FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF
DUAL ENROLLMENT STUDENTS' COLLEGE READINESS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of faculty members who teach courses to high school dual enrollment students. Existing literature on dual enrollment focuses mainly on academic achievement and grade point averages; few studies explore the lived experiences of those who participate in dual enrollment. Although there is limited research on how students perceive their experiences with dual enrollment, a missing piece of the existing literature is in how faculty members perceive their experiences with dual enrollment students. The research questions sought to explore professors' experiences with dual enrollment students, to what extent they believe their students were prepared to perform in a college course, and to what extent they believed their students were prepared to access resources on a college campus. The method included interviewing professors who have taught dual enrollment students in the last 10 years and exploring their experience working with high school students. Interviews were transcribed, codes were applied to the data, and a thematic analysis was conducted to analyze the data. Five themes were discovered as a result of the thematic analysis. Data showed that faculty members perceive that dual enrollment students show regularly improvement, are responsive to feedback, are as prepared or more prepared than their peers who do not participate in dual enrollment, have academic related soft skills that help them succeed, and they are just as resourceful as their peers. Additionally, a common perception among faculty members is that they think dual enrollment students benefit from committed professors. The data suggested from this study

has implications for the recruitment of dual enrollment students and the way programs are structured. Additionally, it recommends further research on students' lived experiences of their participation in dual enrollment.

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CHAPTER 1

I was what you would consider a good student in high school. At the conclusion of my junior year, my transcript was full of Honors courses in which I carried just over a 3.5 GPA, and my SAT score was 1100, which was nearly 100 points higher than the 2004 state average of 1016 (College Board State Profile Report, 2016). When I entered my senior year, I knew I needed to start considering what to do after high school. My above-average academic record would indicate that I was on the path to succeed in college, as GPA and SAT are among the strongest predictors of college success (Easton et al., 2017, Kobrin & Michel, 2006). I knew I liked working with people and wanted to go to college for psychology- but that was about all I had in mind. So, without any rhyme or reason, I searched on Google, *colleges in PA*, and randomly picked one that had a psychology major that was about 1.5 hours from my parent's house (my desired distance- so I could "get away" but not get too far). High school students are encouraged to visit at least three colleges before selecting where to go, as that is one of the few ways to truly determine the best fit (NACAC, 2018). However, without any understanding of the appropriate steps to take to select a college, I blindly applied, got accepted, and paid my enrollment confirmation. I did not setfoot on campus until the first day of orientation towards the end of the summer.

Needless to say, this is not the recommended path for how a high school student should select a college. High school students should apply to at least four colleges in order to fully determine the best fit for them (College Board,

2017-How to build a college list). Although I was academically prepared (and ended up earning a 4.0 GPA in the first semester of my freshman year), I was not at all prepared for the transition from high school to college. I was not prepared to switch from a day of eight structured periods to one full of a few college courses scattered among hours of free time. I was not prepared to adjust my routine by attending classes two to three times per week instead of block scheduling at my high school, nor did I have any understanding of how to navigate college resources such as the campus library, student activities, or health center. I had no idea what skills were important outside of the classroom. Furthermore, I had not developed any skills or strategies for how to connect with my professors, when and how to communicate with them, or any idea of the concept of office hours. All of these non-academic, transitional issues created a negative environment for me. I did not feel that I fit in with the campus, but in hindsight, I believe the core issue of me leaving my first college was that I was not prepared for the transition out of high school. I ended up transferring to a university closer to home in January of my freshman year, commuted for three semesters, and finally decided to move onto campus in my junior year. I ended up thoroughly enjoying the college I transferred to, but the process did not have to be so difficult had I invested more time in the college admissions process and took more care to prepare for my transition from high school to college.

It was during my undergraduate studies in psychology (specifically, an elective course in education) when I decided to pursue college counseling as a career. I knew I wanted to help students navigate the transition from high school

to college, and my personal experience with not finding the school that was the best fit for me until the second time around catalyzed my desire to work in this field. National data reveal an estimated 13.3 million students are attending a four-year school in 2018, and surely there will be no shortage of students and/or families who are puzzled by the college enrollment process (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). Working with my advisor one day was when I realized I could do just that with the degree I was working towards. It did take some time for me to determine if I wanted to work in K-12 or higher education, so I took my time deciding if I wanted to work as a high school counselor or on a college campus. I had several work and internship experiences both at the high school and college levels during my undergraduate and graduate careers, and ultimately, I was drawn to higher education. In 2012 I took a job at George University in the Admissions Office. Fast forward to today, and I am the Director of Undergraduate Admissions at George University, a mid-sized, public regional institution which enrolls 1,800 new students per year. My role affords me a unique opportunity to work with students in that very particular transition from high school to college. My primary responsibility is to lead an office which works directly with high school students on their college applications, financial aid paperwork, and onboarding process. You might say I found the perfect answer to the question I had been asking myself for so long: if I wanted to work in K-12 or higher education. As it turned out, this position allows me to do both.

Over the last several years I have had the responsibility of coordinating my university's dual enrollment program, which includes partnerships with about

12 high schools in Smith County. Because the dual enrollment program is a specialized program that incorporates partnerships with high school superintendents, parents, high achieving high school students, faculty program coordinators, and other stakeholders at the university, it is within my portfolio as the Director of Admissions. I work with students in the high school setting as they decide what courses to take, with the students as they transition into George University through the course registration process, and once they are here- learning to navigate a university setting. The goals of our dual enrollment program include two priorities:

1. Provide local high school students access to our courses and resources prior to enrolling in a degree-seeking program.

2. Provide the students with a college experience while they are still in high school so that they are more prepared for the transition to "college life." Empower students to navigate a university campus, independently interact with faculty, learn how to seek out and use resources such as the library, dining services, campus safety, learning services, etc, and follow a course syllabus.

My personal experience with the struggles of transitioning from high school to college, combined with my recent experience working with our high school dual enrollment program, contributed to my desire to explore the preparation levels of dual enrollment students, for this dissertation. When this study was begun, a phenomenological lens was planned to interpret the experiences of students who participated in this study. The focus of the study was be to investigate whether dual enrolled students at George University are

equipped with two factors of college transition including academic self-efficacy and academic readiness. However, as a result of a limited pool of student participants and the recruitment challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, the study ended up focusing more on the experiences of faculty members who teach dual enrollment, rather than the students' experiences. The original research questions are included below, followed by the updated questions that were necessitated by changing the participant group"

Original research questions:

1. What are students' perceptions of their dual enrollment experiences?

2. To what extent and in what ways are students who were dually enrolled in high school prepared for the transition to college?

3. How do students feel their dual enrollment experience has shaped their levels of self- efficacy and academic readiness?

Updated research questions:

a. What are faculty members' perspectives of dual enrollment students?

b. What are faculty members' perceptions of dual enrollment students' preparedness for a college-level course?

c. To what extent do faculty members believe that their dual enrollment students are prepared to access resources on a college campus?

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Dual enrollment exists in many forms, and oftentimes organizations will use the term *dual enrollment* to describe an umbrella of programs affording students the opportunity of college exposure while still in high school. These programs could include high school students physically attending courses on a college campus, high school teachers/certified college adjuncts teaching college-level courses in a high school building, Advanced Placement (AP) courses and exams, the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program, or College Level Examination Program (CLEP) testing. For the purpose of this dissertation, *dual enrollment* will refer specifically to programs in which high school students physically attend college-level courses taught on college campuses by instructors who are not high school teachers.

Two factors related to both college readiness and dual enrollment will be discussed in depth throughout this report. These include academic self-efficacy and academic readiness. *Academic self-efficacy* is defined as students' judgements about their ability to successfully attain educational goals (Elias & MacDonald, 2007). The concept of *academic readiness* refers to the level of preparation a student needs in order to enroll and succeed- without remediation- in a credit bearing, general education course at a postsecondary institution that offers a baccalaureate degree program (Conley, 2007 (a)).

Academic Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy, which describes an individual's beliefs in their ability to organize and execute actions necessary to manage prospective situations, was first explored by Albert Bandura in the 1980's when he introduced his social cognitive research. His theory was that self-efficacy, those beliefs regarding one's own competence, impacts several different types of behavior across multiple dimensions including phobias, mental health, social skills and assertiveness (Pajares, 1996). Several years after Bandura first defined self-efficacy and researchers explored its implications related to many different situations, researchers began exploring the link between self-efficacy and academics.

Academic self-efficacy refers to students' judgments about their ability to successfully attain educational goals (Elias & MacDonald, 2007). Academic self-efficacy is a broad concept that has been researched through a variety of lenses. It can primarily be understood through exploring Bandura's social cognitive theory, in addition to analyzing its relationship to academic performance.

One of the central functions of many dual enrollment programs is for students to acquire the confidence to perform in a college level course and learn socialization skills related to the transition from high school to college. Several research studies conclude that there is in fact a correlation between participation in a dual enrollment program and these two concepts; however, the research

does not provide information on *how* dual enrollment impacts these experiences (Bailey, Hughes & Karp, 2002; Karp, 2012).

Social Cognitive Theory

In 1977, Bandura introduced his social learning theory which explores the relationship between self-efficacy and behavioral changes (Bandura, 1977). In 1986, Bandura clarified and re-named his theory which today is known as social cognitive theory. This was done to underscore the importance and role of cognition in behavioral changes, and explains that individuals learn by observing others' behavior. The behavior they learn becomes a part of their personality (Bandura, 1986). When Bandura began using social learning and social cognitive theories, the topic of academic self-efficacy became more prevalent in the literature. Although social cognitive theory is most prevalent in research about how children and adolescents learn to make sense of social norms, it also occurs in adulthood in specific situations (An, 2015).

The trajectory of a student's transition from high school to college is one situation in adulthood that can be understood through the lens of social cognitive theory. The transition from high school to college is an important transition period in an individual's life when they must learn new norms, roles and expectations associated with a new environment. Research by Bailey and Burns & Lewis (2000) directly links this with dual enrollment. Participating in dual enrollment provides individuals with a transitional period during which they have an opportunity to learn the rules, behaviors and expectations of being a college

student. Learning to navigate a new social system before they are fully immersed in it lessens the transition time when they arrive at college as a matriculated full-time student. In the context of dual enrollment, this suggests that participants are better prepared to handle the expectations of their professors than nonparticipants (Bailey, 2002; Burns & Lewis, 2000).

This research on social cognitive theory has several implications to dual enrollment programs. The link between the high school to college socialization period and dual enrollment efforts was illustrated through a study that reviewed student's expectations of their professors. In a 2002 study by Huntley and Shuh, researchers found that college students who participated in dual enrollment expect less coddling than their peers. Participants in dual enrollment viewed their high school teachers as having characteristics similar to a parent and being concerned with students' general well-being, and their view of college professors was more focused on teaching and learning than with a student's general well-being. This study was a helpful contribution to the literature on dual enrollment, but did not explore whether or not professors reciprocated the perceptions of their students. It did not explore whether dual enrollment professors versus non dual enrollment professors realized or experienced differences in how students perceive expectations.

Furthermore, one study (Karp, 2012) used socialization theory to examine 26 dual enrollment students' perceptions of what it's like to be a college student. Students were asked, at the beginning and at the end of their dual enrollment class, to describe the role of a college student. Socialization research suggests

that if a student is fully socialized to their new situation, then they would accurately be able to define their new role. Findings discovered that at the beginning of their course work, students described the role of a college student using general and vague terms that were almost identical to how they would describe a high school student. However, at the end of their dual enrollment course, the students articulated the role of a college student in very specific detail. They cited the importance of taking ownership over their own learning, the importance of seeking help when needed, and described specific strategies for achieving academic success. This study then concluded that dual enrollment influenced their perception of their new role as a college student, and, parallel to that, went as far as the students describing strategies for achieving in college (Karp, 2012). Although this research was one of the first of its kind to explore the lived experiences of dual enrollment students, it did fall short of investigating whether or not students' experiences with dual enrollment match the perceptions of their professors. It did not explore whether or not professors agreed that dual enrollment students take ownership of their work and employ specific strategies for being successful.

This research on social cognitive theory and socialization periods contributes to the understanding of how students learn to perceive their professors and how they perceive their role as college students (versus high school students), but it lacks specific information on the viewpoints of professors who teach dual enrollment. Many dual enrollment efforts are meant to improve the transition from high school to college. Although there is limited research on

the way students perceive this experience, it is lacking data on whether or not professors feel their dual enrollment students properly understand the roles, expectations, and responsibilities of being a college student.

Academic Performance

An additional construct of academic self-efficacy is its relationship to academic performance (sometimes referred to as academic achievement throughout the literature). This is primarily understood through students' beliefs and perceptions about what they would like to achieve in school. Several motivational variables are studied throughout the research; specifically, how they relate to self-efficacy. These variables include achievement motives, competency expectancy, and achievement goals.

