

Budget Optimization

Operating and Financial Structure







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Executive Summary

The Early College Program (ECP) at Idaho State University provides dual credit courses to Idaho high school students, offering access to advanced educational opportunities. Between 2011 and 2023, enrollment in the ECP has grown from 1,495 to 4,504 students (201%), from 8,984 to 26,095 annual credit hours (190%), and from \$583,960 to \$1,957,125 in annual revenue. Currently, 23% of the total revenue goes directly into the university's general fund and 77% is invested back into the program to pay salaries, teacher instructional costs, liaison stipends, direct college support, and operating expenses. Based on the analysis provided below, five recommendations are proposed:

- 1) The university/ECP total revenue split should be modified, increasing the university general fund percentage to 35% (to be reviewed annually);
- The ECP should leverage their connections with high school students by hiring a Matriculation Coordinator to help ECP students better understand how their ECP experience has advanced their standing and shortened their time to degree at ISU;
- The ECP should further expand ISU matriculation by increasing ECP funded student scholarships in alignment with in-development best practices related to scholarshipping;
- 4) The University should implement the Dual Enroll Registration System in order to increase ISU dual credit enrollment and resolve long-standing bureaucratic frustrations currently experienced by area high schools due to ISU's lack of this system; and
- 5) The ECP should work more closely with the ISU Office of Admissions (and Visitors Center) to facilitate greater matriculation to ISU.

The budget optimization process will continue over the next year. Additional recommendations will be forthcoming.

Project Team

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Budget Optimization - Scope of Work

- 1. Review ECP Mission, Goals and Outcomes
- 2. Review Current Operating and Financial Structure
- 3. Review Synergies and Redundancies with Enrollment Management/other areas
- 4. Review Opportunities for Increased Matriculation
- 5. Review pros/cons of having ECP roll up to Central University funds
- 6. Present recommendations for optimization

1. ECP Mission, Goals and Outcomes

Early College Program Mission Statement (2015)

The Early College Program at Idaho State University provides dual credit courses to Idaho high school students, offering access to advanced educational opportunities which enable students to explore their intellectual potential, gain academic confidence, and develop critical thinking skills; while providing an affordable experience, quality instruction, and facilitating a pathway to higher education degrees. Through partnerships with university departments, qualified high school instructors, and Idaho school districts and their administration, a community of academic excellence is created.¹

Early College Program Annual Comparison Trends

Year	Enrollment* (% increase)	Credit Hours (% increase)	Revenue	ECP Staff
2010-2011	1,495	8,984	583,960	2
2011-2012	1,701 (13.77)	10,669 (18.75)	693,485	2
2012-2013	1,910 (12.28)	11,355 (6.42)	738,075	2
2013-2014	2,081 (8.95)	12,544 (10.47)	815,360	2
2014-2015	2,214 (6.39)	13,772 (9.78)	895,180	2
2015-2016	2,478 (11.92)	16,458 (19.5)	1,069,770	2
2016-2017	3,162 (27.6)	20,483 (24.45)	1,536,225	2
2017-2018	3,316 (4.87)	21,227 (3.63)	1,592,025	3
2018-2019	3,675 (10.82)	22,947 (8.10)	1,721,025	3
2019-2020	4,044 (10.04)	25,290 (10.21)	1,896,750	4
2020-2021	3,801 (-6)	24,908 (-1.5)	1,868,100	4

¹ State Board Policy III.Y.- Advanced Opportunities (Established 1998, Updated 2018)

^{1.} For postsecondary institutions to provide educational programs and training to their respective service regions

^{2.} Support and enhance regional and statewide economic development

^{3.} Facilitate collaboration between all school levels, including public elementary and secondary schools

^{4.} Prepare secondary graduates for postsecondary programs

^{5.} Enhance postsecondary goals

^{6.} Reduce duplication and provide for an easy transition between secondary and postsecondary education

^{7.} Reduce the overall cost of educational services and training to the student

2021-2022	4,106 (8%)	26,095 (4.77)	1,957,125	4
2022-2023	4,504(9.7%)	27,882 (6.9%)	2,091,150	4.5

2. Review Current Operating and Financial Structure

Early College Program Staff

ISU's Early College Program started in 1994 as a pilot program with one employee, who eventually became the Director. In 1998 the State Board of Education set forth policies and standards with regard to the ECP. As the program continued to grow, in 2008 an Administrative Assistant was added to the staff. Over the years the Administrative Assistant was reclassified as a Dual Credit Coordinator. With continued growth, in 2018 an additional Dual Credit Coordinator was added. An administrative assistant was added in 2020. In 2022 a .5 FTE Dual Credit Coordinator was hired for the Idaho Falls Campus.² Today, the ECP staff consists of a director, 3 coordinators, an administrative assistant and a student Career Path Intern.

