

Heartland Community College



EARLY COLLEGE PARTNERSHIP PROCEDURES

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I. Course Selection Process

A. Submitting Dual Credit Course Requests

1. Early College Course Options

Current partners can access course request forms via our shared Google Drive hub on September 1. **Requests are due by September 30 annually for the following academic year.**

Completing your course request form merely gives HCC insight into (1) what college courses you desire to offer as dual credit options for your students and (2) what level of support your school may need from HCC. *We'll ask you to affirm your approved courses by or before March 15.****

» Prospective partners can contact the [Early College Team](#) to schedule a meeting to discuss procedures and possibilities.

2. Prospective District Instructors

Ensure that all proposed district instructors meet the qualifications to teach dual credit courses through our partnership. **The following documents are also due by September 30.**

- prospective faculty form (pdf) OR resume/CV
- all undergraduate and/or graduate college transcripts
- any applicable credentials, certifications, and/or licenses

**We will review previously submitted documentation for returning instructors for potential new courses based on request form entries. However, the district instructor or liaison must upload any recent documents relevant to new course requests.*

3. Heartland Internal Review

HCC Deans (or Academic Area designees) will commence a **two-week internal review process** following the annual course request deadline. We provide their feedback directly on an HCC Review tab of your course request form **during the 3rd week in Oct.**

II. Approved Course Planning

A. For Principals/Curriculum Directors/Counselors

1. Partner Dual Credit Course Disclosures

a) *Expectations*

- Courses offered to high school students as early college opportunities are college-level courses that require 2-3 hours of outside work for each hour in class.
- College courses may deal with controversial subject matter that is not typically found in high school curricula

- College course expectations for participation, learning outcomes, course materials and evaluation are included in each course syllabus.
- Students are expected to adhere to HCC standards and code of conduct as outlined in the Student Handbook

b) Grade Level

Early college partners must schedule Heartland courses **at the junior/senior year**. Qualified freshmen and sophomore students may be enrolled in the courses, but the courses must be scheduled as junior/senior course offerings.

c) Naming Convention

All Heartland dual credit courses offered through early college partnerships shall appear in the school's course schedule and on the student's high school schedule and transcript with the Heartland course code, number, and name (e.g., ENGL 101 Critical Reading and Writing) in order to promote ease of transferability and understanding on the part of the student that the course is a Heartland college course.

d) Maximum Capacity

Heartland's courses all have an approved course capacity specifying the maximum number of students to be enrolled based on the learning outcomes and pedagogical methods required for the course. (**Note:** *Mixed enrollment sections may not exceed Heartland course capacities.*) Early college partners must adhere to Heartland's course capacities unless a higher capacity is noted in the preapproved course lists for partners who exceed Heartland's standard meeting time allotment.

e) Textbooks & Materials

Textbooks and technology/software used in the delivery of Heartland courses must meet the standard for the College as dictated by curriculum needs. Information regarding textbooks and materials used to teach the course will be solidified between District instructors and Heartland Course Contacts and be identified on the course syllabus.

Early college partners should disseminate information regarding required textbooks and materials to students and how students should obtain them.

- The College will specify whether a common textbook has been selected by faculty for all sections of the course taught at the College.
 - If there is no common textbook, the instructor will determine the textbook and course materials in

consultation with the College. Textbooks and materials must address equivalent content and the same learning outcomes as the outcomes expected of the same courses taught at the College.