In 2004, several researchers completed a meta-analysis of 109 studies that explored the relationships between psychosocial skills and study skill factors, and academic outcomes in college. The factors studied included achievement motivation, academic goals, institutional commitment, social support, academic self-efficacy, self-concept, academic-related skills, social involvement, and contextual influences. A meta-analysis was conducted by reviewing each study to determine if any trends were present among the variables previously mentioned. Researchers found that the two best predictors of GPA in college were academic motivation and academic self-efficacy. Additionally, the analysis showed moderate correlations between retention in college and self-efficacy, academic goals, and academic-related skills (Robbins et al, 2004).

Further research shows that students with higher levels of self-efficacy tend to have higher goals regarding their grades in school (Honicke & Broadbent, 2016). This study reviewed the relationship between academic self-efficacy and academic performance in college, as well as cognitive or motivational variables that might account for any correlations. Fifty-nine studies were selected to be a part of this analysis; each of which was peer-reviewed and dated between 2003 and 2015. Each study in the review explored the relationship between academic self-efficacy and academic performance.in addition to finding that self-efficacy is positively correlated with students' goals regarding their grades, the review also found a moderate, positive relationship between academic self-efficacy and academic performance.

According to a study completed in 2013 by Bjornebekk, Diseth and Ulriksen, the most common motivational variable linked to self-efficacy is academic achievement. Additionally, these variables are also related to college persistence. A study in 1991 found that students who believe they are capable of achieving their goals (and thus have established self-efficacy), are more likely to persist in college than their peers (Pintrich & Garcia, 1991).

The connection to self-efficacy and academic achievement/performance is an important part of developing an understanding of dual enrollment experiences. The research has shown that students who participate in dual enrollment are more likely to be successful in college. A key benefit of dual enrollment is for students to learn how to transition in college and, ultimately, persist and earn a degree, so this research has the potential to inform whether or not dually enrolled

students are more prepared than their peers. However, it does not take into account the experiences of professors who teach dual enrollment – a key group of stakeholders in understanding whether or not students are achieving in the classroom. Although the research provides valuable insight towards students' success and lived experiences, an important piece that is missing from the literature is how faculty members perceive dual enrollment students and their experiences with teaching them. Further research is needed in this area.

Academic Readiness

Academic Readiness is defined as the level of preparation a student needs in order to enroll and succeed- without remediation- in a credit bearing, general education course at a postsecondary institution that offers a baccalaureate degree program (Conley, 2007a). Research on academic readiness is typically centered around two primary constructs: academic rigor in high school and the level of remedial coursework required in college.

Academic Rigor in High School

Academic rigor is defined by the level of standards and expectations put forth in an academic environment. Typically, the level of rigor found in college classroom is higher than that of a high school class. Dual enrollment students should experience a more challenging environment in their college classes than in their standard high school classrooms. If a learning objective is higher than a students' current level of understanding and challenges them to attain a higher level of knowledge, then it is rigorous. Another way to understand academic rigor is based on the level of coursework in a high school environment. If a course is

advanced placement, honors, or taken via dual enrollment (college-level course), then it is considered more rigorous than a standard high school course (Allen, Mattern & Ndum, 2019). Academic rigor of students' high school curriculum is positively related to several college outcomes including the avoidance of remediation and graduation attainment (Adelman, 1999, 2006; Adelman, Daniel, & Berkovits, 2003).

Additional research shows that for students who do not graduate from college, one of the primary causes is linked to the fact that their high school and college courses differ so much from one another (Conley, Aspengren, Stout & Veach, 2006). College courses operate on a different schedule than high school courses; they often have more significant requirements for homework completion and require significantly more reading than high school classes. Now more than ever, with an increase in college-going students but a low national graduation rate, it is crucial to understand factors of academic readiness that prepare students to be successful in, and graduate from, college.

Remedial Coursework in College

One of the primary indicators of students' lack of college readiness is how many credits of remedial coursework they are required to take (Giacomo, 2014). Unfortunately, nearly 20% of new freshmen at four-year institutions of higher education have to take remedial courses (Complete College America, 2012). This body of research has the potential to inform dual enrollment efforts because students who participate in dual enrollment are less likely to take a remedial course than students who did not participate (Kim & Bragg, 2008).

DUAL ENROLLMENT AND EARLY COLLEGE WORK

In order to understand if, and how, dual enrollment may impact a students' ability to succeed, it is important to explore the depth and structure of programming available to high school students. Opportunities for students to earn college credit have been around for decades; initially structured as standardized testing for which a students' score would equate to a set number of earned college credits. The IB Program, which has recently seen growing popularity in the United States, currently has over 3,000 high schools participating in the program (as of 2017) (IB programs, 2017). CLEP tests, offered by the College Board traditionally to current college students as a way to test out of courses by demonstrating credit for prior learning, reports that 15% of test takers are actually high school students preparing to enter a two- or four-year college (College Board, 2018- CLEP research brief).

Even more popular than the IB and CLEP programs are the Advanced Placement (AP) program and dual enrollment. AP courses and exams have been offered by the College Board since the mid-1950's and saw a recent growth from 645,000 students taking an AP exam in 2006, to nearly three million in 2020 (College Board, 2020). However, with that growth has come criticism of the AP program. Although participation in AP courses has largely and historically been recognized as a valuable tool for both college preparation and the early accumulation of college credits, some academic officials are beginning to question the benefits of participation in AP courses. With nearly 40% of high school students now participating in the Advanced Placement program, some

worry that they are no longer favored by college admissions officers. For example, a recent announcement by Washington, D.C. private high schools confirms that, as of 2022, they will no longer be offering AP courses to students due to the "diminished utility" of AP exams (Gelman, 2019). Furthermore, a recent study confirmed that as of 2016, 86% percent of the United States' elite 153 universities restrict the awarding of credit for AP exams. Many of them cite the inconsistency in quality among AP courses, and assert that they are not a sufficient substitute for college courses (Weinstein, 2016). It is difficult to predict the future of the Advanced Placement program, as it seems that its popularity among high schools and high school students is growing more rapidly than its popularity among universities and college admissions officers.

On the other hand, although dual enrollment is the newest of college-credit programs (early programs date back to the 1970's), it continues to grow both in the number of students participating and within the perception and popularity among high schools and colleges and universities. In 2016, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers completed a survey of nearly 400 public and private universities throughout the United States. Their survey reported that 63% of colleges and universities view dual enrollment as a factor that increases the likelihood of being accepted to college (AACRAO, 2016). This is a stark contrast to the trend outlined above regarding the Advanced Placement program.

In order to fully understand the concept of dual enrollment, one must be familiar with the various topics discussed throughout the literature. Important

nuances of dual enrollment can be understood via an exploration of early approaches to dual enrollment programs, the various formats of dual enrollment, and dual enrollment and its relationship to academic achievement.

EARLY APPROACHES TO OPERATIONALIZE DUAL ENROLLMENT

Syracuse University is credited with the longest-standing dual enrollment program in the nation, Project Advance, which was formed in 1972. The goal of Project Advance was rooted in the need to cure senioritis and give highly talented students the opportunity to prepare for their transition to college instead of relaxing after having completed all required high school coursework. Teachers and administrators at Syracuse-area high schools noted that too much emphasis was being placed on students' getting admitted to college, and there was not enough programming in place to address the transition to high school to college, and therefore were very supportive of the opportunity to allow their students to begin taking college courses while still enrolled in high school.

The mission of Syracuse University Project Advance (SUPA) is as follows:

- Offer innovative and challenging Syracuse University courses to qualified high school students at their local high schools, during their regularly scheduled high school day

- Increase college readiness by providing appropriate tools, programs and services for local high school students

- Provide continuous professional development for teachers and ongoing dialogue between the university faculty and high school students

- Conduct regular, extensive research and evaluation of the program in order to improve instruction and smooth students' transition from high school to college (SUPA, 2019).

Some research has been done on the effectiveness of this program as it relates to the students' success once they arrive at college. According to Syracuse University, 90% of the credits earned during Project Advance transfer to a four-year college or university. Although no data were readily available on degree completion rates among Project Advance participants who go on to transfer specific numbers of credits to various universities, it is likely that students who have credits earned prior to entering college have less credits to take in college in order to satisfy college graduation requirements. One research study completed in 1982 analyzed one of the first cohorts of Project Advance students, four years after they graduated from high school. A review of 1,433 college seniors who had participated in Project Advance in high school found that they were more likely to have higher retention rates in college than their peers and achieved exceptionally high grades in college (Mercurio, 1982).

Today, Project Advance has grown from serving six high schools in 1974 to over 200 New York high schools in 2019. The program enrolls 12,000 students per year in over 50 courses taught by 750 high school teachers. It is noted as one of the largest concurrent/dual enrollment programs in the country (SUPA, 2019). The creation of Project Advance has many implications for today's dual enrollment programs; it set the foundation for the dual enrollment model known as *College in the High School,* a model which is widely used today. In fact, it is so

widely used that there is currently a national association tasked with accrediting College in the High School programs. Additionally, the program provided a structure for programs like this that is still used today. For example, the program goals included giving challenging coursework to qualified high school seniors, providing adequate training to high school teachers, and providing high school students with greater access to college-prep resources.

All of these goals are still in place today in many early college programs; however, although Project Advance built a strong foundation for this type of dual enrollment, there is limited research or intentional goal setting done surrounding the students' experience in Project Advance or once they arrive at college. Although limited reviews have been done how many credits are earned by Project Advance students and how long it takes them to earn a college degree, there is a noted gap in the research regarding what students think about their experiences in the program and whether or not professors have positive experiences with dual enrollment students. Further research is needed to determine if faculty members teaching dual enrollment students perceive notable differences in confidence, academic success and preparedness in their high school students.

Rio Salado Community College and Xavier College Preparatory High School is another early example of a formalized dual enrollment program, which launched in 1987. When the program began, it represented a model of *on-campus dual enrollment* rather than Syracuse University's *College in the High School* model. The original goal of the program for officials at both the community

college and the high school was to avoid an overlap in curriculum among upper-level high school courses and entry-level courses at the community college. In order to receive permission for high school students to enroll in community college courses before graduating from high school, administrators from Ria Salado college lobbied with the state of Arizona and in 1987, launched the first set of courses offered both online and at the community college throughout the school year and during the summer. In the first decade of the program, it grew every year as more and more parents and students became familiar with the opportunity.

In the early 2000's, when universities across the country were beginning to formalize dual and concurrent enrollment partnerships, the focus of several programs shifted to a *College in the High School model*, in which high school teachers were trained to deliver college courses during the school day (mirroring the model of Syracuse University's Project Advance). In 2004, Ria Salada's program became one of the first colleges to earn accreditation with the National Association of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), which remains the only national association and accrediting body in the country for dual and concurrent enrollment partnerships (http://blog.riosalado.edu).

Today, the dual enrollment program hosted by Ria Salado College serves 41 high schools throughout Arizona and teaches courses to over 12,000 high school students. A review of their current dual enrollment website reveals several benefits that they communicate to students:

- Save money on college courses and textbooks

- Avoid stress of transferring credits with an in-state transfer guarantee

- Save time by finishing college faster (Rio Salado, 2019)

These goals are similar, but not identical, to the goals laid out by Project Advance. One goal that each of these early adopters of dual enrollment have in common is that they want to help students graduate from college more quickly by saving money on tuition and earning credits while simultaneously enrolled in high school. Limited research has been done on Rio Salado's program as it relates to college retention and graduation rates.

One piece of information does shed light on student's experiences in the Rio Salado dual enrollment program. According to the college's dual enrollment website, the Institutional Assessment Office conducted a survey of dually enrolled students five years after they completed the program and earned their high school diploma (2007). They noted that students indicated their academic experience with the program was "excellent," and that most students either agreed or strongly agreed that they were better prepared academically for college as a result of dual enrollment. Additionally, the study asked specifically about students' experiences once they arrived at college: they noted that most students felt they gained analytic skills that they were able to use in college, and more than 50% of students agreed that participating in dual enrollment increase their confidence in succeeding in college-level work (Rio Salado, 2019). Although this project explored student experiences, a lack of research exists on whether or not their professors would corroborate these experiences.

FACULTY PERCEPTIONS

It is clear that the initial goals of these two early programs were unrelated to students' successful transitions from high school to college and instead focused on credit earning and academic achievement in general. Syracuse University wanted to help high schools cure senioritis, and Rio Salada college and Arizona public high schools wanted to avoid an overlap in curriculum between high school and community college. Today, two out of four of the primary goals cited by Syracuse University Project Advance are related to the students' successful high school to college transition. Zero of the three key benefits outlined by Rio Salado college's current dual enrollment program make any mention of a successful high school to college transition.