High School Instructor (Adjunct/Affiliate Faculty) Payment Structure

Since the Early College Program started, high school instructors have received a stipend for teaching dual credit courses. From 1994 through 2022, instructors were paid \$1,000 per section for a 3+ credit course with an enrollment of seven or more students.³ Stipends for one and two credit courses were based on the number of students enrolled in the course. For a 2-credit course, instructors were paid \$500 for the first five students and \$35 for each additional student enrolled in the course.⁴ For a 1-credit course, instructors were paid \$150 for the first five students and \$35 for each additional student enrolled in the course.

Based on the need for alignment of payment structures across the state, beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year, ISU started to pay instructors based on enrollment. Specifically, instructors are now paid \$20/credit/student. For example, an instructor teaching a 3-credit course is paid \$60 per registered student as long as they are registered by the registration deadline. Instructors are paid \$10/credit/student for students registered after the deadline.⁵ ISU pays instructors toward the end of their course(s). If the course is taught over more than one semester/trimester, the payment is divided between those terms. In order to decrease ECP staff time spent on these time intensive payroll processes, beginning Fall 2024, the ECP office intends to simplify the payment processes and limit the number of times that instructors are paid.

² This position is half funded by Bonneville School District #93.

³ If enrollment is less than seven students, the instructor's stipend is reduced. If instructors teach multiple sections of the same course, they must have an average of 10 students per section in order to receive an additional stipend. For example, if an instructor teaches two sections of HIST 1111 they would need to have at least 20 students enrolled in order to receive \$2,000. If they teach 3 sections they would need to have 30 students enrolled in order to receive \$3,000.

⁴ In 2019, more 2-credit courses were being offered for dual credit and a number of instructors teaching those courses were being paid more than instructors teaching 3+ credit courses. ECP staff discussed the payment of 2-credit courses and decided to pay the same stipend as a 3+ credit course.

⁵ The West Ada school district does not allow ISU to pay their instructors directly, so we pay their stipends to the district, and they disperse to each instructor. The Meridian Medical Arts Charter High School instructors are an exception; these instructors receive payment directly from us.

Five Year High School Instructor Stipend Comparison

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
High School Instructors	134	145	154	154	144
Total Payment	\$383,280	\$429,260	\$418,100	\$427,555	\$492,540

Stripes Instructor Scholarship Program

The 'Stripes Program' was initiated in 2020 to expand the number of high school teachers with the appropriate credentials to teach dual credit courses. Within this program instructors must be admitted to a discipline specific graduate program on their own accord. If approved, they are supervised by a faculty liaison mentor, and may teach a dual credit course. Instructors are required to complete 6 graduate credits each year to remain in the program. If the instructor teaches 2 or more dual credit courses, up to 9 credit hours of tuition and fees per year are paid by the ECP. Currently the program has 21 participants in 4 cohorts, with the 4th cohort starting the fall 2023 semester. The first full cohort is expected to graduate in the Spring of 2025. The projected cost of tuition for the 2024-2025 academic year is \$78,000. Once again, no stipend payments are made to these instructors, instead their tuition is paid on their behalf. To date, this program has proven to be profitable, even with some courses having low enrollment (e.g. Shoshone-Bannock Jr./Sr. High school). The low enrollment courses are offset by higher enrollment courses in larger schools. This program represents part of ISU's commitment to advancing the quality of educational offerings in the K-12 system for current and future students.