- If there is a common textbook and set of course materials, the common textbooks and materials will be used unless the College, in consultation with the District, agrees to a different textbook and materials covering equivalent content and the same learning outcomes.
- The College will consider any alternatives proposed by the District but will retain final decision-making authority.
- Where the College specifies the textbook, the College agrees to allow the use of the textbook for at least four (4) years, provided the use of a previously published edition of the textbook does not appreciably impact the content and delivery of the Course.

f) Canvas (LMS) Requirement

All Heartland courses will use the College's Learning Management System (LMS) to, at a minimum, provide students with basic course information (syllabus and instructor information) and, as indicated by the College, to collect assessment and evaluation data. *Where applicable, district instructors can request Canvas access for students taking Heartland courses for high school credit only.*

g) Course Evaluations

At the end of each semester, students are given the opportunity to evaluate their college courses, allowing them to speak to the overall college course experience. The evaluation will allow students to rate their experience according to aspects such as rigor level, critical thinking, increase in subject knowledge, and overall interest level.

h) Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)

When prompted, partners confirm logistics for dual credit course offerings and complete the MOA via Adobe Sign based on approved courses, administrative standards, and partnership procedures.

- At least one high school counselor and a principal/curriculum director must complete the MOA process.

- Early college partners must email earlycollege@heartland.edu to communicate any changes that occur **before OR after** an MOA is signed.
- Each signee and the HCC-ECO office will automatically receive a copy of the MOA shortly after signing.

B. Student Admission Process Timeline

Partners must advise students to complete the College NOW admission process during the appropriate timeline noted below to earn dual credit for Heartland courses.

- **High school partner admission** window: **September 1 to April 30** during the academic year before courses are scheduled to be offered.
- **Career Center partner admission** window: **until September 30** of the academic year when courses are offered.

Early college partners are encouraged to establish and advertise application or placement testing deadlines within those timelines. Please email us your deadlines as soon as possible.

1. Application Submission

The first step for prospective early college students is to successfully submit the Heartland student application by following instructions specifically for College NOW students. Students who complete the HCC student application:

- **do not** have to resubmit the application every year as a College NOW student
- will receive a welcome letter to the email address they entered on the application within 3-5 days of successful application submission unless application processing is delayed by system or user errors;
- must set up and access their myHeartland student account using the instructions provided in the welcome letter to get important college-related notices from HCC;
- will appear on the early college admission report (ECAR) emailed to district designees every Tuesday and Friday morning.

2. Placement Testing

Next, if required, early college students must complete placement testing at Heartland in Normal, Lincoln, or Pontiac.

- Students can schedule individual placement testing appointments OR district designees can schedule group testing sessions using the [Group Testing Request Form](#)
- After students complete placement testing at Heartland, their literacy and/or math scores should appear on the next ECAR sent to district designees. If not, contact the [HCC Testing Center](#).

- The HCC Testing Center lists [other acceptable standardized test scores](#) that may exempt students from completing placement tests through Heartland. Partner designees may upload official test score reports on behalf of students to the [secure upload portal](#). *HCC does not accept the Pre-ACT for Placement Waiver.*

3. Placement Testing Exemptions

Students with other eligible test scores may not need to test at Heartland

- You can review the current list of other placement test scores HCC accepts and upload each student's official College Board score report (PDF) on this [HCC Testing Center webpage](#).
- You can [submit high school transcripts here](#) to show proof of appropriate high school course completion if required for particular dual credit courses.

Submit documents for early college students only *after* they appear on your ECAR.

a) *Sample Score Reports*

There are many different variations in how the score reports may appear. The key information that we *must* have is the student's full name (first and last) and the date (or month & year) of the test.

- If the full name appears on the same page as the main scores, that is the *only* page needed.
- If the full name and date appear only on the cover page, please include *both* the cover page and main score report page.

b) *Advanced Placement (AP) Scores*

- You can always see [the current list of AP scores](#) HCC accepts.
- The ECO office can accept a PDF score report containing eligible scores as placement into another applicable course via the Test Score Report Upload Portal.
- Students must have their AP score report submitted directly to Heartland (Registrar's Office) if they want a course for which they achieved the appropriate AP score to appear on their Heartland transcript.

Email records@heartland.edu if you have questions about the AP process.