 Since these models are limited to only College in the High School, rather than on-campus dual enrollment, it would be challenging for them to build their program around a central goal of college readiness and transition. While those are evident in indirect ways, the primary purpose of these two programs remains a way for students to save money, earn college credit, and graduate faster. Limited research has been done on whether or not those goals have been met, and there is no research to suggest how the faculty members view their experiences with dual enrollment students. A gap in the literature leads to a lack of information about professors' perceptions of their dual enrollment students, whether or not they believe students have the skills to be successful in college, and their ability to access resources during their time as dual enrollment student.

The creation of Project Advance in 1974 and the launch of the partnership between Ria Salado and Xavier high school in 1987 both catalyzed a movement

in the United States to operationalize, recognize and accredit dual and concurrent partnerships. As noted above, Ria Salado College was the first university in Arizona, and one of the first four in the country, to be recognized by the National Association of Concurrent and Dual Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP).

The National Association of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships was launched in 1999 and began accrediting colleges in 2004. It was during that time that colleges across the country were reporting that their largest areas of growth were in courses that they made available to high school students (Haycock, 1999). Although most of the schools who are currently members of NACEP have accredited programs within the *College in the High School* rather than *on-campus dual enrollment* model, it marks the beginning of operationalizing dual enrollment opportunities in the United States, and contributes valuable research to the field of early college coursework. Since then, dual enrollment has grown significantly. Between 2001 and 2011, the number of students enrolled in public high schools who took one or more dual enrollment course nearly doubled from 1.1 million to 2 million (Thomas, Marken, Gray & Lewis, 2013). Recent data show that 92 percent of public high schools in the United States provide dual enrollment opportunities to students, and 25% of high school transcripts contain at least one dual enrollment course (NACAC, 2019).

With the growth of dual enrollment participation, high schools and colleges are expanding and modifying their programs into various formats, which,

although they take on various approaches, are still considered dual credit
opportunities.

DUAL ENROLLMENT IN VARIOUS FORMATS

In the early 2000's, formalized dual enrollment agreements, or
memorandums of understanding, began to emerge between universities and high
schools (Waits et al., 2005). The National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment
Partnerships defines several types of dual credit opportunities including College
in the High School, on-campus dual enrollment, college faculty members offering
courses at high schools, and high school students taking college courses online
(NACEP, 2018). According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the
most common of these are College in the High School, closely followed by on-
campus dual enrollment (NCES, 2018).

College in the High School

This model is defined as a partnership in which dual enrollment (college)
courses are taught by college-approved high school teachers (NACEP, 2018). In
this model, qualified high school teachers become certified as college adjuncts
and deliver the curriculum of a specific college-level course in the high school
classroom. Approximately 80% of students enrolled in a dual enrollment
opportunity participate in this model (NCES, 2019).

According to the College in the High School Alliance, characteristics
evident in successful implementations of this model include:

- An organized set of college courses which are transferrable to four-year
  colleges and universities, offered at no cost to students.

- A support system that includes proactive initiatives designed to develop students' academic skills and skills necessary for high school and college completion.

- A commitment to provide access to students from low-income families or underrepresented backgrounds (CIHS, 2019).

As College in the High School programs in the United States started to rapidly expand in the early 2000's, the original goals of most programs were simply to increase access to college resources for under-served or underrepresented students, and increase overall high school graduation rates (Webb & Gerwin, 2014). As time progressed and College in the High School programs became more popular, goals expanded to include providing support systems to help students graduate from high school *and* college in a timely fashion, and ensure that affordable, transferrable college courses are offered to qualified high school students.

A study in 2014 sought to review established College in the High School programs to determine how successful the model was in meeting high school and graduation goals. The review included College in the High School participants from 100 high schools, mostly coming from California, New York, North Carolina, Ohio and Texas, and explored attendance rates, high school graduation rates, college grades, college enrollment after high school, and the need for remedial education in college after participating in College in the High School courses. Results found that students who participated in College in the High School had higher attendance rates (95%) than their peers (average of 92%

nationally), and their graduation rates were 15% above the national average as well (Webb & Gerwin, 2014).

In terms of success in college, the study also found that College in the High School students perform better than their peers, nationally. Additionally, 86% of students enrolled in early college high school go on to attend college, compared to 72% of high school students nationally. Once these students are enrolled in college, they persist at a rate of 86% compared to their peers (72% nationally), and it was found that College in the High School graduates require less remedial education in college than their peers who did not earn college credits while in high school (Webb & Gerwin, 2014).

The obvious benefit of this model is that students don't have to leave their high school building in order to participate. This eliminates the barrier of transportation that some students face and provides a convenient option for accessing early college credits. Additionally, these courses tend to cost less than on-campus dual enrollment courses because it does not cost the college as much to facilitate this opportunity than a model in which high school students physically attend classes on a college campus.

A notable challenge, though, with the College in the High School model is that it is difficult to guarantee that the rigor of the College in the High School class matches the rigor of that same course taught on a college campus by a faculty member. Some states are concerned enough with this challenge that their regional accrediting boards have created standards that teachers must meet in

order to be qualified to teach a college course (Southern Association of Colleges and Universities).

An additional challenge of the College in the High School model is that the primary purpose continues to be accumulation of credit in order to shorten time to degree. The model is designed to provide credits in the high school building, which cannot replicate the value of a student sitting in a college classroom located on a college campus. Although the research discussed in this section positively links this model to higher outcomes in college, it fails to consider perspectives of faculty members. Research on whether or not professors agree that students are exposed to more rigor and are therefore more prepared for college, would add valuable literature to this area. An understanding of perspectives of faculty members would shed light on whether or not the goals of these programs are being fulfilled. Further exploration of faculty members' experiences is needed in order to determine the depth of preparedness that exists among high school students and whether they view their dual enrollment students as having successfully managed the transition from high school to college. This will be a primary focus of this project.

On-Campus Dual Enrollment

Alternatively, on-campus dual enrollment is a model in which high school students physically travel to a college or university to take a course on campus. It is most common for a high school student to attend a daytime college course by arranging their high school schedule in such a way that they have back-to-back free periods or lunch and have enough time to travel and attend class. However,

this model also allows for high school students to travel to a college course that is held in the evening or on a weekend, avoiding the need to miss time from the average school day.

According to the National College in the High School Alliance, key characteristics of a successful on-campus dual enrollment model include:

- Collaboration between high school and college faculty members across similar disciplines, regarding curriculum and assessment alignment

- Sharing of resources between high schools and colleges

- Professional development of professors in order to increase the rigor of the courses (College in the High School Alliance, 2018).

Although students generally must arrange for their own transportation, benefits of this model include learning from a college professor in the college environment, and the opportunity to participate in course discussions with college-aged students who likely bring more diverse perspectives to conversations than would be present in a high school setting. Additionally, the on-campus model of dual enrollment encourages students to learn how to transition to college. Since, in this model, they truly are a part-time college student, they are able to integrate themselves into campus and are challenged to learn how to navigate a college campus. This could include anything from learning how to access the library's resources, understanding how to balance time between high school and college classes, learning what faculty office hours are, etc.

Research shows that students who participate in on-campus dual enrollment activities have better outcomes in college than their peers. For example, a 2003 study reviewed national data of students who started in college in 2003, and had been dually enrolled in high school. Student data were reviewed specifically for college persistence, and if/how that differed among various socioeconomic statuses. The review found that, overall, students who had taken a college course (on-campus) in high school were 10% more likely to graduate from college than their peers. Additionally, regarding socioeconomic status, first-generation students were 12% more likely to graduate from college than their peers (An, 2012).

Additionally, two state-level studies were completed on students who took one or more classes on-campus during high school. A 2012 study out of Colorado reviewed records of students from the years 2010-2012, who had been dually enrolled on-campus while in high school. Major findings included students who took a class at a college were 23% more likely to go on to a 2- or 4-year college than their peers, and once they got to college, were 9% less likely to need remedial classes (Colorado Department of Higher Education, 2014). Similarly, a study out of Texas explored outcomes of students who earned dual credit (on-campus) while in high school and then entered a public university in Texas. The study showed that dual enrollment students were 30% more likely to earn Bachelor's degrees within six years of enrolling, and 42% more likely to earn Bachelor's degrees within four years of enrolling (Radunzel et al., 2014).

The goals evident in on-campus dual enrollment models provide a greater opportunity for students to learn to transition from high school college than they are provided in the College in the High School model. Because students have to physically leave their high school building to attend class on a college campus, they are exposed to a variety of college-level perspectives and requirements that are not present in the high school. For example, students have to learn to navigate syllabi and professors' office hours, they need to advocate for themselves if they need help with the library, learning services, or other campus service departments, and they need to self-initiate their work and class assignments. As noted previously, a gap in the literature exists in this area. Exploring professors' lived experiences with dual enrollment students could provide insight about whether or not students actually learned to navigate a syllabus, seek out resources, or demonstrate initiative in the classroom.

Although the on-campus dual enrollment model provides greater opportunity for high school students to increase the likelihood of having a smooth college transition, the current literature on these programs lacks research surrounding how students navigate this transition into an on-campus dual enrollment model, and if and how it impacts them when they graduate from high school and go into college. There is a compelling lack of information about professors' lived experiences teaching dual enrollment students, and how successful their high school students are once they arrive in college.

Comparing the Two Models

Both models of dual enrollment have benefits to students and advantages once they are enrolled in college. In order to investigate which model of dual enrollment is more effective, I conducted a review of research related to outcomes and comparisons between the two models. This was completed via a review of resources provided by the National Center for Education Statistics, the National Alliance for Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships, the College in the High School Alliance, College Board, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, and an ERIC search with terms including, *dual enrollment, concurrent enrollment, College in the High School, and dual credit*. This research turned up a significant amount of data on students who earn credits while enrolled in high school, but most studies did not differentiate between students who earned credits via College in the High School versus on-campus dual enrollment. The studies that analyzed each program model individually are outlined above, but only one study comparing the two models surfaced in the literature review.

One study which specifically reviewed a small cohort of students in Florida found that students who participated in on-campus dual enrollment were more likely to pursue and attain a degree than students who participated in College in the High School (Community College Research Center, 2012). A review of the research did not turn up any additional literature that compared success rates of students between each model. Although some research points to each model's successes, there has not been an adequate amount of research

completed comparing the two models. An exploration of professors' experiences with dual enrollment students would contribute to the understanding of how successful high school students are. Although the data make a quantitative case for how College in the High School or dual enrollment prepares students for the academic requirements of college, the research is lacking a compelling argument for whether or not each of these models prepares students for the transition to college. The research is limited only to academic performance, which is not the only aspect or characteristic that can make a student successful in college. Further exploration of the experiences of dual enrollment professors and their perceptions of their students, is necessary to complete this body of literature.

DUAL ENROLLMENT AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Participation in dual enrollment programs ultimately leads to students being more successful, academically, in college than their peers who did not participate in dual enrollment. The research base surrounding dual enrollment is largely centered on exploring correlations between participation in dual enrollment and factors in college such as GPA, persistence, and degree completion. Generally, students who participate in some form of dual enrollment have higher grade-point averages, are more likely to persist to their second year of college, and have higher rates of degree completion than their peers who did not participate (Karp, 2007).

The relationship between dual enrollment and academic achievement is often explored by researching whether dual enrollment participants attend and persist in college than their peers who did not participate in dual enrollment.

Persistence is defined as first-to-second year retention. Research shows that there is a positive correlation between participation in dual enrollment and the likelihood of starting a degree program (Swanson, 2008), and also between participation in dual enrollment and persistence (Karp, 2007), but it is important to note that this may be due to dual enrollment students self-selecting into the program, and they are therefore already more likely to succeed

Some researchers explore the number of college credits earned in high school versus academic achievement in college. One study found that dual enrollment students who completed 20 or more credits were 28% more likely to persist to their second year in college than their peers who did not participate in dual enrollment (Swanson, 2008). Another study, however, found that students only needed six credits of dual enrollment courses in order to be more likely to enroll in college than their peers who did not take any dual enrollment credits (CCRJ, 2012).

Further research explored whether or not dual enrolled students were more likely than their peers to persist, specifically at a community college. In 2014, a review of student data examined records of 5,332 high school graduates enrolled in a community college in Tennessee between 2006 and 2009. Two groups were established for the project; one group of students with dual enrollment credit, and a group of students who entered college without dual enrollment credit. The researcher used a comparative, non-experimental method to analyze data from each cohort. A review of student records found three main conclusions: students with dual enrollment credits were more likely to earn their

Associate's Degree in three years (the average at that community college), they were more likely to return to school for their second year, and they graduated quicker than their peers who did not enter with dual enrollment credits (Thacker, 2016).

