

## From Dialogue to Collaboration in Dual-Credit Programs

Caroline Wilkinson

*This article examines the experiences of two high school dual-credit instructors as they teach composition for the first time and take a graduate-level pedagogy course. Drawing from interviews with students and instructors in a dual-credit program, this study finds that although many WPAs professionalize high school dual-credit instructors, there is not enough research on the experiences of this new labor force in composition. This research reveals the tensions in developing a course that is equivalent to on-campus courses, creating a bilateral relationship between secondary and postsecondary instructors, and risking the professionalization of composition when professionalizing dual-credit high school instructors. The article argues for reflecting on high school instructors' experiences and struggles as they become a growing labor force for WPAs.*

As high school students look for ways to build college credit, dual-credit courses have become an increasingly popular option.<sup>1</sup> More than 1.4 million high school students in the United States take dual-credit courses each year (“Fact Sheet”). Increasingly, secondary schools are the sites of dual-credit conferral, where 77% of dual-credit students take their courses. Nearly half (45%) of postsecondary institutions with courses taught at a high school campus utilize high school instructors to teach dual-credit courses (“Fast Facts”). Many composition educators feel a real anxiety about high school instructors teaching dual-credit composition classes. Although this point is clear, very few studies ask high school instructors who teach dual-credit composition about their own experiences. Secondary educators are often a silent partner in dual-credit courses. These educators frequently receive little curriculum support from the sponsoring university and lack fellow high school instructors to collaborate with on pedagogy. The perspectives offered by this new labor force of composition are invaluable to reconciling the questions of identity versus equivalency in dual-credit, bilateral

relationships between high schools and colleges and questions of what professionalization in the field of composition means with this different kind of composition instructor.

Recent composition scholarship addresses the reality that WPAs have to deal with the issue of quality assurance in dual-credit classrooms. In their study, Kara Taczak and William Thelin discover the dual-credit instructor was not informed beforehand that he would have high school students in his course and the relative immaturity of the high school students affects the college students in the class. The high school students themselves “appeared to have overlooked the larger mission of the writing course; they misunderstood the goals of the class” (20). Kristine Hansen, Brian Jackson, Brett C. McInelly, and Dennis Eggett examine first-year students’ writing performances, including students who took dual-credit courses, and determine that students who had not taken a composition course in high school or college wrote as well as any other group. The authors recommend that WPAs “be less concerned with selling students on the idea that FYW offers something new or different and be more concerned with convincing them that it offers them something *more*—more opportunity to refine and develop their skills as writers” (80).

K–12 research is more encouraging when its focus is on dual-credit programs’ relation to graduation and enrollment rates. Bart Ganzert finds that taking a dual-credit course showed positive effects on GPA and graduation rates for nonwhite students and positive effects for female students enrolled in community college programs. Dual-credit courses also move students and instructors towards a K–16 framework that creates more partnerships (Hughes et al.; Henry and Stahl). Matthew Giani, Celeste Alexander, and Pedro Reyes’s research suggests that dual-credit participation affects students’ postsecondary outcomes, but they also recognize the locality of dual-credit programs by stating “our results also show that not all dual-credit courses are created equal,” demonstrating the struggle to standardize a local partnership between a high school and college (216).

As dual-credit programs proliferate, composition has begun to recognize and study the high school teachers involved. The CCCC’s *Statement on Dual Credit/Concurrent Enrollment Composition* asserts that there “should be funds, space, and postsecondary faculty expertise necessary for initial and follow-up discipline-specific training seminars that introduce the selected secondary teachers to the partnering college composition curriculum.” Many WPAs create environments for the professionalization of dual-credit instructors, but accounts of the experiences of high school instructors in scholarship are limited. In “Paths to Productive Partnerships,” Melanie Burdick and Jane Greer survey 81 high school teachers about college-level

writing and recognize that the high school instructors' "definitions are not noticeably divergent from what many college-level instructors might say. These teachers consider thinking skills an important part of curriculum (synthesis, analysis, evaluation) and revision an important part of the writing process" (96). Katie McWain addresses the perspectives of high school instructors, but specifically in the dual-credit space, explaining how instructors negotiate a complicated position between high school and college. Christine Denecker similarly explains their positions and calls for looking for "what dual enrollment instructors—especially high school instructors teaching college writing on the high school campus—have to offer in unearthing inconsistencies that exist between high school and college-level writing expectations" (31).

This essay focuses on two high school instructors, Emma and Daphne, and their experiences teaching dual-credit composition for the first time. This work comes out of an IRB-approved project undertaken in 2012–2014 for which I conducted interviews with twenty students, instructors, and administrators and analyzed program documents that informed the conversation on the local dual-credit program.<sup>2</sup> I have used pseudonyms for the participants to allow for honest feedback from participants in regards to their experiences working in the dual-credit program.

