



The TLC Newsletter

Trends in education



Overcoming Senior Slump: The Community College Role

Adapted from: *ERIC Clearinghouse for Community Colleges*
January, 2003

A growing body of literature suggests that high school curriculum, especially during the senior year, is greatly lacking in academic intensity. Not only are students not being challenged during their senior year, they are also not preparing for college. These reports conclude that high school students need to be engaged in more rigorous coursework, and they advocate the involvement of higher education institutions in providing opportunities for high school students to enroll in more challenging courses.

Additionally, community colleges often send weak signals to high school students about the preparations they need to make in order to succeed in college. A wasted senior year of high school can result in negative social and economic consequences for students during college. Students, who waste their senior year, even if they engaged in challenging courses during their preceding years of high school, are often unprepared for college-level work and are more likely to dropout.

The consequences of "senior slump" are also reflected in the rising numbers of students who must take remedial courses. Among those requiring remediation are students who took rigorous courses during their early years of high school, but because they wasted their senior year, forgot what they had previously learned. These students waste time and money by having to repeat topics they studied in high school instead of moving on to college-level work.

Community College Involvement

Community colleges are increasingly working together with high schools in programs of early intervention that combat "senior slump." Three types of community college programs that provide opportunities and incentives for high school students to be engaged in advanced and college-preparatory coursework are:

Concurrent Enrollment Programs: These programs offer community college-level courses to high school students on either the high school or college campus. Students enrolled in these courses usually receive academic credit on both their high school and college transcripts. Policymakers praise concurrent enrollment programs for providing more academically challenging and rigorous coursework to high school students and for increasing student aspirations to attend college.

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Spring Hours

Monday - Wednesday:
8:30 - 5:00

Tuesday - Thursday:
8:30 - 6:00

Friday: By appointment

TLC Workshops

Jeopardy

Jan. 15, 12 – 12:50 pm

Vanguard Group

Jan. 15, 1 – 1:50 pm

Rethinking the Design of Instruction

Jan. 22, 1 – 1:50 pm

Effective PowerPoint

Jan. 29, 1 – 1:50 pm

For a complete listing of upcoming events and online registration, visit the TLC Workshops page at:

tlccvc.org/workshop.htm

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Distance-Learning Courses: An increasing number of community colleges are creating distance-learning courses specifically for high schools. These “virtual high schools” provide students with the opportunity to take advanced and more rigorous courses that are not offered at their high schools.

Middle College High Schools: Middle colleges are high schools that are fully housed on the campuses of community colleges or universities. These schools explicitly target students who are identified by their teachers and counselors as being at-risk for dropping out of high school. Students at MCHS’s are encouraged to take advanced courses and may earn college credits and even an associate’s degree by the time they graduate from high school. The National Middle College High School Consortium reports that middle college collaborations have resulted in improved school attendance rates, improved grades, higher high school graduation rates, lower dropout rates, increased rates of college attendance, and increased job placement rates.

Financial Benefits

In addition to the benefits that students receive from engaging in rigorous courses, these programs can also benefit students financially. Total college tuition costs can be reduced for students in these programs in two ways: (1) by accelerating progress towards an undergraduate degree, and (2) in many states, by providing totally or partially subsidized tuition costs for the college courses.

Community colleges can also benefit financially from these programs. Twenty-seven states allow both the K-12 school district and the community college to count concurrent students toward their enrollment numbers for state financial support, and middle college collaborations allow both the high school and community college to apply for a broader range of grants and funding opportunities. Programs allowing high school students to take community college-level courses can also raise the image of a college’s community service orientation, can serve as an excellent admissions recruitment tool, and can aid community colleges in attracting better-prepared students.

Conclusion

“Senior slump” in high school can have negative consequences for students in college, including higher remediation and dropout rates. While the college admissions process may contribute to this slump by not stressing the value of the senior year, higher education institutions can help combat “senior slump” by collaborating with K-12 institutions in early intervention programs. Community colleges are involved in a variety of these programs that provide opportunities and incentives for high school students to engage in academically rigorous coursework. By providing advanced courses to high school students, community colleges are effectively working to reduce the social and economic costs brought about by “senior slump”.

PowerPointers

Controlling Slides

Running your PowerPoint presentation is as simple as clicking "View". But what if you accidentally move too far in your presentation? Or, what if you want to black the screen?

While running your PowerPoint presentation, these shortcuts can help you:

Spacebar - advance one slide

P - move to the previous slide

H - Go to hidden slide

B - make the screen black (press again to un-black screen.)

W – make the screen white (press again to return to slides)

A – show/hide pointer

<number> ENTER – Jump to slide <number>

S - Stop and restart an automatic slide show

Esc - exit the presentation

Tip: There are many more shortcuts that you can use in PowerPoint. For information on these, look up "keyboard shortcuts" in Microsoft PowerPoint Help.