Faculty Liaison Payment Structure

Faculty liaisons who are overseeing a 3+ credit course are paid \$1,000 for the first course and \$250 for each additional section of the same course during the academic year. If the course has low enrollment (less than 7 students) the compensation is reduced.⁶

Faculty liaisons who are overseeing a 2-credit course are paid \$500 for the first section and \$125 for each additional section with an enrollment of seven or more students. If a course has less than seven students, the amount of the stipend is reduced. If the faculty liaison is overseeing a 1-credit course, they are paid \$300 for the first section and \$75 for each additional section with an enrollment of seven or more students. If a course has less than seven students, the amount of the stipend is, once again, reduced.⁷

⁶ The compensation is as follows: 4-6 enrolled students = \$500 for first course, \$250 for additional sections,3 enrolled students = \$400 for first course, \$125 for additional sections,2 enrolled students = \$250 for first course, \$125 for additional sections,1 enrolled student = \$100 for first course, \$100 for additional sections

⁷ If faculty liaisons are overseeing instructors who are teaching multiple sections of the same course during the same term, there must be an average of 10 students per section registered in order to receive additional compensation. For example: if an instructor teaches two sections of HIST 1111 they would need to have at least 20 students enrolled in order for the faculty liaison to receive compensation for two courses. If the instructor taught three sections there would need to be at least 30 students enrolled in order for the faculty liaison to receive compensation for three courses.

Faculty Liaison Mentor Payment Structure

Faculty Liaison Mentors, for those instructors within the Stripes Program, are compensated \$500 per instructor per course in addition to the faculty liaison payment structure listed above. For example if a faculty liaison mentor is overseeing an instructor who is teaching ENGL 1101 and ENGL 1175 and they have an enrollment of 25 students in each course, they would be compensated \$1,000 for liaison duties plus \$500 for mentor duties for ENGL 1101 and \$1,000 for liaison duties and \$500 for mentor duties for ENGL 1175 for a total of \$3,000.

Through research of payment structures within our sister institution, we found that many Idaho dual credit programs are paying faculty liaisons (some refer to them as mentors) vastly differently. For example, Boise State University pays liaisons for each task performed (e.g., reviewing an application, a site visit, creating a professional development opportunity). Institutions such as CSI and CEI pay a lump sum for a list of responsibilities. Many institutions compensate their liaisons at the end of the course/semester whereas ISU provides compensation several times per academic year. As part of this budget optimization initiative, the ECP will review ISU's Faculty Liaison payment structure over the next year to ensure payment equity (across liaisons) and optimization of funds.

Five Year Faculty Liaison Compensation Comparison

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Faculty Liaisons	56	71	73	73	74
Compensation Amount	\$182,320	\$205,900	\$226,705	\$232,800	\$234,945

Travel Expenses

The ECP travel budget is used for ECP staff to attend NACEP (National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships) conferences, high schools to assist with registration, meetings, information nights, school award events, and for faculty liaisons to conduct classroom visits. When traveling, the most economical mode of transportation is employed and reimbursed.

ECP Travel Expenses

	ECP Staff Travel	Faculty Liaison Travel	Total
2018-2019	\$16,069.72	\$5,743.83	\$21,813.55
2019-2020	\$13,414.61	\$5,596.25	\$19,010.86
2020-2021*	\$232.06	\$67.10	\$299.16
2021-2022*	\$2,994.72	\$2,283.14	\$5,277.86
2022-2023**	\$15,408.10	\$2,578.31	\$17,986.41

^{*} Travel budget anomalies: During Covid ECP staff and faculty liaisons were working from home. High school classes were also being taught from home over Google or Zoom so visits and meetings were also held via Zoom. When schools resumed meeting in their buildings, they were still not comfortable having guests visit, so online visits and meetings continued to be held. Beginning with the 2022/2023 school year school visits have resumed so the travel budget has started to increase.

^{**}Note: 2022-2023 Expenses are only through May 30, 2023

On-Campus Dual Enrollment (E-Section Courses)

High school students have the option to attend on-campus courses and online courses taught by an ISU professor through our ISU's Dual Enrollment Program. Students are afforded the standard \$75 per credit dual enrollment fee. These courses are identified as e-section courses. Many departments provide a distinct number of e-section courses at the start of each semester's registration period. Other departments allow the Early College Program to submit a request for e-section courses as needed. When a student wants to take a course that does not already have an e-section associated with it, students complete an on-campus request form and the ECP emails the department chair to ask for the course. Not all course requests are fulfilled.