The study demonstrated three tensions in the professionalization of high school instructors for dual-credit courses: the equivalency of a dual-credit course to an on-campus composition course, the creation of a bilateral relationship between high schools and colleges, and the risk professionalizing high school teachers poses to the field of composition. These tensions reveal the nuanced experiences of dual-credit high school instructors as they navigate teaching a composition course and being part of the university composition community. By listening to dual-credit high school instructors' perceptions of the university program and their positions in it, WPAs can more equitably address how to prepare high school instructors to teach a college composition course and, more broadly, how to create a collaborative relationship between secondary and postsecondary instructors.

#### THE UNIVERSITY'S DUAL-CREDIT PROGRAM

I studied the dual-credit program at the University of Louisville because I was first interested in how notions of "college readiness" in legislation like Race to the Top and the Common Core Standards seep into composition. I was particularly interested in dual-credit composition courses because they were beginning to grow at a variety of institutions even as WPAs were not comfortable with offering them. The tension that exists between the

economic and programmatic led me to focusing on high school instructors teaching dual-credit composition for the first time. I also taught dual-credit composition at a local high school at the time of this study (though a different high school than Emma and Daphne) and observed the very real differences in the contexts and cultures of high school and college. The University of Louisville is a large university bordering both the Midwest and South with about 16,000 undergraduate students and 6,000 graduate students. There are two courses in the university's composition program: ENGL 101: English Composition I and ENGL 102: English Composition II. The dual-credit composition program at the University of Louisville partnered with seven high schools at the time of this study. For dual-credit students to enter the program, they had to be high school juniors or seniors with a GPA of 3.0 and meet the minimum entrance requirements for the SAT (480) or ACT (20) or earn comparable scores on the PSAT (50). Moreover, according to the university's *Dual Credit English 101 Composition Program Handbook* at the time of this study, students must demonstrate writing competency, be nominated by their high school English teacher, and obtain the approval of their high school counselor (8). Because of the numerous requirements to enroll in dual-credit courses, most students have thought carefully about it and are already on track to attend college.

Most of the dual-credit instructors at the University of Louisville are high school teachers who have earned a Master's degree in English or have taken at least 18 graduate hours of English courses. All new dual-credit instructors must take the graduate-level course Teaching College Composition, which is taught by the WPA and provides an introduction to composition pedagogy. The dual-credit instructors take the course alongside first-time, on-campus instructors, who are usually graduate teaching assistants. The dual-credit instructors also attend program orientation in the summer with graduate teaching assistants, professors, full-time lecturers, and part-time lecturers. Because the orientation often conflicts with the beginning of the public school system's academic year, the high school instructors are usually not able to attend the entire orientation. The university's WPA or the dual-credit program coordinator for the English department observes dual-credit composition instructors at their high school during their first semester. At the time Emma and Daphne took the course, the teachers were required to follow a standard syllabus during their first semester of dual-credit instruction. This syllabus was identical to the college curriculum, assigning the same kinds of major writing assignments and requirements as first-time graduate teaching assistants.

## HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER TRAINING IN DUAL-CREDIT COMPOSITION

The Teaching College Composition class serves not only as a way for first-time composition instructors at the University of Louisville to learn about the expectations and standards of writing and pedagogy, but also as a place for new composition instructors to establish community. Instructors discuss pedagogies, and they work in mentoring groups to articulate their challenges in the classroom and receive input from others. Emma and Daphne, who both taught at one of the top public high schools in the state, were the only high school instructors enrolled when they took the course. Emma had taught high school for 12 years before she started teaching dual-credit courses. She had experience teaching creative writing, oral communication, study skills, freshman through senior English, and AP English. Daphne had taught high school for 11 years, mostly focusing on freshman and senior English. Both instructors had a range of experiences at their high school. Emma also had a Master's degree in English, while Daphne had more than 18 credit hours in graduate English courses. They were the only high school English teachers at the high school to have these qualifications; Master's degrees held by other high school faculty were in education.

The prevailing and valid narrative is that the dual-credit experience is not identical to the experiences of college students in first-year composition. When dual-credit courses began to rise in popularity during the early nineties, David Schwalm argued "College writing courses, are, by definition, taught in the general context of college—a context impossible to replicate in a high school senior English class" (53). The high school context involves distractions such as the bell ringing and the intercom calling and the class time is shorter. The class frequently meets Monday through Friday so the instructor has more daily interaction with students than a college instructor would. The students also know each other in a different manner than the college context creates.

In one way, though, Emma and Daphne's dual-credit courses were identical to the on-campus composition courses. Because Emma and Daphne were in the Teaching College Composition course for the first time, they, along with the graduate teaching assistants in the course, had to follow an approved standard syllabus and assignment sequence. This standardization meant that the major assignment prompt templates were already created for the dual-credit class, so Emma and Daphne did not have to create any new assignments. Daphne thought the best part of the course was the access to these resources:

I liked the fact that we got the assignment sheets and examples, rubrics, things like that. All that was very helpful. And the textbook, I've always liked the textbook. And there were some good lessons and some good PowerPoints, so, yeah, we got a lot of good materials.