Additional research on this topic shows that these results hold true across socioeconomic statuses. Both disadvantaged and advantaged students who participate in a dual enrollment program in high school are far more likely to not just attend college, but to complete a degree (Jenkins, 2017). Although this research eludes to dual enrollment students demonstrating higher levels of college persistence and degree attainment, it cannot be determined if a causal relationship exists, and cannot explain the experiences of those who work first-hand with dual enrollment students.

CRITIQUES OF DUAL ENROLLMENT

Dual enrollment continues to grow across the United States. As of 2019, 92% of public high schools offered some form of dual enrollment and 25% of high school transcripts reflected at least one dual enrollment course (NACAC, 2019). The existing literature on dual enrollment articulates several benefits of early credit programs, but there are also drawbacks. In order to fully understand the research behind dual credit initiatives and considerations for researching experiences of those directly involved with the programs, it is important to understand the criticisms of dual enrollment. Frequently cited criticisms of dual enrollment include challenges with equity and access, concerns about academic rigor, and inconsistent or insufficient policies.

Equity and Access

In the early 2000's when College in the High School models were being developed, the original goal of many initiatives was to increase college access among underserved or underrepresented students (Webb & Gerwin, 2014). According to the College in the High School Alliance, one of the top three goals of college in the high school programs is a commitment to providing access to low income families from underrepresented backgrounds (CEHS Alliance, 2019). Although these goals related to closing the equity gap exist, research shows that significant challenges remain in providing access to dual enrollment opportunities. Participating in at least one dual enrollment course increases college completion rates among both majority students and students from low income households (An, 2013a), but as of 2019, there were significant gaps in participation rates among populations. Almost 40% of white and Asian American high school students participated in dual credit programs compared to 30% of Hispanic students and 27% of African American students (NCES, 2019). Further, dual enrollment students are more likely than their peers to be from a high socioeconomic household, female, white, Asian and high achieving (Fink et al., 2017; Pierson et al., 2017; Pretlow & Washington, 2014; Young et al., 2013). As access to college courses continues to be a concern for low-income, minority and academically underprepared students (Andrews, 2000), logistical challenges are also causing skepticism of dual enrollment programs. Students from some racial/ethnic groups typically have fewer financial resource and less social/family

support than their white peers (Liu, V., Minaya, V., Zhang, Q., & Xu, D., 2020). If underrepresented or low-income students are able to access a college course or a formal dual enrollment program, they often have difficulties with participation including competing priorities at home (i. e. child care for younger siblings or a job to support the family), lack of transportation or lack of funding to purchase course materials or fees related to dual enrollment (Hughes, Rodriguez, Edwards & Belfield, 2012). The extent to which these challenges are felt across the underrepresented student population depend on the structure and format of the dual enrollment program. Although on-campus programs have been found to be more beneficial, academically, than college in the high school courses, most of the equity-related critiques of dual enrollment are with the on-campus model. While on-campus programs provide more resources and opportunities, transportation poses a challenge for students. Additionally, on-campus dual enrollment courses are typically set up by the colleges- college administrators select the time of day for courses and they do not always line up with the student's free period or an available time in their high school schedule. This continues to pose a challenge for low-income or historically underrepresented students, as they are less likely to have the resources available to abide by the college schedule or arrange transportation.

Academic Rigor

The concept of academic rigor is an important factor of academic achievement, but often cited as a criticism of dual enrollment. Particularly in the college in the high school model in which students take college courses in their

high school classrooms among high school peers, there is a concern with whether an appropriate level of college-level academic rigor can be achieved. One notable concern is that there is a fundamental difference between curriculum and education at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Dual enrollment courses taught through college in the high school are criticized for insufficiently preparing students for the rigor of college courses and for the reality of college (Blankenberger, 2008 and Jones, 2014).

Differences in course modality also pose challenges with dual enrollment. College in the high school courses, while helpful to promote access, sometimes pose a challenge for students understanding to differentiate their role as a high school student from their role as a college student. Some students experience challenges relating to grasping the difference between their traditional high school courses and college in the high school courses, and research suggests that this may not actually be helping to promote college access if students aren't getting the value of a college experience from courses taught in their high school. These challenges may not be as prevalent if students were provided greater access to on-campus programs. (Karp, 2012).

A recent study investigated the relationship between course modality and college persistence and found that college students who enroll in a hybrid or face-to-face course perform better than those enrolled in fully online courses. Students who are in fully online courses had lower levels of college persistence and achievement than their peers. Reasons for this includes a lack of interaction with peers and a lack of strict accountability in the classroom. The study went

further to determine if these impacts on college students are the same as the impacts on high school students taking dual enrollment courses. Similar results were found, in particular that high school students who take courses on a college campus have higher levels of college persistence than their peers who take courses through college in the high school. Although academically, rigor appeared to be upheld in on-campus courses, there are still several critiques of the program. Namely, when students have to physically travel to college courses on-campus they must provide their own transportation and they may risk being left out of important high school events being held at conflicting times (Alsep & Depenhart, 2020). Research also cites challenges with students struggling to fit in in their dual enrollment courses. Students sometimes report feeling left out of college courses due to their age, their year in high school, and general skepticism about their abilities to be successful in a college level course (Alsep & Depenhart, 2020; Kanny, 2015).

Policy making

Policies and legislation related to dual enrollment are often left up to states to manage. One criticism related to this is inconsistent policies and tracking. Policies are often enacted at the state level and therefore apply to public institutions (state or state related four-year institutions and public community colleges) and all data tracking and compilation is based on programs at those schools and excludes private colleges. This is problematic when states are considering policies or directives related to dual enrollment and do not have accurate data on outcomes because their database fails to include information on

students who go on to attend a private college. Additionally, without corroboration from the National Student Clearinghouse, it is increasingly difficult to track accurate dual enrollment outcomes over the course of several years. This creates challenges with creating policies based on data, because the data is typically limited to a subset of the dual enrollment participants. (Cowan & Goldhaber, 2015).

Another consideration is that courses offered for dual enrollment should be carefully considered by colleges if the goals of their program include college access and degree completion. Subjects and course selection matter. An analysis of dual enrollment programs in the state of Texas not only validated existing research that found that affluent students are more likely to participate in dual enrollment than their low-income peers, but it found that participation in a dual credit course in a core subject area like language arts, math, social studies and science was more likely to lead to college enrollment, second year persistence, and degree attainment (Giani & Reyes, 2014). Policies that aim to increase access to dual enrollment opportunities and access to college, but do not consider the courses being taught, run the risk of placing students into courses that will have no impact on their college attendance and completion rates (Glennie, Dalton & Knapp, 2015).

Lastly, policies must address issues with transferring of credit and how grades are handled at the high school level. When high schools do not work with local institutions of higher education to determine transferability of courses, it creates confusion for students which impacts their experience with dual

enrollment. One study found that students' perceptions of the dual enrollment program, from the beginning, were that they were going to get college credit- which prompted them to participate. They reported feeling pressured because of the benefits of saving money and faster degree completion, and did not realize initially that the benefits touted by their high school administration may have been too good to be true. Students noted that they were under the impression that taking college courses would "look good" on their high school transcript – regardless of the grades earned. They reported at the end of their dual enrollment experience that they were simply fulfilling basic high school requirements that happened to transfer to some colleges, but for those who earned failing grades – they were not prepared for that information to impact their permanent academic record in college, nor were they aware of resources available to them both at the high school and college for understanding the dual enrollment program, their academic requirements, and how what they do in high school impacts them in college. (Kanny, 2015). It is important that state- and district- level dual enrollment policies and procedures address the challenges associated with transferring credit, resource availability, and the academic record in order for students to fully understand the goals and purpose of their taking college courses while in high school and to address some of these challenges.

IMPORTANCE OF STUDY

It's estimated that 19.9 million students were enrolled in a college, university or trade school in the 2018-2019 school year, and by 2027, this

number will increase to 20.5 million (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). However, although across the country college attendance is rising, only 60% of students attending a two- or four-year school will graduate within six years (NCES, 2018). This leaves nearly nine million students per year who are not able to graduate from college within a reasonable time frame. As the previous literature alludes to, among the important factors contributing to students' success in college are their levels of academic self-efficacy and academic readiness. Since dual enrollment is one of the fastest-growing college preparatory programs in the country, contributing research which could inform students' experiences in dual enrollment as it relates to academic self-efficacy and academic readiness, could be invaluable to the fields of K-12 and Higher Education.

Research Purpose

Quantitative data show that students who participate in dual enrollment and accumulate college credits while in high school are more likely to succeed academically in college than their peers. They are more likely to earn a higher GPA than their peers who did not participate in dual enrollment, they are more likely to persist, have less time to graduation, and are more likely to graduate on-time from college than their peers who did not participate in dual enrollment (Attewell et al., 2006; Lorenzo, 2016; NCES, 2000; Reisberg, 1998). Additionally, students and parents often cite that accumulating college credits in high school (usually at a discounted tuition price) provides a significant financial advantage, as it will save them money when their student is in college, because they will

have fewer credits left to earn towards a degree. However, dual enrollment is about more than just accumulating college credits and reducing time to graduation. Although earning college credits is a marked benefit of dual enrollment, it is important to clarify that the goals of dual enrollment also include high school-to-college transition skills. Especially during a time when dual enrollment is growing so rapidly and not all states have caught up with assuring that the credits are 100% transferrable to degree programs (College Board, 2017), it is necessary to ensure that students are still using their time wisely by investing in college credits.

For example, several research studies identify transitional, non-academic factors as potential benefits of participating in dual enrollment. These factors include, but are not limited to, helping students prepare for the rigors of college work, educating students about the skills they need to succeed in college, and empowering them to become comfortable and accustomed to a college campus environment (Barnett & Kim, 2014; Karp, 2012; Webb & Mayka, 2011). Although these are frequently cited as potential benefits, there is little research to support whether or not professors teaching dual enrollment students actually see these skills being put to use in the classroom.

As evidenced by this literature review, several sources reveal that there continue to be two crucial factors to students' success in college. One of those factors includes *academic self-efficacy* (Le et Al., 2005; Herpen et Al., 2007), which refers to a student's belief or conviction that they can successfully perform given academic tasks at designated levels (Schunk, 1991). Additionally, college

readiness remains one of the most important factors of transition between high school students' experiences in high school and then college, and in their success in college. Since the current body of dual enrollment research is lacking an exploration of whether or not dual enrollment students have a higher level of academic self-efficacy and college readiness than their peers, the purpose of this study will explore how professors experience teaching dual enrollment students. The purpose is to investigate to what extent faculty members feel that their dual enrollment students are prepared for college.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

Background

The original intention of this study was to use a mixed methods approach with dual enrollment students; a quantitative analysis was planned for a questionnaire to be sent to participants which asked about their perceptions of their levels of self-efficacy and academic readiness; a qualitative approach was planned for results of interviews about students' perspective of their dual enrollment experiences. I was unable to achieve the desired number of student participants for both the quantitative and qualitative approach. I received IRB approval near the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, forcing data collection to occur electronically. Instead of meeting with high school students at their schools and with college students at the library, all data collection had to be done online via email and Zoom calls. Despite efforts to recruit an acceptable number of participants via email and phone, I only obtained four student participants who completed both an interview and a questionnaire. Since this was not enough participants to complete the study I submitted a modification to the IRB. The request included an update to the study to change the participant group since there was not a sample of students large enough to complete data collection. Instead of interviewing students about their experiences, I changed the data collection to interview professors who teach dual enrollment courses.

The original research questions included:

1. What are students' perceptions of their dual enrollment experiences?

2. In what ways are students who were dually enrolled in high school prepared for the transition to college?

3. How do students feel their dual enrollment experience has shaped their levels of self- efficacy and academic readiness?

Updated research questions due to changing participant group included:

1. What are faculty members' perspectives of dual enrollment students?

2. What are faculty members' perceptions of dual enrollment students' preparedness for a college-level course? To what extent do faculty members believe that their dual enrollment students are prepared to access resources on a college campus?

Setting

The dual enrollment program at George University was established in 2010 when the university partnered with one local high school to allow select (high achieving) students to participate in on-campus college courses. Originally, the program was designed for local high school students who had met the limit on Advanced Placement courses at their high school and the school did not have additional courses to offer. In 2015, the program was expanded to include any high school interested in partnering, and the admissions requirements became more flexible.