C. Roster Management Instructions

1. Initial Roster Submissions

- Preliminary dual credit rosters are always due on the **1st Friday in May from high schools and by August 1st from career centers**, attached as Excel files in an email to earlycollege@heartland.edu.
- The HCC-ECO office receives, reviews, and reformats submitted rosters, and makes them available to district designees via Google Drive; both parties should follow the roster management instructions to ensure rosters are always current/correct.
- Partners must notify the HCC-ECO office of mixed enrollment sections by indicating students taking a Heartland course for “high school credit only”. District designees should select HS Credit Only in the HS Notes column of applicable dual credit rosters in Google Drive for those students.

For **courses that require placement**, partners must notify each student taking a Heartland course for high school credit only that they will not receive college credit upon successful completion. **HCC will not retroactively grant any students credit for dual credit courses.**

2. Ongoing Roster Maintenance

District designees have edit access to dual credit rosters in Google Drive until the HCC drop deadline each semester (listed on the [HCC academic calendar](#)). ***It is vitally important that district designees make all necessary roster changes before drop dates, as incorrect rosters impact our state reporting process and can be time-consuming to correct after those dates.***

After HCC drop deadlines, student drops result in a grade of W, signifying a withdrawal, on their collegiate transcript.

- Instructors OR district designees can complete the withdrawal process. (See the withdrawal section of our roster management instructions.) *Students cannot withdraw themselves from a dual credit course*
- *Withdrawal dates are also provided on the [HCC academic calendar](#). After withdrawal dates pass, students' college transcript will reflect the grade(s) they earned in Heartland courses.

D. Student Support Services

College NOW students are Heartland students and can access many of the services provided to college students, such as:

- academic advising
- [free HCC student ID card](#)
- [library](#) and [tutoring](#) services
- [fitness and recreation center access](#)
- [student access and accommodation services](#)

E. Contingency Plans

1. Late Roster Additions

After the initial College NOW admission window (Sep 1 - Apr 30) has passed for courses offered at high school locations, you may only add students who:

- Met placement testing benchmarks via other tests (e.g., PSAT, SAT). You may instruct them to apply to HCC as a College NOW student ASAP - if they haven't already - and upload their eligible test scores after they appear on your Early College Admission Report (ECAR)
- Transferred into your school district. You may advise them to complete the admission process prior to or within the first week of class each semester. Email us their name, date of birth, and grad year. If applicable, upload their eligible test scores after they appear on your Early College Admission Report (ECAR).
- If extenuating circumstances prohibited students from completing the College NOW admission process during the initial window during the prior year, contact us so we can work together on a resolution. Please do not advise students to:
 - call Heartland to request an exception; we should handle special circumstances at the partner level;
 - attempt to schedule late placement testing appointments beyond the College NOW admission process window unless instructed to do so by the HCC-ECO office.

2. Instructor Changes

Partners will not be permitted to change instructors after the College general orientation session has been held without seeking an appeal from the VP of Enrollment and Student Services for extenuating circumstances. If available, the College will offer to provide a qualified online instructor for the course(s) in lieu of adding a late instructor to ensure quality instruction and alignment with the College's curriculum and assessment.

3. Substitute Instructors

In the case that substitute instruction is necessary for five or more consecutive class periods in a Heartland dual credit/dual enrollment course, substitutes will be approved provided:

- The instructor of record for the course has been approved by HCC and holds appropriate credentials, per Higher Learning Commission and Illinois Community College Board Administrative Rules; and
- Every effort has been made to hire a substitute instructor with the required credentials, including the use of Heartland faculty to substitute if no substitute instructors from the school's subbing

pool are qualified and available (Heartland will be reimbursed at the school's substitute instructor rate); and

- The substitute instructor holds a minimum of an undergraduate degree in the subject if no qualified high school or Heartland instructor could be secured; and
- The instructor of record and/or school administration works with the substitute instructor to ensure course syllabus and learning outcomes alignment; and
- The need for the substitute was either not known in advance of the start date of the course or is not a planned absence totaling more than one-third of the semester; and
- Heartland Community College is notified as soon as the school realizes a need for a substitute and is given the substitute instructor's name, contact information, duration of subbing assignment, and copy of undergraduate and graduate transcripts.