These resources facilitated Daphne's work as a dual-credit instructor and her work as a high school instructor teaching other classes. To give instructors in the Teaching College Composition course opportunity to practice making new assignments that followed the standards of the program, one project required each person to create one piece of supplementary material for an assignment, such as a PowerPoint or Prezi presentation. These were then made available to everyone in the course. Emma and Daphne commented on the helpfulness of these resources along with the rubrics that were brought into the class.

However, the pace of the dual-credit courses was different compared to the on-campus courses. Emma and Daphne taught English 101 along with the high school's Senior English course (which was a requirement for graduation), to the same students for the whole academic year. Conversely, the graduate teaching assistants in the Teaching College Composition course taught English 101 only in the fall semester. Therefore, the rest of the graduate-level teaching class was ahead of Emma and Daphne on the standard syllabus by one to two major assignments. By the end of the Teaching College Composition course, they were months ahead of what Emma and Daphne were doing in their classes. This difference in schedules was significant. When working on a major assignment with their classes, Emma and Daphne struggled to remember what exactly had been discussed in the Teaching College Composition course because, although the teaching materials were online, the conversations were not as clear because so much time had passed. Daphne explained,

But we just didn't know when to use [the material], where to use it, why. The context was lost. And by the time we got to that point from two weeks or three weeks ago, you know we had forgotten what was said. And I even took notes and still by that time it lost context.

The National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) serves as a national accrediting body for dual-credit partnerships. NACEP works to make sure that these courses are just as rigorous as the on-campus college courses by applying measurable criteria. The standards for faculty on the dual-credit site are that all participating instructors have qualifications to teach a college course, course-specific training occurs in curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment, dual-credit instructors participate in professional development, and the "program ensures instructors are informed

of and adhere to program policies and procedures” (2017 *National Concurrent Enrollment*). The University of Louisville program followed all of these standards for faculty. However, the issues with Daphne and Emma’s schedules demonstrated even when a program follows ethical standards, there will still be contextual nuance that influences the instructors.

The high school instructors were also institutionally distinct from the other instructors because they worked off campus. One of the ways that this mattered was in supplemental practices of the composition program, such as attendance in pedagogy workshops and the ability to make use of the WPA’s office hours. These practices could not be part of the dual-credit instructors’ experiences because they were only on campus for the graduate course and they worked full-time at the high school. Emma and Daphne were not able to receive the content at these workshops and meetings, but more critically, they were not able to develop connections with other instructors and with the WPA outside of class.

Both Emma and Daphne fully participated in the Teaching College Composition class, but there is no doubt that the material conditions of being high school teachers affected their dialogue with other instructors. The high school instructors maintained their full-time jobs while taking the course on composition pedagogy; this workload is very different from the course workload of most English graduate students. These different working conditions made the high school instructors feel isolated from the university at times, but they also felt motivated by the pedagogical strategies and ideas discussed in the classroom that they were able to carry over to their dual-credit course and the other English courses they taught.

#### EQUIVALENCY IN THE CLASSROOM

Students who took Emma and Daphne’s courses indicated they benefited from having these teachers. Justin, a senior in Emma’s class, explained how the class differed from what he thought it would be: “It was more interacting with the teacher, more, you know, talk out loud, more group discussions actually. More written papers than tests. Just more interacting. So I like that part of the class, and I wasn’t expecting that at all.” In comparison with his previous high school English classes, the dual-credit course was not about studying content for literature exams or writing a literature paper. It was also more focused on peer review and comments from the instructors than regular high school English classes. Emma and Daphne commented on their students’ papers, although the material conditions of being a high school teacher made this difficult because they had so many students and so little extra time. Daphne used her planning time to make comments:

They'll usually leave it [the paper draft] with me and I'll look at it during my planning and send it to their classroom wherever they might be and just make some notes on it, the big things. Now as far as the grading of the final product, I have to rely a lot on the rubrics because I can't possibly write as many comments as I really, truly want.

Like many composition instructors, Daphne recognized that commenting on the major aspects of a student's paper was the most effective manner for responding to student writing.

Students were also asked to use outside resources for their dual-credit class. The dual-credit instructors took them to the writing center at the university. Emma required that her students attend at least one writing center session. For Justin, that requirement made a difference:

And what's really good about the dual credit is we got a chance to go to the writing center in the library ourselves so we did one paper, it was mandatory for every student to go and have a peer review with the actual people in the writing center. . .and I'm going to U of L next year so I know already where it is, how to do it.

Justin's high school and the university were only about a ten-minute walk. The dual-credit students were able to easily use the university resources. They could walk to the university library after school and use the writing center.