Currently, the dual enrollment program at George University attracts 100 students per semester from approximately 15 high schools. Most students come from the two high schools physically closest to the university, however, students travel from all over the county as well as from a few districts in the neighboring county. George University offers nearly all 100- and 200- level courses for dual enrollment students. With few exceptions such as nursing, secondary education, and social work certification courses, all general education courses are open for dual enrollment students. Additionally, 300- and 400-level courses in languages and mathematics are offered due to local demand for advanced coursework in those subject areas. Dual enrollment students may apply to the program for free and are permitted and encouraged to sign up before degree-seeking students begin their registration period. This allows dual enrollment students to have first choice at course selection. If a student applies before the stated deadline, it is almost always guaranteed that they will get placed in at least their top two course choices. Students may apply after the deadline, in which case they would only be registered for courses with seats remaining.

Students are required to submit a high school transcript with their application. The admissions office reviews the students' grades and courses taken to determine if they are admissible to the program. Generally, students are entering with at least a 3.0 high school GPA, however, George University will admit students down to a 2.75 GPA if they show potential to be successful in a college-level course. Typically, students are expected to have earned a grade of an *A* or *B* in the high school equivalent of the course they are applying for. The two most

popular courses taken by high school students are English Composition and Introduction to Speech Communication. However, the dual enrollment program continues to grow every semester in the amount of schools participating and the amount of students taking courses.

ParticipantsParticipants of this research study were faculty members who taught at least one 100-level or higher dual enrollment course within the last five years (Fall 2015- Spring 2020). This sample was selected because it was the only other group at the university that has direct, consistent experiences with dual enrollment students. Since an adequate number of participants wasn't achieved to collect data about students' experiences, professors were selected in order to provide their perspectives on students' experiences, academic readiness and preparation. Additionally, this sample was chosen out of convenience; I had access to the faculty database and was able to easily connect with them to arrange interviews.

I utilized an internal university database to identify a list of professors who teach dual enrollment courses. The list was filtered to only include professors who taught at least one dual enrollment student within the last five years. I recruited faculty members to participate in interviews by inviting them to sign up via email. The invitation was sent to 140 professors; 18 responded with interest and ultimately 14 signed up and completed interviews. One of the 14 participants' interviews is excluded from the data collection because they misunderstood the meaning of dual enrollment, therefore their answers were unrelated to the research questions of this study. Halfway through the interview, upon realization

of this misunderstanding, I asked if the professor had any recollection of their dual enrollment students to which they responded "no." The interview was stopped at that time and the data werenot included in the analyses. Ultimately, for the purpose of data collection, 13 participants completed the qualitative interview in its entirety.

The participants represented a diverse cross-section of the university; the group was comprised of eight males and five females. Subject areas represented include English, Emergency Management, Chemistry (two participants), Earth Science, Sociology, Language and Culture Studies (two participants), Educational Foundations, Entrepreneurship, History, and Government and Political Affairs.

The average number of dual enrollment students taught by participants, between Fall 2015 and Spring 2020 is two. The average number of dual enrollment courses taught by participants, between Fall 2015 and Spring 2020, is three.

DATA COLLECTION

Interviews were conducted via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I explained the study to the participants, confirmed they received the electronic Informed Consent Form, and asked for verbal, affirmative consent that they agree to participate. The interviews were structured with open-ended questions in a semi-structured interview format. This approach was appropriate because it allowed participants to elaborate on their perspectives of dual enrollment students without being limited by closed-ended questions that do not allow them

to fully expand or explain their thoughts and opinions. Interviews are a helpful method for hearing participants' stories and gaining an in-depth analysis of their experiences surrounding on particular topic (McNamara, 1999). The questions were designed based on gaps in current dual enrollment research; they were crafted specifically to inquire about faculty members' perspectives on levels of college readiness and overall impressions of dual enrollment students.

I recorded each interview and took brief notes during each conversation, although the transcriptions were not completed until after each interview was over. The software Otter AI was used to record and transcribe interviews; afterwards I listened to each interview again and edited the transcriptions for accuracy and clarity.

The original intent of this study was to frame it through a phenomenological approach. Since so little research exists on students' first-hand experiences with dual enrollment, the goal was to explore their perceptions on dual enrollment and how well prepared they felt for college-level work. Since the recruited pool was not large enough to use student participants, and the population had to switch to faculty members, little information was able to be gathered about students' dual enrollment experiences. Instead, the study turned into an interview-based qualitative research project that includes first-hand experiences, but from faculty members who taught dual enrollment students, instead of from the dually enrolled students themselves.

DATA ANALYSIS

Although this study morphed from phenomenological to an interview-based qualitative research project, one aspect of phenomenological research was used to analyze the results of the interviews – thematic analysis, which primarily includes identifying themes across a large set of data (Guest, 2012 and Lichtman, 2013). The strength of thematic analysis is that it provides a tool to use to *interpret* and *explain* data that is presented through interview responses and participants' statements. Advantages of using this data analysis strategy are that it is helpful when sorting through large amounts of data (such as interview responses), it allows for multiple themes to rise to the surface of the research (and does not limit discoveries), and data from the research directly support the themes. Additionally, the utilization of interviews as a part of this project provides a valuable contribution to the literature on dual enrollment. As mentioned previously, an exploration of students' experiences with dual enrollment is a gap in the literature. Although this study is not able to infer results from interviews directly with students, interview with faculty members were used to determine their perceptions of dual enrollment students related to self-efficacy and academic readiness. I did examine the students' interviews to determine points of concurrence and areas of disagreement compared with interviews with professors, however, since so few student interviews were completed, those items are not formally part of the data analysis.

Before I began this process, my intention was to research a coding software to use for data analysis, but as I read through the data I became

confident that I could complete the coding process by hand. I made this decision

for many reasons; the interviews were completed extremely close to each other

and I recollected many details about their content from memory already, the

interviews were short and I was already familiar with the data after reviewing it

line-by-line to correct transcriptions, and several years ago as part of my

master's work, in order to learn about qualitative analysis, I completed a

qualitative thesis in which I coded the data entirely by hand. Although I planned

to use a software this time around, once I completed an initial read of the data I

was eager to begin analyzing it and for the reasons listed above, I decided to

analyze codes and themes by hand in the way I was taught previously.

The *Framework Approach* structured by Hackett and Strickland (2018)

framed my data analysis. The first step of this approach is familiarization; the

most important aspect of this stage is to be immersed in the data. Being able to

immerse myself in the data is a key step in ensuring the coding and categories

accurately represent the data. To familiarize myself with the data, I prepared and

organized the data for review. This included compiling all responses and

transcribing each interview's recording; after downloading the text of each

interview from Otter AI software, I listened to each interview at least one

additional time to correct inaccuracies produced by the transcription software.

After this was complete, the text was added to one master document and I began

the data analysis process by doing one initial read of the data. The initial read

refreshed my memory of all of the interviews and began to inform the process of

creating preliminary codes. I made a first set of notes in the margins that included

some notes I had taken down during the interviews, as well as a list of possible

initial coding. I read each statement or response from a participant and wrote

down the first code that came to my mind; in many cases this was a short set of

words, or one phrase, to describe what the participant was explaining. This

began the process of step two, constructing a thematic framework. I copied the

codes and short phrases onto post it notes and began organizing them based on

like topics. I first grouped them by the relevant research question that they

addressed, and then analyzed each for possible sub themes or similarities. For

example, one set of codes included the following: *agreeable, followed*

instructions well, improvements, open to feedback, encouraged, responsive,

show improvement, teachable, teachable, took instruction well, continuous

improvement, and open to feedback. These were all derived from my reading of

the responses to questions asking faculty members to describe their perceptions

of dual enrollment students. After sorting this list of codes, I went back through

the transcriptions and noted where they each could be used to describe

responses (this step is call indexing and sorting). This helped clarify the codes

and make them as succinct as possible. For example, many faculty members

had used different wording to describe students being agreeable, or they

described them following instructions well instead of stating "they follow

instructions well." Re-reading the transcripts and applying these codes helped

me come up with the final list for each category.

After reviewing the data to determine appropriate codes, I re-read the data

and mapped each code to the relevant research question. I mapped each code

by utilizing an excel spreadsheet to categorize potential themes or sub-themes.

After they were sorted and mapped based on the appropriate research

questions, I formed an outline to organize the coding structure, which allowed me

to derive a set of themes.

CHAPTER 4: FACULTY MEMBERS' PERSPECTIVES

The first step I took after identifying codes was to consider possible themes. As I explained in the section above, my method involved reading the data multiple times and categorizing them based on similar content. I formed an outline based on the research questions, which helped to identify themes. After reviewing each category, set of codes, and concepts, I identified five themes total, which are listed in the narrative below and organized by research question.

It is important to acknowledge while reading these results that typically, students who participate in dual enrollment self-select into the program and given their motivation to seek out and apply for a college-level course, they are already more likely to do well academically. Further, these themes should be interpreted as perspectives and experiences of faculty members who teach dual enrollment courses, not as causal relationships between dual enrollment and any factors of student achievement, behavior, or outcomes.

Theme One: Behavior

The first research question of this project sought to explore faculty members' perspective of dual enrollment students. The first theme that emerged in this category was that faculty members perceive that dual enrollment students follow instructions well, are responsive to feedback and show improvement throughout the course of the semester. This contributes to their success in class.

When prompted with a question about overall impressions of dual enrollment students, about half of the participants noted that they had already answered that in response to an earlier question. The other half noted that based

on their experiences, students follow instructions well, are responsive and participatory, and generally show improvement throughout the semester, demonstrating that they are motivated and take their courses seriously. Eric, Professor of Chemistry, explained that his dual enrollment students take the initiative to contact him when they have a question or concern about their work. Also, as noted in an earlier section, Eric stated that these students do "exceptionally well" and typically perform higher than their peers who are enrolled full-time:

> They do some work outside of the lab for them to finish. And they do email me to where I have to give them more information, to clarify, because a college student may already know. For the high school students, they are very, very... I shouldn't say anxious, but they want to do the right thing, they want to do it the proper way. So, they would email me more to clarify things, asking what I want or what is expected.

Two participants noted specifically that the improvement they see is related to dual enrollment students learning what college is like. David, a faculty member in the Emergency Management Department, noted:

> I've never had a dual enrolled student that didn't do well, and that wasn't better by the end of the semester, just because they were learning the process.

Kay, Professor of Sociology, agreed, and expanded on that by explaining that students had to get comfortable with both the materials and the professors:

> I think that that student felt when she was talking to me regularly, I think there are a couple reasons. One is she was really engaged in the material that we were learning. The material was the kind she could relate to herself, so it was easier to learn what the expectations were. That helped her throughout the course of the semester. Also, she had a family member who was a staff member George University. And I think that also helped her feel a little bit more comfortable talking with me, a staff member. She eventually learned that I was approachable, learned my expectations, and her work improved and as a result.

Mary, a faculty member in the Education department, when asked about her overall impression of high school dual enrollment students, did agree with her colleagues but clarified that the most important piece to them learning how college works was the effort from the professor. This does relate to one of the other themes, that dual enrollment students benefit from committed professors; however this explanation was provided directly in response to me asking her about her most salient impression of her students. She noted that "once they come talk to me, they understand how college works and it (their work) only gets better from there." She continued,

> I make them all come and talk to me because that kind of breaks the threshold resistance, you know. And then, I make them make an appointment to talk to me, one on one. And then after that, I find that a lot more of them are more open to talking to me about things, you know, but initially they were very, like, I think they were intimidated and scared about losing the college course, and what are the expectations... Who is this person? But I think now they get me and I think they see me as a help rather than like somebody that they have to prove something to.

Lastly, one participant answered this based on her experience with one cohort of students. Tammy, a faculty member in the Entrepreneurship Department, teaches several classes involving dual enrollment students; however, for this question she specifically pointed out that she was referring to her weekend Entrepreneurship course, which I know to be an intense three-day workshop culminating in three college credits. I got to ask her if the change she noted about high school students in other courses was similar to the changes she saw in her Entrepreneurship course between Friday and Sunday.

> Yeah I think so, because again it wasn't where you're giving the information and then they regurgitate it on a test... it was more, the information was given ahead of time and then they used that information

to work with the weekend and I was there to just help, moderate and move things along. So I think they did see it changed a little bit, for the better.

Theme Two: Commitment

The second theme that emerged from the initial research question is that based on the experiences of faculty members, dual enrollment students benefit from having committed professors. Several professors noted that they take an extra step in introductions or outreach when they find out a student is participating in dual enrollment. Some participants did admit that there probably were high school students in their course who they never knew about and they explained that when they do realize they have a dual enrolled student, they understand it might be overwhelming for them and they try to mitigate any potential challenges by making them feel comfortable in the course. This highlights one of the critiques of dual enrollment listed in the section above, policy making, because the university does not have a consistent policy or procedure for identifying dual enrollment students and so that creates a challenge at the program level when some professors are aware of their students and some are not.