III. For District 540 High School/Career Centers Instructors

A. Instructor Onboarding Experience

All District instructors are required to attend College NOW faculty orientation sessions prior to the first year of teaching and subsequently attend at least one departmental meeting annually to ensure that the curriculum being taught in dual credit courses is consistent with that being taught in the same courses as delivered on campus. Orientation sessions for incoming instructors include a:

- General overview meeting hosted by the Director, Curriculum and Early College Processes;
- Academic department meeting hosted by the appropriate College Dean or designees;
- Information technology and records management (combined) meeting hosted by appropriate College personnel from those areas.
- Learning Management System orientation session hosted by appropriate College personnel from the Teaching & Learning Commons

B. Expectations

- Attend all mandatory College NOW Faculty Orientation sessions according to the schedule provided.
- Attend HCC department-hosted curriculum alignment meetings at least once every year and before any year of being scheduled to teach a new HCC course.
- Prepare and submit syllabi for courses taught that is consistent with the requirements of HCC master syllabi.
- Cooperate with college-wide and division instructional goals.

- Check HCC emails weekly and respond, when appropriate, to those emails in a timely fashion.
- Respond to departmental requests for syllabi and course assessment materials by deadlines.
- Respond to requests from HCC department to set up course reviews/site visits.
- Respond to requests from HCC Registrar's office to complete roster verification and midterm/final grade entry by deadlines each term.
- Demonstrate competence and remain current within the discipline approved and scheduled to teach.
- Provide a college-like environment within the high school physical setting.
- Integrate and evaluate student learning outcomes within the framework of Heartland Community College assessment protocols, including assessment of HCC's Essential Competencies for: Communication, Diversity, Problem Solving/Critical Thinking, Ethics/Social Responsibility, and Technology.
- Report assessment data per college protocols.
- Use the College's Learning Management System to, at a minimum, provide students with basic course information (syllabus, instructor information) and as indicated by the College to collect assessment and evaluation data.
- Create an environment that fosters student success and attainment of the learning outcomes on the master syllabus.
- Evaluate students based on HCC's Grading Philosophy and Rubric.
- Administer student course evaluations each semester according to directions provided.
- Maintain reasonable accessibility to students and manage student issues in a manner consistent with the HCC Student Handbook (heartland.edu/studentHandbook).
- Inform & encourage students to use HCC resources (i.e. myHeartland and HCC Library & Tutoring Services) listed at heartland.edu/collegeNow.

C. Best Practices

- Be open to teaching and instructional design strategies such as embedding non-cognitive skill development into the curriculum (Heartland uses the On Course methodology) and employing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to provide all individuals equal opportunities to learn. Heartland offers workshops on best teaching practices, instructional design, and assessment that are open to all College NOW faculty.
- Employ active learning.
- Communicate openly with HCC partners to ask for feedback and ideas; share challenges and opportunities.

D. Grading Philosophy & Rubric

1. Grading Philosophy

The Heartland Community College grading philosophy grows out of our vision of educational excellence. This common philosophy provides a framework for each academic division and instructor as they establish their own individual course grading system, evaluation methods and course policies using the shared general rubrics for letter grades given below.

Letter grades serve as a vehicle to promote meaningful evaluation of student achievement, to inform students of academic progress, and, as necessary, to improve student performance, habits, and practices. Using a letter grade as a prerequisite for subsequent courses means we believe that the grade was assigned through a conscious judgment about a student's readiness to proceed to more advanced study.

