

Summary Report of 2015 Running Start in the High School and College in the High School
Principal, Counselor, and Instructor Survey

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Beginning this year, the Running Start office surveyed principals, counselors, and instructors of our high school partners who participated in Running Start in the High School (RSHS) or College in the High School (CHS). The survey was based on the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment (NACEP) survey guidelines.

Methodology

The survey was created using Survey Monkey and they NACEP template questions adjusted to apply to the Eastern Washington University (EWU) concurrent enrollment program. An announcement was made on April 27, 2015 with initial opening of the survey on May 4, 2015. Principals, counselors, and instructors were sent two reminder emails. The survey closed on June 12, 2015. The survey was sent to N=56 principals, N=90 high school counselors, and N=137 instructors who had email addresses listed in our contact list and listed in the *Washington Education Directory 2014-2015* who participated in RSHS/CHS during the 2014-2015 academic year. 24 emails total were returned undeliverable. Many school districts have very restricted firewalls that routinely block our emails.

Locality

The majority of the high school partners who responded considered their communities to be rural. School size ranged from 34 to 1590 students, 9-12. Table 1 shows the location breakdown of respondents.

TABLE 1

Demographic Breakdown of Respondents

Variables	Response Percentage
Location	

<i>Rural</i>	66.67%
<i>City</i>	22.22%
<i>Suburb</i>	14.81%

TABLE 1 (*continued*)*Demographic Breakdown of Respondents*

Variables	Response Percentage
Location	
<i>Town</i>	3.70%

By far the EWU RSHS program is part of the curriculum in rural areas of Eastern Washington. This poses challenges to EWU due to low enrollment, distance to travel for site visits, and lack of resources often found in more urban areas. Although there are challenges in offering courses in rural areas, the impact on those community far outweigh any extra costs or inconvenience.

Results

High School Principals

Principals were asked to complete a survey outlining their thoughts on how EWU RSHS or CHS courses have impacted their school and students and what the Running Start office can do to improve the program. Out of the N=56 principals contacted to complete the survey only n=28 or 50% responded. The overall responses were positive and many good suggestions on how the program can improve were provided. Some suggestions for improvement are out of the hands of the EWU program as they pertain to funding.

Collegiality

The first part of the survey dealt with the partnership with EWU. 92.86% felt that the partnership was collegial and enjoyed working with the program. The principals outlined how EWU supports our partnering high schools. Table 2 shows the areas where principals felt that the EWU program was supporting their school and teachers.

TABLE 2

Areas of Support Offered by EWU Running Start Office

Variables	Response Percentage
College campus visits and events	87.86%
Professional Development	57.14%
Library Access	32.14%
Technology Recourses	28.57%
Conferences	21.43%
Academic Advising	21.43%
Financial Aid Counseling	7.14%
Tutoring	7.14%
Teacher Scholarships for Graduate Courses	0.00%

The program hosts numerous campus visits each year. During 2014-15 over 17 schools came to campus. During the visits, we partner with other campus departments such as admissions, academic departments, athletics, the University Recreation Center (URC), and

library. Students typically get a tour of the campus, a lecture from a faculty member in the subject area they are taking, complete research in the library, go ice skating, stand on the Inferno, and experience campus dining. Tours have become more popular; however, the time needed to prepare an outstanding tour is quite extensive.

Annually we hold a teacher training day that is required for teachers to attend. Additionally, departments are required to provide at least one professional development opportunity per year. There is room for improvement in the teacher training day. We had good feedback from the last training day (2015) and are already using the information to make the next year's better.

Students who participate in RSHS/CHS courses have access to the EWU library. Many of our English and history instructors have their students use the library, mostly online, to help them with assignments. We need a better way to share the resources available to our instructors and students.

Course Impact and Quality

Impact. Principals were asked a series of questions regarding the impact RSHS/CHS courses had on their teachers, students and schools. An overwhelming majority agreed that partnering with EWU helped to align curriculum between secondary and post-secondary schooling, improved students' college readiness, and developed subject-area expertise for instructors. Table 3 outlines the percentages of those principals who agreed that EWU RSHS had a positive impact on their instructors.

TABLE 3

Areas of Impact for RSHS Instructors

Variables	Response Percentage
Align secondary curriculum with college curriculum	82.14%
Improve college readiness of my students	92.86%
Develop subject –area expertise in their discipline	32.14%

Quality. Principals who completed the survey felt very strongly (92.86%) that RSHS/CHS courses increased the academic rigor of the courses taught. Further they agreed that concurrent enrollment courses challenged their students and held students accountable to the course rigor. Table 4 shows the responses for how RSHS/CHS courses improved the academic rigor.

