PEP's integrated core curriculum provides your child with the foundation to be prepared for life.

PEP features a Humanities Core curriculum that brings knowledge together across three disciplines,

with the Bible as the integrating point and foundation of all learning.

PEP provides a discipleship model of education.

We seek to unite scholarly discipline with Christian nurture. As Christians, we are interested in far more than the transmission of information. Our desire is to partner with parents to help students grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our tutors work closely with parents and students and are able to provide personal encouragement and accountability.

PEP follows the Classical model of education.

Not only are students given information, but they learn to answer the “why” and “how” questions. Our Humanities Core A and B classes focus on origins – in Scripture, history, and literature – the “what.” Our Core C Humanities focuses on examination of worldview and assumptions; on learning what questions to ask to uncover underlying assumptions; and most importantly, on the underlying assumptions of the Christian faith. Lastly, our Humanities Cores D, E, and F teach students to apply this knowledge to the history, literature, and thought of the Ancient, Medieval, and Modern periods. In other words, there is a progression of knowledge and competencies that is built year by year in a deliberate manner.

In contrast to the “advantage” that CCP or Dual Enrollment offers, we would suggest the following:

Continue a home-based education with the help of PEP.

1. Take PEP's Core Curriculum in the Eleventh and Twelfth Grades.

Because of PEP’s unique Core Curriculum, your child will benefit spiritually, academically, and financially by pursuing a home-based education through PEP. This will prepare your child to be in a strong position to compete for substantial scholarships at competitive schools.

2. Prepare for and take AP and CLEP tests.

It's quite possible to earn up to two years of college credit through AP or CLEP tests apart from enduring the shortcomings of CCP or Dual Enrollment.

3. Prepare well for the SAT, ACT, or CLT.

Take these tests seriously. Enroll in prep classes through PEP. Do practice tests. Taking college entrance examinations is a skill that can be learned. The time and money invested will be repaid many times over by reaping the rewards of acceptance into competitive colleges and more scholarship offers.