The proximity of the high school to the university allowed the dual-credit students to experience some of the context of college, but their classrooms were still made up of high school peers they already knew. Devyn, a senior in Daphne's class, commented that the course helped her and that "there weren't any drawbacks really," but

I don't know, I guess it's just the type of people you're in class with. That kind of makes a difference too. Because I mean our class they all knew each other, they all hung out, like the majority of them, except for me. Like they all knew each other outside of school.

Devyn's experience demonstrated another limitation of dual-credit programs even when the WPA trained instructors effectively and ethically. The context of the classroom—including the group of high school peers comprising the class—made it difficult for a dual-credit class to replicate college, as Schwalm and Taczak and Thelin have explained. As much as the instructors were trained by the university, the students were still in high school and the class was physically located in a high school. The students might be college-bound, but the boundaries of whether a dual-credit

student was actually “in college” prompted the issue inherent in a dual-credit classroom because it is a liminal space. The dual-credit students, the course, and the classroom were fully situated neither in the college, nor the high school.

The dual-credit course cannot be identical to an on-campus course because of the context of the high school, the students, and in these cases, the high school instructors teaching the courses. Devyn presented a difference when she noted that not only did all of the students in her class know each other, but were also friends with one another. One of the great benefits of a college composition class is that it is a small class with students who do not usually know each other. Ideally, the class becomes a community throughout the semester. These community-building efforts are more difficult in a dual-credit course at the high school because the students already know each other and the class is taught all academic year. We know because of these contextual differences, the dual-credit class will not be identical to the on-campus course.

Instead of worrying about whether dual-credit programs dilute composition, we should recognize that dual-credit composition courses take place in a distinctive space with an unusually homogeneous population. Because these classes will continue to be offered, dual-credit programs could be considered as an opportunity to apply composition pedagogy to a special population. Inside this framework, a question emerges: “Can dual-credit courses be equivalent without being identical?” With teacher training of high school instructors through a graduate-level pedagogy course and mentoring from the WPA, dual-credit courses can be equivalent. Emma and Daphne used the same syllabus, major assignments, and assessment measures used by the on-campus instructors from the Teaching College Composition course. Emma’s student Justin explained the class was able to use the university resources such as the library and writing center. In these ways, the University of Louisville’s dual-credit class was equivalent primarily because the high school instructors teaching dual-credit composition were required to take a graduate level composition pedagogy course and had a supportive WPA.

#### CREATING A BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP

Much of the research on dual-credit programs in both composition and secondary education revolves around the notion of a partnership. Michael Vivion argues that dual-credit programs could unite instructors from high school and college in a “mutually beneficial professional undertaking” (60). Howard Tinberg and Jean-Paul Nadeau stress that “the design and imple-

mentation of a dual-enrollment program have a significant influence on whether true collaboration and clear communication occur” (717). Definitions of college readiness develop partnerships between high school and college instructors on curriculum and pedagogy (Newman and Rosas; Hughes and Edwards).

Prevailing practice does not reflect the research because a unidirectional relationship between high school teachers and college administrators is the current design of most dual-credit composition programs. High school teachers are supposed to take courses and learn from the composition scholars. Whereas Emma and Daphne possessed many years of teaching experience, many of the graduate teaching assistants in their Teaching College Composition class had never taught before. This disparity of skills was difficult. Emma explained,

Most of the rest of the class were brand new teachers so some of the instruction they needed, we didn't necessarily need, but they were also a more integrated part of the university, so some of the instruction we needed about that kind of stuff, they didn't need.

Emma noticed that the course fit the needs of graduate teaching assistants who were familiar with campus resources, but new to teaching. Daphne also remarked that the concentration on how to teach students was too repetitive for her:

But the thing is, a lot of it too, especially in the beginning, was about teaching and Emma and I had been doing it for many, many years, and we had those classes a long time ago so that wasn't as useful for us either.

Emma and Daphne were familiar with teaching a variety of courses and could handle the issues that unsettle new teachers such as class disruptions, student attendance, and pedagogical strategies for a variety of learners. What they really needed help with were campus resources that were part of the college context, such as how to use Blackboard and what online resources students could use from the library.

Through taking the Teaching College Composition course, both Emma and Daphne came to know composition theory. Emma also thought that taking the class and teaching dual-credit courses could potentially lead to more discussion about writing pedagogy between secondary and post-secondary educators. Emma was interested in taking the course so she could learn more about how the composition program operated at the university. When discussing the Teaching College Composition class, Emma explained:

Well, I think it's good in that it's working towards fostering a kind of mutual respect for what we each do even though it's different. I feel like particularly with having taken that class that kind of worked in a way. Even though during the class I felt like we were kind of separate from the rest of the class, I think it was useful, a useful course, in helping to work on some of that kind of community-ness . . . I still feel like we're a separate entity, even within the class like the way things applied or the way that we were. It was different.