At Heartland, students' academic achievement is measured by their mastery of course objectives and content. We challenge students to meet these recognized standards of achievement and we assign grades based on their success in doing so. Simply stated, we believe that the responsibility for academic achievement rests with the student and that holding students responsible for their learning promotes their academic growth

2. Letter Grade Rubric

A (4.0)	This grade represents consistently outstanding performance that demonstrates superior understanding and skillful use of important course concepts. Performance at this level signifies that the student is extremely well prepared to continue with more advanced study of the subject. [90%-100%]
B (3.0)	This grade represents performance significantly beyond the level necessary to achieve the course objectives. Work is of high quality but not consistently at an outstanding level. Performance at this level signifies that the student is well prepared to continue with more advanced study of the subject. [80%-89%]
C (2.0)	This grade represents an acceptable achievement of the course objectives. Performance at this level signifies that the student is reasonably well prepared to continue with more advanced study of the subject. [70%-79%]
D (1.0)	This grade represents less than adequate performance. It signifies questionable readiness to proceed with more advanced study of the subject. [60% - 69%]
F (0.0)	This grade reflects unacceptable performance. The student is not yet ready to proceed with more advanced study of the subject and must repeat the course successfully to receive credit. [Below 60%]

3. Standards-Based Grading

Partners using standards-based grading will ensure grades assigned align to the HCC Letter Grade Rubric above. HCC midterm and final grades will be reported as letter grades, and HCC departments may also require individual assignments to be reported as percentages in alignment with requirements in the master syllabus.

E. Course Review & Site Visits

In accordance with the Illinois Dual Credit Quality Act (DCQA) and in alignment with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and National Alliance for Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) accreditation standards, all dual credit courses offered in District high schools are subject to review by the community college.

In order to review the delivery of dual credit courses to ensure consistency with courses offered on campus, Heartland has established the following guidelines and procedures:

- A Heartland student syllabus must be submitted by the secondary instructor to the appropriate academic department for approval prior to the start of each term the course is offered (2nd Friday in May for Fall term courses; 2nd Friday in December for Spring term courses).
- A desk review and site visit will be conducted by the academic department during the first offering of the course.
- Provided the course review is satisfactory, the academic department will conduct ongoing reviews at least once every three years. The College may elect to conduct additional reviews in case deficiencies are noted.
- A copy of the review will be delivered to the secondary instructor and appropriate secondary administrator and placed on file at Heartland Community College.
- Should HCC find a course to be non-compliant with the College's expectations, formal notice, with a deadline for remediation if appropriate, shall be provided by the Vice President of Enrollment and Student Services to the appropriate secondary administrator. If remediation is not appropriate, or if the remediation deadline is not met satisfactorily, the Vice President shall inform the secondary school of the termination of the partnership for the course as currently delivered.

F. Professional Development

District instructors will also be given the opportunity and are encouraged to participate in all activities available to other HCC adjunct faculty, including professional development and department and college meetings.

Numerous professional development opportunities are available through HCC's Teaching and Learning Commons (TLC). The TLC is dedicated to assisting faculty, both full-time and adjunct, with their overall teaching and learning

needs. District instructors receive a small stipend for participation in TLC college-wide events and for division-specific training.

District instructors receive a tuition waiver to audit the HCC course they are assigned to teach, or less formal course observations or shadowing opportunities can be provided as professional development.

IV. Helpful Links and Resources

A. Course Approval & Roster Management

1. [AY 27-28 Course Selection Guide](#)
2. [Roster Management Guide](#)
3. [Instructor Qualifications Upload Sharefile Portal](#)
4. [Prospective Faculty Form](#)

B. Testing and Placement

1. [Testing Center](#)
2. [Make an Appointment](#)
3. Group Testing Form
4. [Advanced Placement \(AP\) Scores](#)
5. [Eligible Test Scores - Placement waivers](#)
6. [Test Score Upload Sharefile Portal](#) (all schools)

C. For Students

1. [College NOW Website](#)
2. [College NOW Student Application Guide](#)
3. [Student Handbook](#)
4. [Tutoring](#) and [Library](#) Services

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