Eric, Professor of Chemistry, felt more strongly about this concept than many others we discussed. When I inquired about how the dual enrollment students perform in his course, he added at the end of his response:

> This is what I do to help them feel comfortable in the class environment. I do talk to them. I email them and I ask them, "are you alright?" In the lab, I will find partners for them, rather than randomly assigning. So there'll be a responsible person who, you know, who would treat them well in that aspect. Who will give and take, you know, to make sure that they are comfortable in the classroom. I do I email them more often than a college student, to make sure that they are alright, that they're learning in that

class. I ask, is there something that I could help them out with, but I never had to find a tutor or things like that for them.

I acknowledged these comments and asked him to elaborate on how, specifically, that outreach helped the students. The reason I asked this was because I was curious to know if that was the reason his students did well academically or if they came to the class more academically prepared and would have performed well regardless of his actions. I was also curious if he would mention anything about academic rigor in high school versus college, as was noted in the literature review as a common challenge with dual enrollment. I did not point that out to him in order to keep the questions open ended, but in response he mostly discussed what types of assistance they need. He indicated that they do not necessarily need academic help, but it helps them feel more at ease and comfortable in the college environment. From his comments, it was clear to me that the commitment he made to helping them feel welcome was not a contributing factor to their academic success; they were high achievers to begin with. As he explained,

> The professor will make a difference when they are in dual enrollment, you know, to show interest in them, to encourage them, make them feel comfortable. They don't need much academic help, but other things like to encourage them, to show how impressed you are with them. And I think it helps them tremendously. I took it on my part to make sure that they were comfortable because initially they are very shy. Initially they are shy when they first come; they feel that they don't belong in the classroom, with the people and things like that. So I make sure that I talk to them, make them feel at ease, make them feel comfortable, you know. And also, I give them enough encouragement as well, and they do well and I make sure to tell them that I'm quite impressed with their work and the quality of work.

Mary, Professor of Education, noted that the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic played a significant role in the support needed for her dual enrollment

students. We discussed how typically, her students are independent and do not

need extra outreach or support from her. However, just as the pandemic was

causing challenges among college students, she noticed that it was also

impacting her high school students. In this case, as opposed to Professor Eric's

students, hers relied on that extra support simply due to the pandemic. In a "non-

pandemic" year, she indicated that she still provides special outreach to high

school students, but not at the rate required in 2020:

> During the transition to virtual courses, they were getting confused, are we having class? I said, we were meeting once a week and I thought okay, this isn't working, we have to meet twice a week. So just to get them-- and this is true, I have friends in the School District of Downtown-- they're saying the same thing, you know, they're just not coming a lot of times. I actually set up a reminder, and I wake them up. I wake them up. I go okay class in 10 minutes, get up, wash your face, get in front of us. You know, and I know this is not something your college professors are going to do you have to get yourself up and get to class. But again, I am feeling like this is so abnormal, and so stressful for them. Like it is for all of us, but it's particularly for them, that they need a little extra TLC. I'm trying to tell them like, I care about you a lot, I want you to be really successful and I'm bending over backwards to help you do that. You might not get that from every college professor when there's a class of 30 people. I'm trying to be honest about that, but I certainly don't want them-- you know I'm not trying to be the rigor monster and say this is my way or the highway or you're done. And I just want them to be successful with this. And they just needed a lot of extra support to do that.

Two participants noted that the attention they pay to high school students

is important to help them prepare for their eventual transition to college. They

want students to understand that the experience students receive as dual

enrollment students is one of the most valuable ways they can prepare to be a

full-time college student. Alex, faculty member in the Entertainment and Media

Arts department, noted:

I made sure they understood the rigor and challenges of college level work so there were no surprises when they got to college.

Rick, a Government Professor, agreed with professor Alex and provided

the following reflection about a student he remembered:

There's something to be said about having had a college course before you go and move in the dorm. It's you know, a level of comfort, I can do this and this is what it's like. I remember the young woman who went to Bucknell. She was a Manor Ridge student, lives just a couple miles from the university and when she was at Bucknell she wrote me an email that said I just want to let you know that your class really prepared me for what I experienced at Bucknell. So I don't think she even considered Millersville at all but she was doing it not even to check a box, but to have some comfort about going elsewhere.

PREPAREDNESS

The second research question of this project sought to explore faculty perceptions on dual enrollment students' preparedness for college level work.

Theme One: Academic Preparedness

The first theme that emerged within this research question was that according to the perceptions of faculty members, dual enrollment students are just as prepared, or more prepared, than their college level peers. Their work meets or exceeds college standards; it is equal to or greater than work completed by their college level peers. Nearly the entire participant group indicated that their dual enrollment students were either just as prepared as, or more prepared, than their peers. In terms of meeting the academic expectations for college, they noted that the high school students in their courses have been some of the brightest, prepared, dedicated students- sometimes more so than their full time, degree seeking students.

Professor David, from the Emergency Management department, summarized his overall impression of high school students' work compared to that of his college students:

> I think that I found that those students for the most part, are probably better prepared than say a freshman or sophomore in my classes. And I think that there's a reason for that. I think that one is, they're like, Hey, I'm here, I want to be here. I want to be working on this. Not that our regular students don't, but you know some, some students take my classes, because they're general education. And so when I have dual enrollment students, like the student I have right now, you know, he's really gung ho, because he wants to be here and it's something he wants to do. He specifically picked this class. I think where they struggle is some of the information really relates to preparedness. We do a lot of college preparedness. Well, they're still at home. You know, so they struggle a

little bit with that; they're still under mom and dad's roof. But overall, they normally write pretty well, they do get better at discussion boards over the course of the semester. The dual enrollment students that I know of, there was there was nothing where they were struggling that hard that I had to throw them a rope.

Both the participants who teach in the sciences noted that their students

have been among "the best of the best.

Eric, Professor of Chemistry, noted:

I went back and checked the last 10 years of the high school students in my classes, and they were all excellent students, they were very well prepared. They were very well prepared, and I wrote that they were regular to class. They were very, very good in the exams and quizzes and all; that shows that they took it really seriously. Normally about 10% of my students get an A in my class and to say that these students were among that 10% shows that they had commitment, as well as the discipline for learning the material. They had equal enthusiasm, equal commitment, equal ambition when comparing those.

Richard, another professor of Chemistry, explained a similar experience

when reflecting on the academic preparedness of his students:

I have had high school students in chemistry 111 and 112 introductory chemistry one, and introductory chemistry two. Most of them have been from Manor Ridge High School. And I have been very pleased with how well they perform; they're often at the very top of the class. In most cases it exceeded what the other students in the course were doing. One individual in particular who is somewhat of an extraordinary young man that I had a year ago, was the highest scoring student in the class. He took the national American Chemical Society final exam, which I gave all my students, which has national norms, students from all across the nation are taking it- thousands, and he scored at the 99th percentile in the nation after he just took my class. Remarkable young man.

Faculty members from other disciplines agreed with their colleagues in the

sciences. Kay, from the Sociology Department, explained:

Dual enrollment students' work met the standards compared to their peers and although they exceeded my standards, they were quieter and more reserved than their peers- although they appeared overwhelmed, it did not show academically.

Lillian, professor of History, told me that she had "unbelievably excellent students." It is important to note that Lillian told me she could only remember two dual enrollment students she had over the last 10 years. Of those two, both were excellent, but one stuck out more so than the other:

> She was just on top of everything. I remember that her writing was pretty darn excellent, I think, in this class. In this class, the exams were a mix of multiple choice and essay. And it was a very small class. I had several people not ever show up. Three were withdrawn or Z grades. There were maybe 11 in the class. The students who self-select into dual enrollment are some of the smartest kids in their high school. They're usually pretty well prepared for freshman level coursework. They were adequately or over prepared.

Lastly, Tammy, Professor of Entrepreneurship, noted:

> Writing and everything was actually higher than some of the freshmen I've had. Even the math skills were higher than the hire higher from the high school kids.

Her colleague Mary agreed and made a statement that summarizes how most of the participants described their experiences reviewing and grading work submitted by dual enrollment students:

> I would say that all of them upped the ante actually, compared to the mainstream first year students. They do produce better work.

During the interviews, some participants answered the question about college-level academic work by describing specific assignments completed by their dual enrollment students. Still, they agreed with other participants that the specific projects they discussed with me either met or exceeded expectations for college level work:

> Anne, professor of Spanish, noted:

> Their assignments are really the same. I currently have two high school students in my 300-level course, and their work is very comparable to

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what my regular students do. The students that I have had was either in the 200 or 300 level and the students were exceptionally strong students. So I had one student two years ago, who I later found out, was the valedictorian of his high school. He also was the best student in my course. Even though he was younger than everybody else he certainly had the most background knowledge even. So, very well prepared. And it's really been the same with everybody that I've had from high school.

Fred, also from the Spanish department, noted:

My experience is that dual enrollment students are very responsible for turning in their daily homework. More than university students. They have been very, very good students- very responsible, and their academic performance is superior compared to the rest of the class. In terms of language classes and assignments, the work exceeds standards.

One participant noted that dual enrollment students only excelled in some assignments. They did not necessarily perform poorly in other areas, but they did not exceed expectations with certain types of work. Mary, Professor of Education, stated:

Now these students-- they speak well, you know they're prepared. They know how to do presentations. I think they have that down. So I think they're very prepared in that way. But writing a formal paper-- an academic paper, and I think the math is probably another area where some of them struggle.

An exception to every other response was Adam, professor of Earth Sciences. His perspective was unique in that he agreed with his colleagues in terms of dual enrollment students performing similarly to their college peers; however, he noted that the performance was not up to parwith standards of college level work. It is important to note that Adam did frame this response in regards to COVID-19. He noted several times during the interview that he had limited interaction with dual enrollment students and in this particular course he

was describing, all students struggled when the university went virtual in March

2020 due to COVID-19:

> And as of the end of September, there had been five quizzes- five weekly quizzes, which he had completed four of the five quizzes and at that point, his lecture percentage was a 46%. And he only turned in two of the five laboratories. So, yeah he was missing a lot of assignments. He was not the only student to miss that much work. I think I started the class with around 140 students in that class. And there were probably, maybe seven or eight that would routinely miss assignments and that I urge to either start doing assignments or withdraw from the class if they're not going to do the work. Some withdrew and some failed. Other really struggled because of the virtual situation.

Theme Two: Soft Skills

The second theme that emerged within this category is that according to

the experiences of faculty members, dual

enrollment students have academic-related soft skills that help them succeed in

the classroom. Based on the responses outlined in the previous theme, it is

evident that they have high levels of academic readiness as well as the

motivation and desire to do well.

Several participants, while not directly asked about soft skills, made sure

to mention that in their experience, they were impressed by the academic

abilities of their dual enrollment students. Of all the participants who alluded to

this, several mentioned skills such as time management, balancing their high

school and college schedules, enthusiasm for the material in the course,

punctual, dependable, teamwork, communication and professionalism. Only one

used the actual term *soft skills*, however, several of his colleagues described

similar impressions of their high school students.

Professor Alex, faculty member in the Entertainment and Media Arts Department, explained that his dual enrollment students have above average skills in time management and prioritizing their tasks:

> They tend to better manage their scheduling skills. I hate using the word soft skills but like, they have better subjective skills. They tend to do better in that anyway, because, and that's one of the reasons that they're doing the dual enrollment because they kind of see those opportunities and take them. So like a lot of stuff I deal with, especially with first years is like, this is how you make a schedule; this is how you prioritize. They (dual enrollment students) usually already have that just because they're, they're kind of functioning at a higher level already.

David, Professor of Emergency Management, agreed with Professor Alex that his dual enrollment students also have an above average ability to manage their time, keep track of projects and assignments, and completing work on or ahead of schedule.

> So the dual enrollment students are certainly learning time management because you know what, here's this project and it's due on this date, and, you know, coming into the semester I always start the same way- I say it that the easiest class in the world to flunk is an online class, because you're never faced with the teacher, especially with asynchronous. So, they are learning time management skills which are very important. And then because we do so many discussion boards, they have to interact with all the other students. And so I think that those are two key skills that help them when they will be going away to college, especially the time management because you know, they have a post date and a reply date every week, on the discussion boards. And so they they have to do their work, otherwise they don't succeed, so like they do a pretty good job of learning time management.

One specific soft skill, teamwork, was mentioned during my interview with Tammy, Professor of Entrepreneurship:

> I would say they're on par with the students and the George University students that took the course were anywhere from seniors to sophomores or a few freshmen but mainly they were, I'd say seniors and juniors. I think the high school students were well prepared to work in teams, and were able to contribute.