Emma's response relayed the tension she felt in building community between high school and college educators and the struggle of teaching in distinctly different locations and cultures. Throughout the class, there was a sense of respect by both the graduate teaching assistants for what the high school instructors were doing and the high school instructors for their university counterparts. But as these few sentences illustrate, the feelings of being "separate from," a "separate entity," and being "different" were front and center. What Emma and Daphne were doing was different and WPAs have to acknowledge the vastness of this difference for high school instructors teaching college composition.

Both Daphne and Emma commented on the support that Susan, the WPA, offered them. They stated that she was attuned to the unique needs of the dual-credit instructors. For example, she encouraged them to alter aspects of the curriculum to best reflect their classrooms. Emma and Daphne recognized that Susan understood they were coming from a different situation that would sometimes make the Teaching College Composition class boring or repetitive for them. The fact that the WPA was supporting them, even though they occupied a different pedagogical space, seemed very important to both Emma and Daphne.

Even though Emma and Daphne described receiving support from the WPA and access to pedagogical materials through the Teaching College Composition course, the course still functioned in a unidirectional manner where the high school instructors received information on pedagogical strategies that they already knew and had been putting into practice for at least a decade. Emma and Daphne participated in class with the rest of the students and created pedagogical materials to share with their fellow students. However, they were separated by being in their own mentoring group, primarily because their schedules made it difficult to be in any other. If they had been able to be in a mentoring group with the graduate teaching assistants, Emma and Daphne would have been able to demonstrate their expertise and experience.

Although Emma and Daphne began to be part of the community in the classroom, they were still unable to have an experience like the gradu-

ate teaching assistants. If we take seriously Tinberg and Nadeau's call for dual-credit programs that foster "true communication" and "collaboration," this limitation becomes much more worrisome. Collaboration means more than dialogue. It means that the high school instructors also have a hand in shaping the dual-credit composition program. Dual-credit programs should acknowledge that high school teachers are experts in their own right, often coming in with many years of classroom experience, and everyone in the course would benefit from their knowledge of writing and pedagogy.

To make the relationship more bilateral, there needs to be clearer discussion on what high school instructors can bring to the composition conversation. The NACEP Standards address that the "concurrent enrollment program has ongoing collaboration with secondary school partners" ("Standards"). A WPA can address high school instructors' expertise by speaking to their specific positionality—their liminality—when teaching composition. This means offering the high school instructors a chance to present on a specific subject or learning strategy they think would be valuable for other instructors who have not taken education classes before. If the WPA performs research on dual-credit programs, they could ask whether the high school instructors would be interested in participating in the research so that high school instructors are not only the subject of, but also active participants in the research of dual-credit composition. This kind of research would be a professional development opportunity for high school instructors and a way for the university to learn from these instructors so that the partnership is more bilateral.

#### THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF HIGH SCHOOL INSTRUCTORS

The dual-credit instructors in this study found themselves in a liminal space where their labor belonged to both their high school and the sponsoring university. Emma and Daphne did not describe themselves as college instructors, even though they were teaching a college class and had most of the same training as an on-campus composition instructor. Daphne explained, "Well I do notice that I'm often saying, 'This is something you would do in college.' I feel like I'm trying to prepare them, so and even with the grading, I try to point out things that a professor might point out." Daphne said this after she had finished taking the Teaching College Composition course. She still saw herself as a high school instructor preparing students for college, not a college instructor teaching a college class. Emma felt similarly: "And I don't feel integrated into that community either so I guess I don't ever really think of myself as being a university teacher." Emma and Daphne still perceived themselves as high school teachers, not

as a part of the university faculty, even though both had gone through the formal professionalization process to teach the composition class, and even though they used the same materials as on-campus instructors for the course. Their reasoning could in part be because the high school paid for them to teach the course and to take the Teaching College Composition course, so their labor was compensated through their high school. As dual-credit composition instructors, they were technically part of the university faculty, but this identity seemed to make them uncomfortable.

Emma and Daphne saw themselves as high school instructors because they had been professionalized to be high school instructors up until their dual-credit training. They commented that through taking the Teaching College Composition course, they recognized the differences in their past training where much of the focus was on literature. The courses they taught outside the dual-credit composition course revolved around literature and reading instruction; for both instructors, it was novel to have writing be the emphasis. The lack of teacher training in writing as compared to literature and reading is a prevalent narrative in English education. Robert Tremmel explains how secondary education is “far from realizing a fully elaborated disciplinary commitment to writing teacher education” because of preparing high school teachers for literature courses (17). Traditional teacher education programs should have more writing courses (Rives and Olsen; Morgan; Wright). Denise N. Morgan and Kristine E. Pytash’s work also advocates for future teachers to have a “methods course devoted solely to the teaching of writing” in their teacher education programs (28). The lack of experience with writing courses and composition theory for many dual-credit high school instructors is a threat to the field of composition, specifically as more universities outsource the course to high schools.