Each college receives 50% of the course fees collected from students enrolled in their respective e-section courses. Prior to Fall 2021 the colleges received 75% of the course fee. Below is a list of the fees that colleges have received since ISU started the "on-campus" dual enrollment program.

E-Section Payments to Colleges

	CAL	СОВ	COHS	COSE	СОТ
Fall 2018	\$8,580.00				
Spring 2019	\$9,506.25				
Summer 2019	\$2,441.25			\$97.50	
Fall 2019	\$14,400.00			\$4,443.75	
Spring 2020	\$17,943.75			\$2,362.50	
Summer 2020	\$9,281.25			\$281.25	
Fall 2020	\$7,256.25			\$2,475.00	\$9,168.75
Spring 2021	\$15,918.75			\$3,487.50	\$10,743.75
Summer 2021	\$7,312.50	\$843.75		\$337.50	
Fall 2021	\$8,250.00	\$450.00		\$1,800.00	\$8,737.50
Spring 2022	\$11,550.00	\$1,912.50		\$2,100.00	\$8,400.00
Summer 2022	\$6,000.00	\$787.50	\$1,650.00	\$225.00	\$300.00
Fall 2022	\$8,925.00	\$562.50	\$787.50	\$1,950.00	\$6,562.50
Spring 2023	\$11,512.50	\$1,237.50	\$2,250.00	\$3,225.00	\$7,050.00
Total	\$138,877.50	\$5,793.75	\$4,687.50	\$22,785.00	\$50,962.50

3. Synergies and Redundancies with Enrollment Management / Other Areas

Efficiencies within Enrollment Management

Dual Enroll Registration Software

The implementation of the Dual Enroll registration software has the potential to help immensely with the registration process. Students will have one login (for all Dual Enroll institutions across



the state) and will complete registration in a like manner for the vast majority of institutions offering dual credit courses in our region. Implementation will help decrease the number of inadvertent and incorrect registrations made by participants. Perhaps most importantly, implementation will generate significant goodwill with high school students, parents, counselors, and administrators. The current optics are that ISU makes registration more difficult than it needs to be, although the ECP utilizes the same registration system that current ISU students use. Evidence from across our state and region shows that dual credit enrollment increases by an average of 5% with the implementation of Dual Enroll.

Admissions/Recruitment

In the past, the Early College Program worked closely with the Admissions and Recruitment Coordinators collaborating on dual enrollment registration visits 4 times each year. This collaboration helped ISU reach students and discuss future opportunities. COVID, however, derailed this collaboration. Yet, the practice will begin once again with the upcoming academic year and recruitment cycle.

Additionally, the ECP intends to utilize the Apply Idaho admissions download of high school seniors who applied to ISU for the upcoming school year and cross reference it with the Advanced Opportunities student portal. In conjunction with DegreeWorks, this information will be useful to support and advise ECP students in their ISU degree path and provide connections and resources to help these students matriculate to ISU. Moreover, the ECP intends to begin providing breakout sessions on using DegreeWorks at recruitment events such as Bengal Visit Day and Experience ISU. This would give ECP students the opportunity to see the coursework they have taken and how this fits into a future ISU program of study. Showing students that they have already created a pathway to a degree is meaningful to matriculating to ISU.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) unit associated with the ECP is currently utilizing the return funding for e-section courses to fund specific student needs. However, the needs seem to be larger than the current funding allows. The CTE unit would like to be able to purchase tools for ECP students so that when they are finished with the program, they could keep these tools to take into the labor force. Currently, students are borrowing tools that stay with the program after they leave.

CTE is also in need of some staff assistance to take care of phone calls and questions while the Director is out visiting schools. This type of customer service is key to the continued success of the program. While a short-term fix is for the ECP to provide assistance, there is a need for more discussion to determine long-term solutions.



4. Opportunities for Increased Matriculation

Matriculation and Retention Assistance

The Early College Program represents the first contact that many students have with Idaho State University. It is the goal of the ECP to provide each student with up-to-date information and resources to build strong and stable relationships for years to come. One way this is completed is through high school registration visits (which are slated to occur up to four times per year). The ECP staff also volunteers for all recruitment events, advising, and NSO events on campus. Because many high school students have built strong connections with Early College Coordinators, they are a reliable resource when a student first walks onto campus.