Professor Fred, from the Language and Culture Studies Department who teaches Spanish, noted that not only have his experiences shown him that high school students display above average levels of time management, but they sometimes surpass that of his college students. During a discussion comparing the two groups (high school and degree-seeking college students), I asked if they have a higher level of responsibility and time management:

> I think they do. In terms of managing their time to be responsible with assignments. In general, they have been very responsible and managing their time appropriately and meeting all deadlines in time and have been very good students. I think in general, they have been comfortable asking questions in class, not only about the content of the class, but also about the structure, and requisites, and grades and things like that. At the end of the class, I remember some of them came in to talk to me, yes.

Several participants spoke to the dual enrollment students' motivation and natural desires to do well: Eric, from the Chemistry Department, noted:

> They were more on the quiet side, but very, very enthusiastic to learn the material; they're excited to be in this college course, and they want to do well; you know maybe it gives them motivation or a sense of achievement. So because of that, they do exceptionally well, even their grades, you know, all of them had A's, which I look back and see. That's what I like about them their enthusiasm, their desire to learn, their desire to be challenged. You know, those things. I really enjoy having them.

Anne, professor of Spanish, agreed:

> My experience is that those students have the motivation, that want to come and take a college level class, while they are still in high school are well prepared and have a really good work ethic. the students that choose to do this, are pretty highly motivated and pretty well prepared and thinking that college is going to be a lot of work. Rickard had very similar comments: "my experience is that those students have the motivation, that want to come and take a college level class, while they are still in high school are well prepared and have a really good work ethic. The students that choose to do this, are pretty highly motivated and pretty well prepared and thinking that college is going to be a lot of work.

Lillian, Professor of History, was impressed with the level of initiative and responsibility. She noted that during the semester she taught most of her DE students, they had to speak with her about snow days and make up dates where college and HS schedules didn't align properly. They were more responsible for pointing out when you are having issues or struggles. She was also impressed by their motivation to strive for academic success:

> The kids who are coming from the high school... they have more hoops to jump through to get to that class. Just in terms of enrollment, but you know they have to make it work with their high school schedule. I mean they really do have to self-select and it takes a lot of thought and planning. And you can see that. They have chosen us, they take it seriously. I think when you're looking at dual enrollment students, you're looking at the best of local high schools. And then when we're looking at our student body as a whole, we're looking at a much broader range of preparation levels. So, I have never had a dual enrollment student that needed as much help as some of my weaker incoming freshmen.

Lastly, Rick, Government professor, summarized his thoughts on how his dual enrollment students have performed above and beyond grades and academics. Of all participants I interviewed, I saw the most amount of regard and respect for dual enrollment students from Rick.

> Dual enrolled students attend more regularly, they show up on time, more regularly, they raise their hands more often. They ask questions, they seek clarification more often. And then they do better on the exams as well so I don't know what they're doing outside of class but I can speculate that they are more dedicated to learning, more committed to reading and preparing. They are all impressive young people you know they... I can't get my college students even to act like they care. And I mean that came out wrong because in every class there are some who care deeply. But, but as a whole I can't get them to care like I want them to care. So when I see when I see that there's a dual enrolled student on my roster, I'm actually excited because often that student winds up driving questions and answers and it's not that they're.... you know they're simply more curious, you know, than others. It may also be because you know they they've obviously excelled in their high schools to get to this point, and their GPAs matter to them, whereas I'm not certain they matter to a bunch of my other

students. I've never encountered one who was disrespectful or monopolized the conversation but if they have questions, they want them answered and they don't have a problem saying hey, you know, explain this to me a little bit better whereas I don't get that from my students. So, in that sense, they're like, a couple of students in each class you know there are two or three in every class who would behave that way, but I like them more when it comes to participation for sure.

RESOURCEFULNESS

The third research question addressed to what extent faculty members believe their dual enrollment students are prepared to access resources on a college campus.

Theme One: Accessing Resources

The theme that emerged within this category is that faculty members perceive that dual enrollment students display the same levels of resourcefulness as current, degree seeking students. A specific topic that was investigated among the participants was to what extent they felt dual enrollment students were prepared to access resources on a college campus. Unlike the responses and themes within previous categories, this area yielded mixed results. About half of the participants did not provide any context for this area because they noted that their courses do not require the utilization of any outside resources, so therefore they did not have a perspective on whether their dual enrollment students could, or would, access them. (A segment of these participants felt that questions surrounding this topic were irrelevant because their dual enrollment students were so prepared that they would not ever have a need for seeking out additional resources outside of class.)

One group of participants explained that they witnessed their dual enrollment students failing to obtain the proper resources. These responses highlight the challenge of equity and access within dual enrollment. As mentioned in the section on critiques of dual enrollment programs, one of the key issues is that students from underrepresented backgrounds and underserved backgrounds often do have the resources needed to be connected with dual enrollment opportunities. Even when they do have access to take college courses, they may not have the funds to pay registration fees or for textbooks, as was the case in this professors' experience. Professor Kay, who teaches in the Sociology Department, was very descriptive in her explanation of her dual enrollment students. From her perspective, *using resources* meant obtaining course materials and utilizing the instructor to ask questions or seek out information. She explained that one of the dual enrollment students reached out to her frequently to ask questions and seek out resources, but the other was very shy and rarely spoke up or asked for help. She got the impression that they were good friends in high school and one student would ask questions on behalf of them both and then share the information. The course she was describing took place in spring 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic forced courses to switch to a virtual format. Because of that transition, she noticed that the students were not prepared with the resources they needed.

> I got the sense that they didn't have the materials- the books. And you know I was kind of wondering... So what they had to do, is they had to do discussion posts. And that's how we quickly pivoted. When we were face to face, they had to break up into small groups, and then select a representative to post to the discussion board. And then when we transitioned, they had to individually post. They couldn't rely on, you know,

somebody in their small group. And that's when I started to wonder if they actually had the textbook. Because there was, you know, one of the girls reached out to me and said, would you mind if our answers were similar. And I thought, okay, something's going on there that either they don't have the book, or they can't share the book, or they're talking to one another about what the appropriate answer is. I got really suspicious that they didn't have the resources they needed, and they were trying to figure out, okay how do we do this now that we don't have each other and other students in the classroom to rely on?

I asked her to elaborate on why she thought it was that they had not

acquired the appropriate resources and she did not have an explanation.

Unfortunately, even though this resource was free and readily available to all

students, they had not accessed it the entire semester.

No, and I thought it was very peculiar. You know one of the things I had told a regular college student was, the last book we're reading is available through the library as an electronic copy. And so there's really no reason that you shouldn't be able to have the book. Yea I was surprised and I think I wouldn't have caught that if we hadn't immediately switched to online.

David, a professor of Emergency Management, had separate answers

depending on which resources were in question. He did not address specific

course resources such as textbooks; he did address students' ability to access

the library:

Well… what's interesting about that is that's not just dual enrolls. That's my grad students! For the first couple years, I taught grad students. All of a sudden one day I had this lightbulb moment, you know, Dr. S. from the library- we're good friends. And I thought, why don't I have my students have a library session with him, so they can learn about our online resources. So, I think all students need that, I think although they learn about the library in their comp 100 classes, I think it's where all students struggle the most.

Professor Alex, a faculty member in the Entertainment and Media Arts

department, had a similar impression. He noted that he didn't think his dual

enrollment students were aware of how to access resources, and, like Professor David, explained that his current students also struggle in this area and are not that different than his dual enrolled students.

> My general impression of the student I have right now is that I don't know that he's even aware of those support systems. Which is probably why he doesn't make use of them. I mean it's not like we're a big library. Um, but, thinking about like tutoring and even like some of the library services as far as it goes, I don't know that he knows he has some of that stuff available. I mean the bigger comment is that I don't know that all of our students know of the resources. I noticed that a lot of our students actually just, that's a general pervasive problem in Millersville. It becomes worse for dual enrollment because they're not here all the time.

On the other hand, four participants clearly explained that, yes, in their experience, their dual enrollment students were able to access resources.

One professor, Steve, of the English Department, when asked if he had to provide any additional resources for his one dual enrollment student compared to others in the class, explained that although he had to provide additional resources for some degree-seeking students in his class, that was not the case for his high school student. I clarified his perspective and asked if he had to help or guide his dual enrollment student when he accessed library resources:

> The amazing thing about it is there's a couple of students in the class where I had to. It was necessary for me to do that. But not with him (my dual enrollment student).

Contrary to Steve, Professor David had previously stated that his dual enrollment students were unable to access library resources. However, David explained that they are in fact able to access electronic resources quite well, even better than this degree seeking students.

> Where our high school students are going better is with the learning management system, because a lot of them have it in high school. We

have students that I get students in my class, sometimes like college juniors that have never been in D2L because they're in classes that don't use it. And so they don't know how to use the learning management system. And the students that I've had that are dual enrolled, for the most part, have not struggled.

Professor Mary, a faculty member in the Education department, explained that she reviews library and learning management resources with her students at the beginning of each course and since the course in which she had dual enrollment students was entirely virtual, she only noticed one instance when students took advantage of the resources she provided:

Since we had Dr. I from the library come to my class as a guest speaker, I kept pushing them to make an appointment with her. And two of them took me up on it I think as far as I know- two maybe three but two for sure. Took me up on it and made an appointment with her and she helped them with their research.

Lillian, a Professor of History, had a similar perspective on resources- she defined them as being able to access library services and use the learning management system (D2L). She explained that although she would consider the library as an important resource, to her knowledge her dual enrollment students did not need to access it for any reason, so that is why they didn't – not because they didn't know how. Regarding the Desire to Learn learning management system:

D2L, Absolutely. All of the assignments had to be submitted through D2L. There were lecture outlines there, the assignments were posted there as well as their weekly announcements. So, you know, not as extensive as what we're doing now, but I was using a lot of the different elements of it.

Professor Lillian made one distinction that her colleagues did not. Even though she felt dual enrollment students were well prepared to access D2L

resources, they and their degree seeking peers were too quick to give up if there

were technical difficulties.

> I think that they were a little quicker to be bamboozled when things weren't working. They didn't necessarily know what to do. And until this semester I think it was harder to check to see what the system status was, they didn't know how to do that. So, you know, if they tried to log in and it didn't work, they threw up their hands and that was it until the next day, which I think is actually kind of a high school reaction if you think about it. And I will say I'm seeing that from a lot of my freshmen right now, if it breaks they're like, I'm out for the day!

Anne, a professor of Spanish in the Language and Cultural Studies

Department, also noted similarities between dual enrollment students and her

degree seeking students in terms of accessing library resources.

> I think for library if, if I were doing library research, that the high school students and the Millersville students would need to learn that in the same way as the high school students. I wouldn't assume that they would know how to do this just because they hopefully successfully completed English 110.

She noted, when prompted about whether her dual enrollment students

were able to access any other resources:

> I would say, just like our regular university students if they came, you know to office hours and needed advice I would give them the same kind of advice that I give our regular students, and they would need the same kind of assistance in locating resources as our regular students do.

One of the participants' answers to this question surprised me. Data

presented in previous sections show that almost all participants had either

positive or neutral reflections on their dual enrollment students, with one

exception. Adam, the Earth Science professor, who previously spoke about a

negative experience with the only dual enrollment student he ever had- actually

had a positive comment in this area. Although Professor Adam's student was

poorly prepared (academically), did not pay attention, was absent frequently and eventually dropped the class, he evidently exceled in this area compared to his dual enrollment peers. When asked about that students' ability to access resources on campus, he explained that the student was able to, based on an email interaction they had. He explained that he thought he did because he was aware of note-taking and the need to request it, meaning he had to have reached out to learning services on his own:

> I did see that on the 25th he sent me an email asking if it would be possible to request the note taker for the class so apparently he has accommodations. And I replied to him that because as per Learning Services they said that if a class was asynchronous and, I did pre-recorded lectures, so it was like I was in the class and I posted all those. Since I was doing that, he was not allowed a note taker so I just replied to him that he wasn't allowed to notetaker That's the only correspondence I had with him the entire semester.

Professor Adam also mentioned that one other student (not a part of dual enrollment) in that course sought a similar accommodation. A degree seeking student had also submitted a request for a note-taker via the Office of Learning Services and to him directly. Although Adam's experience with this students' resourcefulness was more positive than most of his other observations, his response to this question aligns with many of his colleagues who noted that dual enrollment students display a similar level of resourcefulness as their degree-seeking peers.

Overall, despite the varied responses, it is clear that faculty members perceive that dual enrollment students display similar levels of resourcefulness as their degree seeking peers. Data shows that several participants feel that although dual enrollment students struggle, their peers do as well. Few

distinctions were made between high school seniors and dual enrollment

students. There were also no distinctions made between students from different

socioeconomic statuses. Based on the existing literature on critiques of dual

enrollment, it is possible that some participants' students did not have the proper

resources needed in order for them to gain access to course materials or other

supplies. It is important to note that these responses are based on first-hand

experiences of faculty members and do not control for individual student

backgrounds or levels of socioeconomic status.