The Teaching College Composition course was one way to begin to professionalize dual-credit high school instructors. Enrollment of high school instructors in the course made sense in regards to fulfillment of the NACEP Standards, particularly if the course was taken a semester prior to teaching dual-credit courses. However, Daphne also thought of an alternative for professionalization at the university :

And I understand even the dual-credit teachers get college credit for this, so there needs to be, you know, something for that, but like in my situation, I felt I didn’t really need a class; I needed guidance. Maybe a mentor, but not necessarily a class because that just added to my load. But I understand where the university’s coming with that too.

Daphne asserted the class was helpful, but she thought that for high school instructors who already have a heavy workload, the mentor program would be less labor. A mentorship program could be a way to more fully address the issues faced by high school instructors teaching dual-credit courses versus those of graduate teaching assistants. A mentorship program could also create a closer relationship between the WPA and dual-credit faculty, one based less on assessment measures intrinsic to a class and more open than just class time and office hours. Mentoring would not fulfill enough professionalization for teaching dual-credit composition because while it would offer practical advice, it would not address composition theory with a variety of new instructors. The mentorship program would be an effective supplemental part of professionalizing dual-credit instructors.

The high school instructors who teach dual-credit composition are in a complicated position because they are contingent faculty to the university. The instructors teach for the university, which offers credit for the course, but they get paid by their high school. Emma and Daphne did not see themselves as college composition instructors. WPAs are in the difficult position of figuring out how to run a dual-credit program that aligns with their curriculum in an effective and ethical manner, specifically in regards to pedagogy. In the foreword of *College Credit for Writing in High School*, David Jolliffe asks a question fundamental to research on dual-credit in composition: “Should high school students even be encouraged or allowed to accelerate and earn college credit in composition via Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), early college (EC), or concurrent enrollment (CE) programs?” (vii). To that end, should WPAs encourage high school instructors to teach composition by professionalizing them? Joyce Malek and Laura R. Micciche argue for faculty “to influence as much as possible what is taught in dual enrollment high school composition courses, how, and by whom” (92). Malek and Micciche created a certificate program for high school teachers, but they also suggest not participating in partnering with high school instructors seeking certification because of the time and labor that influences the WPA and composition program. Labor issues filter down into the perceptions of the identity of composition because of its history as a service course. Having high school instructors teach composition reflects the nature of this service and may lead to some composition scholars’ discomfort with dual-credit programs. Some believe that if composition can be meaningfully taught in high school, the long-fought for professionalization of the field is at risk. There could be more arguments for high school instructors teaching composition, which would eventually lower the number of students who take composition when they come to college. This would thus lower the number of composition instruc-

tors needed. Many English departments, especially where the numbers of English majors are dwindling, depend on the composition program as courses they know will fill.

Too much composition at the high school level could be detrimental to our field not only in course numbers but also in scholarship. If first-year composition becomes an increasing part of secondary education, then first-year writing as a subject to be studied would not be as accessible to post-secondary compositionists. Also, secondary education scholars might start studying composition more, so there could be disciplinary changes. The fear of this risk of professionalizing high school instructors is understandable to the field.

Because of the risks that are present, WPAs face a challenge economically, programmatically, and pedagogically when universities offer dual-credit courses but do not attend to those courses, thus hurting the whole composition program. Unless WPAs are in a position to have full-time faculty or adjunct instructors teach the dual-credit courses, many WPAs deal with dual-credit programs by taking a risk on secondary educators teaching it. What should be recognized is that many of these instructors, like Emma and Daphne, are rightfully anxious themselves about teaching the course and need the direction, institutional support, and mentoring that an on-campus faculty member would have at their institution. Emma and Daphne struggled with the Teaching College Composition class, but they also needed and appreciated the support of that class and the WPA. Some other high school instructors might not have done as well. Maybe at some institutions dual-credit courses will ultimately fail no matter the professionalization that composition programs provide. Support and mentorship is needed, although dual-credit courses and who teaches them can seem threatening to composition as a field.

#### COLLABORATION BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

The professionalization of Emma and Daphne revealed three tensions of high school instructors teaching dual-credit composition: formulating a course that is equivalent, creating a bilateral relationship between high school and college instructors, and risking the professionalization of composition in training dual-credit high school instructors. Throughout this study, it was clear that the dual-credit composition courses taught by Emma and Daphne were not identical to the on-campus composition courses. Yet, the Teaching College Composition course, support from the WPA, and increased teacher training explains why the course could be equivalent. The University of Louisville program also worked to create a dialogue between

high school instructors by including them with new graduate teaching assistants in the Teaching College Composition course. However, the program could go further by recognizing and showcasing high school instructors' expertise in pedagogy, curriculum, and education policy. Creating a bilateral relationship means listening to high school instructors on their expertise and implementing this expertise into the dual-credit program. Christine Farris has designed professionalization opportunities for the dual-credit program at Indiana University, where Farris conducts 35-hour summer seminars that introduce high school teachers to current methods in college composition (278). The high school teachers in Farris's program are funded by the university for the summer seminar, and they also participate in the fall and spring colloquia. They are able to interact with on-campus composition instructors and present their own pedagogical knowledge.