Creating a new position to assist with matriculation and retention of ECP students is one way to increase matriculation rates. This proposed position would serve the Early College Program students by developing connections to openly discuss future goals and degree pathways at ISU. For reference, ECP student matriculation went from 17% in 2012 to 28% in 2022 with the highest percentages in 2020 and 2021 at 30% and 31% respecitively.

5. Budget Recommendations

Increase Annual University Revenue from ECP

Currently, 23% of the Early College total revenue goes directly into the university's general fund and 77% is invested back into the program to pay salaries, teacher instructional costs, liaison stipends, direct college support, and operating expenses. The ECP currently has revenue in excess of expenditures annually. Thus, university revenue could be increased without impacting the success of the program. Based on the budget analysis below, an increase to a 35/65 split is reasonable and is recommended to support university needs and initiatives.

The Office of Finance's somewhat conservative forecasts for the 2023-2024 academic year show that the university's general fund is expected to receive annual total revenue of \$827,400 (an increase of \$283,680) due to this new revenue split.

6. Recommendations

- 1. The university general fund should receive a larger percentage of revenue from early college tuition annually. The university's revenue share should be increased from 23% to 35%.
- 2. The ECP should leverage their high school student connections and generate greater matriculation to ISU. They should accomplish this by hiring an Early College Matriculation Coordinator who will focus primarily on recruitment and retention of ECP students. Having an individual work closely with ECP students would be a profitable investment in assisting with ISU's overall recruitment.



- 3. The ECP should increase scholarship funding for students matriculating to ISU by increasing their internally funded (local) scholarships. The first scholarship that was available to ECP students was the Step Ahead Scholarship and that funding ended in approximately 2020. One way of supporting ECP matriculation is to provide scholarships for students who matriculate. Additional discussions with the Scholarship Office based on their experience and expertise will take place over the next year.
- 4. The University should implement the Dual Enroll Registration System in order to increase ISU dual credit enrollment and good will with the high schools. The implementation of the Dual Enroll registration software has the potential to help immensely with the registration process. Students will have one login (for all Dual Enroll institutions across the state) and will complete registration in a like manner for the vast majority of institutions offering dual credit courses in our region.
- 5. The ECP should work more closely with the ISU Office of Admissions (and Visitors Center) to generate greater matriculation to ISU. A physical campus location change to be closer to the Admissions Visitors Center and therefore more connected to initiatives and specific recruitment efforts would be beneficial.

Additional Areas to Research and Explore

Over the next year, it is the intention of the ECP to analyze best practices and make additional recommendations with regard to the following:

- 1. Faculty liaison job expectations to ensure equity and high-quality instruction
- 2. E-section best practices
- 3. The INCLUDE project's role, staffing, and alignment with the ECP
- 4. The ECP's relationship with CTE including CTE's needs for continued program success
- 5. Instructor recruitment and retention best practices across the state



Appendix A

Adjunct/Affiliate Faculty Responsibilities

- New instructors must attend the Early College Program's Administrative Orientation and Department Course Orientation Workshops prior to teaching their course(s).
- All instructors must participate in annual departmental discipline-specific professional development.
- Work with an assigned academic department faculty liaison.
- Submit yearly course syllabus to department liaison/chair for approval prior to starting the course. Include registration, drop, and withdraw deadlines as well ISU objective information (isu.edu/ecp/). Syllabus template is available from the ECP office.
- Upload department approved syllabus to ECP department syllabus folder in box.com or by document upload link on ECP website at www.isu.edu/ecp/forms prior to course registration number (CRN) being created.
- Notify the Early College Program office of class times including term start and end dates as soon as high school schedule is set each year/term.
- Distribute course syllabus to students including registration, drop, and withdraw deadlines. Refer to www.isu.edu/ecp/registration/deadlines for appropriate dates.
- Facilitate Early College Program admissions and registration procedures.
- If teaching a course that requires a prerequisite or test score, make sure students have met the required prerequisite. Refer to www.isu.edu/ecp/registration/prerequisite-and-placement-scores. If not met, make arrangements for them to take the appropriate placement test.
- Submit copies of official placement test scores or official high school transcripts with ACT/SAT test scores to the Early College Program via box.com or by document upload link on ECP website at www.isu.edu/ecp/forms prior to ECP registration
- Submit unofficial college transcripts for proof of prerequisite placement to the Early College Program via box.com or by document upload link on ECP website at www.isu.edu/ecp/forms
- Submit high school roster to box.com if you would like us to help track the process of your student application/registration status
- Review BengalWeb class list with students prior to the add/drop deadline to ensure students are registered and in the correct class. Notify ECP staff if you have students listed who are not in your class. Update class roster in box file as necessary.