CHAPTER 5: FACULTY MEMBERS' PERSPECTIVES ON DUAL ENROLLMENT

The first research question presented in this project inquired about what perspectives faculty members have of dual enrollment students. It is clear that their perspectives of high school students are positive and their experiences have been positive; in their experiences they have seen higher levels of academic preparedness among their high school students than in their degree seeking students. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive when I spoke with participants about their overall impressions of these students. Although the question was presented to faculty members as open-ended and it was not necessarily connected to academic skill, many of them answered by explaining their positive impressions of their behavior and their academic ability. The only outlier that presented itself through the interviews was faculty members perceive that dual enrollment students are quiet and more reserved than their peers. This wasn't a negative comment but was one common response I received from faculty members when speaking about dual enrollment students. Many of them considered this understandable and did not view it as a negative perspective, but it was noteworthy enough for them to mentioned that when describing their experiences.

A second noteworthy discovery is that faculty members feel that dual enrollment students receive many benefits as a result of participating in the program, for which the catalyst is a committed, dedicated professor. It was clear from the results of the professors' interviews that although in their experience, dual enrollment students are typically prepared for college level work, they can

exceed standards and thrive with the help of faculty members. Several participants noted that once they find out they have a dual enrollment student in class, they make sure to check in with them once or twice more than they would with a full-time degree-seeking student; additionally, they noted that they often send notes of praise to dual enrollment students throughout the semester to help them continue to feel supported and encouraged.

The second question sought to explore in what ways dual enrollment students are prepared to make the transition from high school to college. It is evident from the research that dual enrollment students are academically prepared for college level work. Several of the themes in the previous section emerged in this category as well. Interview results found that faculty members perceive dual enrollment students as being at least as prepared as, but usually more prepared, than their degree-seeking peers. Almost every participant noted with confidence that their dual enrollment students either "meet or exceed" the standard for college level academics.

Data also supports the common perception among faculty members that dual enrollment students do demonstrate academic readiness and they demonstrate that regularly. Examples of this include professors explaining that students "care deeply" about their academics, they "try harder" than most of their peers, and they seem to have higher levels of motivation and an overall desire to exceed in the course. Several participants speculated that this is likely because high school students are not yet "jaded" and understand that there is a lot riding on the college course, or because they are paying out of pocket for the course

whereas most of their peers are utilizing loans or financial aid and do not have as much financial literacy as high school students have by default.

Lastly, a research question was, "To what extent do faculty members believe that their dual enrollment students are prepared to access resources on a college campus?

The varied results of this question suggest that there is great variability among the types of and approaches to courses taught by these participants. Most of the questions were equally as applicable across all participants/subject areas, but I noticed during responses to questions about resourcefulness that it is very situational and based on the subject area. For example, a few of the participants who teach science struggled to answer the question at first because they mentioned that students use the lab frequently. They reasoned that students have the wherewithal to come to lab when needed, but they would not consider that as being resourceful, per se Another professor, for example, who teaches in the humanities, stated that there are no resources needed; his class is a series of lectures and tests and either students understand the material, or they don't. They don't need to use the library, he does not require the use of a learning management system, and he explained that he doubted any of his dual enrollment students needed to seek out tutoring or any other resource since they were "the brightest in the class."

Some participants also noted that in a "non-COVID" world, when their classes are primarily in person, students have the opportunity to physically walk to the library with their class to learn how to access those resources, professors

hold office hours where they go over how to use the learning management system, and tutors (upperclassmen) or peer mentors assigned to their sections are physically present in class, facilitating a relationship with students. Most of the professors who took part in this study noted that their courses are mostly virtual, and have been for over a year, which may exacerbate the gap between students and available resources at the university. It should be noted, as explained above in the discussion about criticisms of dual enrollment, that some students may not come to dual enrollment with the resources or support needed in order to access course supplies. It it possible, for example, in the example where two students did not have the course textbook, that they did know how to access the resource but they did not have access to a device to view the electronic version or they did not have the funds to pay for the physical book.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Although this study was not able to logistically recruit enough student participants to complete a full phenomenological study of their lived experiences with dual enrollment, it is still an important topic to consider. Research about whether dual enrollment students feel prepared, and are prepared, for college should inform future studies on this topic. Additionally, further research on students' dual enrollment experiences should take equity and access into consideration. Further studies should investigate whether students from disadvantaged or underrepresented backgrounds experience dual enrollment differently than then peers.

While different from the original intent of this project, the data collected about the experiences and perceptions of faculty members still adds an important layer to existing dual enrollment research. Just as little research exists on experiences of dual enrollment students, research on faculty members' dual enrollment perspectives is also extremely limited. The results of this study, particularly those in which such positive experiences were highlighted, suggest that a similar study among high school dual enrollment participants may yield similar results.

Should more research be conducted on the perspectives of faculty members, one area of focus should be one of the themes that emerged from the first question: *Dual enrollment students benefit from committed professors.* While several participants noted that they provide extra support to students if they find out they are dual enrollment participants, it is unclear if this impacted the success

of those students. These findings suggest that an exploration of the term

committed should be explored more in depth. It is possible that the reason their

dual enrollment students were so successful is because the professors were

committed; because they took extra time to check in with them and because they

provided more encouragement than they typically do to degree-seeking students.

It is equally as possible that the students would have been successful regardless

of the involvement from the professor. A future study on direct support provided

by faculty members to dual enrollment students may yield to what extent that

support directly contributed to their academic success.

An additional topic to explore is related to the original research question

about resourcefulness. I noticed that many professors had very specific

recollections of both their dual enrollment and degree-seeking students' abilities

to access resources; however, most of those recollections were limited to the

most recent semester(s) when the COVID-19 pandemic was at its peak and most

coursework was being completed online. For most of the other questions in this

study, I noticed that professors' comments would date back to students they had

five or ten years ago. For the question about resourcefulness, almost all of them

referred to the current situation with online learning when answering the

question. Whether or not dual enrolled students are prepared to access

resources is a topic worth exploring further both because of the unique

challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic which took place during this

research, but also to investigate any differences that exist between

resourcefulness of students from underserved backgrounds compared to their

peers . Because most of the data collected from this area was very specific to the circumstances surrounding the pandemic, it is doubtful that those results would still hold true once the pandemic subsides. A future study exploring how dual enrollment students are introduced to resources, how much or how little they are required to use them, and to what extent they feel confident doing so both before and after their college coursework, would be a helpful addition to the existing dual enrollment research.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

As evidenced throughout the introduction of this paper, this was quite a personal project for me. When I began considering a topic for my dissertation, the reason I selected dual enrollment was because it's something I work with every day and is a growing trend both regionally and nationally. Since I coordinate the program at the institution I work for, it made sense to investigate pieces of it which have not been extensively researched before. I had also hoped to be able to use some of the research to inform practice in my day-to-day work.

On a note of personal reflection, the most significant thing I learned from this entire project is that faculty members at my institution are humbled, impressed and excited by our dual enrollment students. Going into this project, I worried that faculty members would struggle to provide accurate information about their experiences with dual enrollment students because they often are few and far between and professors do not always know if they have high school students in their class or not. I have also heard, anecdotally, from my colleagues

that sometimes it's a burden for dual enrollment students to join particular courses. This was not my experience as I listened to their responses to my interview questions. I was pleased to hear so many participants reporting such positive experiences with high school students. In my position, it is often difficult to follow students' journeys until the end of their time at the university. The admissions office is responsible for recruitment and enrollment and once students are enrolled, we move on to the next cohort. It was refreshing and encouraging to hear so many positive experiences our faculty members are having as a result of having dual enrollment students in their courses. I can tell they take their responsibilities seriously, genuinely enjoy working with and helping students, and are willing to go the extra mile for them- as I'm sure they are with their other students as well. On a professional level, the results of this project will inform my practice in several ways.

Implication 1

On the topic of resourcefulness, results indicated that dual enrollment students are just as resourceful as their full-time peers; however, that did not always mean that they were actually familiar with how to access resources. I got the impression from several interviews that there are some struggles with resourcefulness among all of our student populations. This is a timely finding because less than a year ago, the Office of New Student Programs (Orientation) was moved into my department. This has caused me to think differently about how we onboard dual enrollment students and even, to an extent, consider how we onboard new students regarding resources available to them. It is clear from

this study that the current methods we use do not reach the number of students we expect them to. For dual enrollment students, we invite them to campus for a tour and PowerPoint presentation about the program and campus services. This is not a required program, but those who attend are familiarized with key campus resources. For new full-time degree seeking students, a full Orientation program provides several opportunities to learn about various campus resources. It may be worth formally assessing both of those programs to determine how useful students find the sessions. It may also be worth surveying professors about which resources should be prioritized during Orientation programs. A few of the participants in this study noted that they take it into their own hands and take students to the library or invite a speaker in to review the library resources. I anticipate that if professors were asked to contribute their thoughts on resourcefulness of current students, that they would happily provide feedback on where their transition and orientation sessions may be improved.

Implication 2

The second implication for my practice is to consider relevant updates to the application process for dual enrollment. Admittedly, today we use the same process that we've been using since the inception of the program- students are asked to submit a transcript and they are reviewed primarily for grade point average and academic preparedness. We are extremely flexible with this policy and are often asked to give students a chance if they do not meet the academic criteria. University administration is interested in expanding the dual enrollment program and providing greater access to students, so we *prefer* to see a high

GPA, but ultimately do not always require it. It is clear from my research that most dual enrollment students, according to the faculty members I interviewed, display several soft skills that help them be successful. I learned that our high school students follow instructions well, are willing to work to improve their performance, are highly motivated, and responsive to working together with professors on their academics.

My university's application process for full time degree seeking students includes questions about soft skills. Students who do not meet the standard academic criteria are invited to interview, which focuses on skills outside of the classroom such as grit, resilience, motivation, and openness to improving in the classroom. Based on the results of this research, it makes sense to incorporate some of this into the dual enrollment application process. This may increase access to our program by providing opportunities for students who do not demonstrate 100% of their abilities through their transcripts.

Implication 3

George University could make improvements to the way the dual enrollment program is facilitated among the faculty. During this project I learned that a few professors were not aware of how to tell whether a student was dually enrolled or not, and some, although familiar with the fact that high school students regularly take college courses on our campus, were not aware that the university has a formal, structured program. Additionally, I heard from faculty members that they are extremely committed to their high school students, so much so that they take extra care and time to make sure they are successful.

This prompted considerations for empowering all faculty members to do this with their dual enrollment students. The University should consider hosting a dual enrollment training session or a workshop that provides faculty members with the context and structure of the dual enrollment program. This would be facilitated by the Admissions Office with support from the University Registrar and could include information about goals of the program, partnering high schools, information about enrolled students, and ways to work with dual enrollment students to facilitate their success. There is a Center for Academic Excellence within the Academic Affairs unit which invites workshop sessions; I think this would help faculty better understand their dual enrollment students and better understand the overall program at the university.

In summary, I am pleased with the outcomes of this project. Although I set out to interview students and explore their experiences with dual enrollment, the switch to focusing on professors still helped with my understanding of our dual enrollment program. I learned valuable lessons from the professors and as I mentioned above, am pleased that they reported mostly positive experiences with our dual enrollment students. Before working on this project, most of my work with the dual enrollment program focused on the students – not necessarily on the professors. This project encouraged me to explore dual enrollment from the lens of a faculty member instead of just the students. Exploring the program from the viewpoint of professors helped me understand notable strengths of the program, recommendations for improving the admissions process, and implications for future research.

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APPENDIX

Interview Questions

- Please state your name and department at Millersville University

- Tell me about a culminating project or paper that you assigned in a course that included a dual enrollment student.

  - To what degree were the dual enrollment students prepared to complete that assignment?

  - How did you prepare your students to do that work?

  - Did you provide any additional support to the dual enrollment student(s)?

  - How well did it meet the standards for college-level work?

- One of the goals of dual enrollment is to help students learn to access resources available to them on a college campus.

- Thinking about dual enrollment students you have taught, to what extent were they ready to access the resources they needed for your course?

- How does that compare with degree-seeking courses in the class?

- Thinking about the dual enrollment students you have taught, to what extent did their experience in your class help them:

  - Learn about the role and responsibilities of a college student (expectations, responsibilities, acceptable and unacceptable behaviors)

  - Learn the role and responsibilities of a professor (expectations, responsibilities, acceptable and unacceptable behaviors)

- o How does that compare with your degree-seeking students?

  - Do you know if you have any current degree-seeking students who were formally dual enrolled?

    - o How does their performance compare to their dual enrollment experience?

- Is there anything else you would like to share about your observations of high school or college students who were involved in dual enrollment?