As dual-credit programs continue to grow, WPAs could also match a new dual-credit high school instructor with another high school instructor who has experience teaching the course. Such a mentorship program could be a way for high school instructors to have conversations with one another about specific challenges. More community could help teachers such as Emma and Daphne see how they are a certain kind of college instructor.

The increased contact WPAs have with local high schools through the dual-credit courses offers an opportunity to make sure that there is a National Writing Project (NWP) site in the area. The NWP offers professional development for K–16 writing educators and has nearly 200 university-based writing project sites in all 50 states. WPAs can use the NWP as a model for collaboration between university and secondary educators in the dual-credit space.

At the University of Louisville, the dual-credit composition program is an effective and ethical space. The WPA, the dual-credit coordinator, and the participating instructors at the time of this study were all dedicated to teaching composition. In part, this program is effective because it is a Research I state university and possesses resources like a graduate-level Teaching College Composition course. Many universities, colleges, and community colleges are not in the same financial or material place. In fact, some of these institutions might have dual-credit programs because they are viewed as a way of recruiting students, as well as a means of gathering tuition money from students who are not necessarily on-campus students without having to provide any kind of institutional support for the faculty who teach the courses.

For colleges that do not have a graduate-level Teaching College Composition course to offer their high school instructors, there are other ways

---

to prepare the high school dual-credit instructors and create a relationship between the college and high school:

- Designate a specific person for the high school dual-credit instructors to contact with questions about curriculum, assessment, and other factors. This could be the WPA or, if there is no WPA, the department chair. Also provide the high school instructors with the contact information for the university dual-credit coordinator, if there is a college contact person, in case students have problems with bills, log-in information, or any university issues that are not part of the classroom itself.
- Offer the curriculum well in advance to the dual-credit high school instructors. If there is an orientation for the writing program, ask them to attend the orientation. Meet with any new dual-credit high school instructor in person so a relationship can be established. Provide not only the curriculum, but also sample syllabi, textbooks, major assignments, and schedules so that the instructors are clear on the main objectives of the class and how these objectives are assessed by the composition program.
- If there are other high school dual-credit instructors you have worked with in the past, ask these instructors to mentor the new instructors so they have people to turn to with questions besides the WPA or department chair. This also creates an informal network that again better connects the dual-credit program with the college or university. This relationship creates more of a community for the high school dual-credit instructors, who are many times in tenuous, liminal positions and carry a heavy teaching load.
- If you publish research on dual-credit programs, consider co-authoring with a dual-credit high school instructor, or if that is too much labor, consider asking them to read a draft of your publication so they can provide their insights on dual-credit programs since there has not been enough attention paid to their ideas on dual-credit courses in composition scholarship.

The professionalization of high school dual-credit instructors continues to happen in a number of programs in effective ways. What we need more of in composition is listening to high school instructors' experiences in order to understand the issues in the dual-credit space that affect them so that WPAs can better address the situation, specifically through clear curriculum and assessment, professionalization, and equitable labor practices. Although dual-credit courses have been thrust on most WPAs by

their college, dual-credit programs provide an access point where high school and college instructors can work to collaborate on writing pedagogy and professionalization.

## NOTES

1. Dual enrollment, concurrent enrollment, and dual credit are also phrases used to refer to the situation where a high school student takes a college course and receives credit at both levels. I will refer to the course as dual credit because the specific program studied called itself a dual-credit program.

2. This study was approved by an institutional review board for human subjects research (protocol number 12.0036).

## WORKS CITED

- 2017 National Concurrent Enrollment Partnership Standards*. National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships, 2017, [nacep.org/docs/accreditation/NACEP\\_Standards\\_2017.pdf](http://nacep.org/docs/accreditation/NACEP_Standards_2017.pdf).
- Burdick, Melanie, and Jane Greer. "Paths to Productive Partnerships: Surveying High School Teachers about Professional Development Opportunities and 'College-Level' Writing." *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2017, pp. 82–101.
- Denecker, Christine. "Transitioning Writers across the Composition Threshold: What We Can Learn from Dual Enrollment Partnerships." *Composition Studies*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2013, pp. 27–50.
- Dual Credit English 101: Composition Program Handbook*. University of Louisville, Mar. 2011.
- "Fact Sheet: Department of Education Launches Experiment to Provide Federal Pell Grant Funds to High School Students Taking College Courses for Credit." *Department of Education*, 30 Oct. 2015, [ed.gov/news/press-releases/fact-sheet-department-education-launches-experiment-provide-federal-pell-grant-funds-high-school-students-taking-college-courses-credit](http://ed.gov/news/press-releases/fact-sheet-department-education-launches-experiment-provide-federal-pell-grant-funds-high-school-students-taking-college-courses-credit).
- Farris, Christine. "Minding the Gap and Learning the Game: Differences That Matter between High School and College Writing." Hansen and Farris, pp. 272–82.
- "Fast Facts about Dual and Concurrent Enrollment." National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships, [nacep.org/research-policy/fast-facts](http://nacep.org/research-policy/fast-facts).
- Ganzert, Bart. "The Effects of Dual Enrollment Credit on Gender and Race." *Current Issues in Education*, vol. 15, no. 3, 2012, pp. 1–8.
- Giani, Matthew, Celeste Alexander, and Pedro Reyes. "Exploring Variation in the Impact of Dual-Credit Coursework on Postsecondary Outcomes: A Quasi-Experimental Analysis of Texas Students." *High School Journal*, vol. 97, no. 4, 2014, pp. 200–18.

