

## ***A letter from a caring faculty member to a new dual enrollment student***

Welcome parents, guardians, and teachers. Because dual credit status may be new to you, I've provided some additional information here to help you and your student(s) be as successful as possible.

To me, dual credit represents a calculated risk. Upon successful completion of this course, your student(s) will receive college credit as well as high school credit. Because grades are linked, success at the college affects both high school GPA (and credits toward graduation) as well as college GPA (which may or may not matter depending on your student(s) transfer plans).

### Relationships and roles

My relationship with your student(s) is largely defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which guarantees the privacy of most dimensions of a student's academic record in college unless the student has signed a release that grants access to protected information to others. Your students will always know where they stand in terms of their course grades, but as the college does not have a means of progress reporting to parents or school personnel outside midterm grades, you may not know where they stand unless you check in with your student(s).

What students can do to set themselves up for success and how you can help

I can tell you that all students struggle transitioning from high school to college to some degree; however, that struggle is more acute for dual credit students as they have to negotiate both high school and college simultaneously. Here's what your student(s) need your support and guidance with

- **Self-advocacy.** Students need to be able to speak up when they need help. That means **your help with logistics** (like a pass to a study hall or library so they can email me or video conference with me, or permission to use a cell phone to text me questions). It also means **your help with access to technology, protected time, and support** for completing class-related tasks which may be new to them within an academic context (like video conferencing or video production). Without your help with logistics, and your support with access and tech, even the best of students may feel like there's nobody there helping them as there is in a traditional high school environment, and that feeling doesn't allow them to shine as they otherwise would.
- **Self-sufficiency.** Students need to be able to answer their own basic questions instead of being paralyzed by them. For example, if students don't know which page a certain text is on, they need to be able to use the index to find it. Or, if they don't understand the definition of a term the book's chapter, or its glossary, they need to think to Google it so they can move forward with an assignment. Some students need a nudge in this direction-- **your help with guiding questions** like, "did you check the index?" or "if the glossary doesn't have anything, how about Googling a definition?" really does remind them that they know how to conjure this kind of information independently.
- **Self-direction.** While I'll use tools available to push out critical information (email notifications and sometimes texts), I won't communicate with your student(s) every day or check their completion of independent tasks like assigned reading, other than through the assessment of their homework. **Your help supporting completion of longer tasks over time** can help, like through reminders that if they prioritize another activity, the time for their assigned reading or other work still has to come from somewhere.
- **Help with routing of questions.** *Everyone is on your student(s) team, but everyone has a different role.* Your help routing questions to the right people will help us solve problems quickly.

#### At the college

- **College instructor. I'm your student's primary contact at the college** - your student(s) have my email and phone number so that they can reach out to me at any time, and I have scheduled office hours - dedicated time during which I can conference with students. **Please refer students to me with assignment-specific questions.**
- **College tutors.** The tutors in the college's Academic Success Center (tutoring lab) are available both online and in person. The ASC is staffed with both professional tutors and students who have taken this specific class. I check in with our tutors almost every day - **please refer students to tutors at the college for supplemental help with assignments.** To schedule a Google Hangout with a tutor Call the Academic Success Center at 406.771.5121. For feedback on a rough draft via email, follow [the steps described here](#). Or, stop by the GFCMSU campus.
- **College tech support.** The Great Falls College Technology Assistance Center (TAC) handles all manner of tech issues, including installing Microsoft Office O365 software (free to college-enrolled students) and using D2L Brightspace tools. They're available by phone at 406.771.4440. **Please refer students to the TAC with any tech-related questions or problems.**
- **College Student Central staff.** Enrollment Services personnel (Registrar, Admissions, and Advising) all support dual enrollment. Please refer students to Student Central (406.268.3700) for any questions related to registration processes (dropping and adding courses, grades, transcripts) and college academic plan/advising support.

#### At the high school

- **Classroom teachers.** Students may have someone, like the English teacher, Librarian, or Study Hall teacher, who is helping with content either at their request or according to the practices of the district/campus. This person is in a support role, but in most cases has not made contact with your student(s) instructor and may not be familiar with the class or its assignments - **please refer students to the instructor or college's Academic Success Center (tutoring lab).**
- **High school contact people.** Students have a teacher, counselor, or another contact person on their campus whose role is to help interface with the college (paperwork, policies, etc.). Please refer students to this person with policy/paperwork questions.

Overall, everyone at the college cares about the success of your dual enrollment students and we look forward to supporting you as a partner in that success. Thank you for all you do encourage their independent thinking and work in this and all of their college level classes.