- Provide a copy of the BengalWeb class list, after the deadline, to your school's Advance Opportunities liaison so they can make sure funding requests are in for your students.
- Advise ECP students who transfer out of your class of drop/withdrawal procedures. Just because they drop the high school class does not automatically drop them from the college class.
- Inform students of mid-term D and F grades, and withdrawal options and deadlines (midterm grades do not need to be recorded in BengalWeb).
- Distribute Qualtrics survey link for class evaluations at the end of the course. If you have not received the link at least three weeks before the end of your course, contact the Early College Program Office.
- Submit final student grades in BengalWeb by appropriate deadline
- Follow FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) guidelines (see www.isu.edu/registrar/student-resources/ferpa/#d.en.14158).



Appendix B

Faculty Liaison Assignment and Responsibilities

Academic support is provided to high school instructors through the corresponding department at Idaho State University. Each instructor is provided with a department faculty liaison that helps with all needs in relation to teaching a college course. Each year the Early College Program staff will send a list of dual credit instructors and courses to the respective department chair. The department chair will assign a faculty liaison to work with each high school instructor to provide curriculum and instructor support.

At the beginning of the academic year, the Early College Program will send faculty liaison notifications to ISU faculty, listing the high school instructors and courses for which they will have oversight. Faculty liaisons will also receive compensation letters approximately two weeks after each ECP term registration deadline in which they have course oversight.

Faculty Liaison Responsibilities

- Communicate department information each semester to high school instructors. Include high school instructors in department correspondence, listserv, academic notices, and general information.
- Visit high school instructors on-site the first year of approval and at least every three years following the initial visit or work with instructors in on-campus department meetings.
- Communicate at least once per month via email or phone.
- Be available to give presentations of discipline-specific lectures to Early College Program students.
- Provide guidance concerning grading policies of the department.
- Discuss the college experience with high school students. This may be done
 when faculty visits the high schools or when high school students visit our
 campus.
- Supply high school instructors with current sample syllabi, sample exams, and other course materials
- Supply high school instructors with desk copies of current textbooks.
- Assist high school instructors/school districts in selecting department approved textbooks.



- Request and review course syllabus annually.
- Assist department chair with or hold annual department professional development for all ECP instructors.
- Submit Annual Professional Development tracking form with agenda and materials for all professional development activities provided for ECP instructors to the Early College Program per NACEP requirement.
- Assist department chair with or hold department Course Orientation Training Workshops for new ECP instructors when applicable.
- When on-boarding new instructors, submit a New Course Orientation Tracking form with agenda and materials for course orientation provided for new ECP instructors to the Early College Program per NACEP requirement.
- Submit liaison report forms for each assigned instructor to the Early College Program, immediate supervisor, and high school instructor.
- Coordinate with the department chair in guiding high school instructors on assessment of general education learning competencies.

Faculty Liaison Mentor Responsibilities ("Stripes Instructor Scholarship" Mentors)

Faculty Liaison Mentors will have oversight for ECP instructors who are participating in the ECP Waiver Program (working on a master's degree in lieu of receiving a stipend for teaching dual credit courses). A Faculty Liaison Mentor will have the same responsibilities of a faculty liaison (as listed in Appendix B) as well as these additional oversight and mentoring responsibilities to include but not be limited to:

- Minimum of two site visits per course term
- Site visit reports for all site visits
- Monthly communication with the instructor during the course term
- Participate in the discipline specific orientation for new instructor
- Approve course syllabi prior to starting course