- Hansen, Kristine, and Christine R. Farris, editors. *College Credit for Writing in High School: The "Taking Care of" Business*, NCTE, 2010.
- Hansen, Kristine, Brian Jackson, Brett C. McNelly, and Dennis Eggett. "How Do Dual Credit Students Perform on College Writing Tasks after They Arrive on Campus?: Empirical Data from a Large-Scale Study." *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 38, no. 2, 2015, pp. 56–92.
- Henry, Laurie A., and Norman A. Stahl. "Dismantling the Developmental Education Pipeline: Potent Pedagogies and Promising Practices that Address the College Readiness Gap." *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, vol. 60, no. 6, 2017, pp. 611–16.
- Hughes, Katherine L., and Linsey Edwards. "Teaching and Learning in the Dual Enrollment Classroom." *New Directions for Higher Education*, no. 158, 2012, pp. 29–37.
- Hughes, Katherine L., Olga Rodriguez, Linsey Edwards, and Clive Belfield. *Broadening the Benefits of Dual Enrollment: Reaching Underachieving and Underrepresented Students with Career-Focused Programs*. Community Coll. Research Center, 2012.
- Jolliffe, David A. "Foreword: Tough Questions for Thoughtful Educators." Hansen and Farris, pp. vii–xiv.
- Malek, Joyce, and Laura R. Micciche. "A Model of Efficiency: Pre-College Credit and the State Apparatus." *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 40, no. 2, 2017, pp. 77–97.
- McWain, Katie. "Finding Freedom at the Composition Threshold: Learning from the Experiences of Dual Enrollment Teachers." *Teaching English in the Two-Year College*, vol. 45, no. 4, 2018, pp. 406–24.
- Morgan, Denise N. "Preservice Teachers as Writers." *Literacy Research and Instruction*, vol. 49, no. 4, 2010, pp. 352–65.
- Morgan, Denise N., and Kristine E. Pytash. "Preparing Preservice Teachers to Become Teachers of Writing: A 20-Year Review of the Research Literature." *English Education*, vol. 47, no. 1, 2014, pp. 6–37.
- Newman, Beatrice Mendez, and Penny Rosas. "Opening the Door for Cross-Disciplinary Literacy: Doing History and Writing in a High School to University Collaboration." *English Journal*, vol. 106, no. 2, 2016, pp. 54–61.
- Rives, Ashley, and Allison Wynhoff Olsen. "Where's the Rhetoric?: Exposing the (Mis)alignment in the Common Core State Writing Standards." *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, vol. 59, no. 2, 2015, pp. 161–70.
- Schwalm, David E. "High School/College Dual Enrollment." *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 15, nos. 1–2, 1991, pp. 51–54.
- Statement on Dual Credit/Concurrent Enrollment Composition: Policy and Best Practices*. CCCC, Nov. 2012, [cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/dualcredit](http://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/dualcredit).
- Taczak, Kara, and William Thelin. "(Re)Envisioning the Divide: The Impact of College Courses on High School Students." *Teaching English in the Two-Year College*, vol. 37, no. 1, 2009, pp. 7–23.

- Tinberg, Howard, and Jean-Paul Nadeau. "Contesting the Space between High School and College in the Era of Dual-Enrollment." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 62, no. 4, 2011, pp. 704–25.
- Tremmel, Robert. "Seeking a Balanced Discipline: Writing Teacher Education in First-Year Composition and English Education." *English Education*, vol. 34, no. 1, 2001, pp. 6–30.
- Vivion, Michael J. "High School/College Dual Enrollment and the Composition Program." *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 15, nos. 1–2, 1991, pp. 55–60.
- Wright, Elizabethada A. "Secondary-School English Teachers Should Only be Taught Literature." *Bad Ideas about Writing*, edited by Cheryl E. Ball and Drew M. Loewe, West Virginia U Libraries Digital Publishing Institute, 2017, pp. 344–50, [textbooks.lib.wvu.edu/badideas](http://textbooks.lib.wvu.edu/badideas).

**Caroline Wilkinson** is assistant professor of English at New Jersey City University in Jersey City, New Jersey. She teaches composition, linguistics, and dual-credit composition. Her research interests cover the relationship between high schools and colleges in writing instruction and teacher training in composition.