TABLE 4

Improvement of Academic Rigor

Variables	Response Percentage
Expecting college level work	92.31%
Implementing college course standards	80.77%
Requiring a higher level of student accountability	65.38%

One respondent stated that by offering EWU courses at his or her high school increased the status of student work. Students were able to say “I’m taking a EWU class” which encourage success with college level work. As a result of offering EWU concurrent enrollment

courses principals felt the results to be positive. The most notable benefit was the ability to offer a greater number of rigorous courses in their high schools and demonstrate to parents that students are being challenged. Table 5 outlines the benefits of offering college courses in the high schools.

TABLE 5

Benefits of Offering Concurrent Enrollment Courses

Variables	Response Percentage
Demonstrates to parents that students are doing challenging work	82.14%
Offers a greater number of rigorous classes	78.58%
Enhances its prestige academic reputation	75.00%
Offers prerequisite courses that prepare students for college courses in upper grades	71.43%
Has more students succeed in post-secondary education	39.28%
Has more students continuing on to post-secondary education	32.14%

I believe that the low percentages on the last two statements is due to the high schools not tracking their students once they graduate from high school. Many of the principals (60-68%) answered neutral to the last two statements.

High School Counselors

Counselors were asked to complete a survey outlining their thoughts on how EWU RSHS or CHS courses have impacted their school and students and what the Running Start office can

do to improve the program. Out of the N=92 counselors contacted to complete the survey only $n=28$ or 30% responded. The majority of respondents said they only occasionally interact with students taking EWU concurrent enrollment courses. The overall responses were positive and many good suggestions on how the program can improve were provided.

Course Impact and Quality

Impact. Counselors were asked a series of questions regarding the impact RSHS/CHS courses had on their teachers, students and schools. An overwhelming majority agreed that partnering with EWU helped students participate in rigorous learning, improved students' college readiness, and increased the likelihood that their students would pursue higher education after graduation. Table 6 outlines responses in what the counselors perceived as the results of offering EWU RSHS had a positive impact on their students and schools.

TABLE 6

Areas of Impact for RSHS Students

Variables	Response Percentage
Participate in rigorous learning	100.00%
Develop realistic expectations of postsecondary education coursework	100.00%
Increase their likelihood of pursuing postsecondary education	92.86%
Develop a better understanding of their academic skills	92.85%

TABLE 6 (continued)

Areas of Impact for RSHS Students

Variables	Response Percentage
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Raise their postsecondary educational aspirations	85.71%
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Counselors were also asked what the impact on their practice was of offering EWU concurrent enrollment practices. The majority of the counselors reported either neutral or disagreed with the impact on them. This is in contrast to their perceived positive impact on their students and schools. Table 7 shows these response rates.

TABLE 7

Areas of Impact for High School Counselors

Variables	Response Percentage
Changed the way I present college options to students	60.72%
Have a better understanding of the skills and knowledge students need to succeed in postsecondary education	53.57%
Perceived more students as capable of higher levels of postsecondary educational achievement	60.71%

The number of counselors who selected “disagree” was relatively small with 1 counselor stating that they “strongly disagree” in regards to helping them with their practice. The majority of respondents stated “neutral”. This response tells us that we need to find ways to better help our high school counselors.

Additionally, counselors were asked about their perceptions of how concurrent enrollment courses offered by EWU had impacted their high schools. The majority of the respondents felt that there was a positive impact, but still a good percentage also claimed

“neutral”. Table 8 shows the percentages of those counselors that “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that EWU HS/CHS courses were a positive addition to their high schools.

TABLE 8

Areas of Impact for High Schools

Variables	Response Percentage
Offers more rigorous classes	57.14%
Offers prerequisite courses that prepare students for college courses in upper grades	57.14%
Demonstrates to parents that students are doing challenging work	75.00%
Enhances its prestige and academic reputation	75.00%
Has more students continuing on to postsecondary education	42.86%
Has more students succeed in postsecondary education	42.85%

I believe that the low percentages on the last two statements is due to the high schools not tracking their students once they graduate from high school. Many of the counselors (57%) answered neutral or disagreed to the last two statements.

When asked, what counselors felt was the biggest impact on their students nearly all of them stated some form of that offering concurrent enrollment courses at their high school kept their students on campus and helped students realize they can be successful in college level courses. One counselor stated “The ability for them to ‘try’ out college before they get to the actual campus. By seeing success in the running start [sic] classroom they begin to understand

that college is attainable, even though the majority of students in our district will be first generation college students. Many parents farthest education was grade school, and some never attended school. Due to this, it is harder for my students to understand their potential but with the addition of college in the classroom they have been able to have more confidence in their college dreams and endeavors after they leave their building.”

Counselors were also provided the opportunity to explain what they thought was the biggest impact on their schools. Nearly all of the responses were positive and the negative comments all dealt with state funding. Most of the responses pertain to keep their “talent” on campus instead of losing them to the nearest Running Start program (dual enrollment). They also responded that it had changed the culture of the school in general.

High School Instructors

High school instructors were asked to complete a survey outlining their thoughts on how EWU RSHS or CHS courses have impacted their instruction, school and students and what the Running Start office can do to improve the program. Out of the N=136 instructors contacted to complete the survey only $n=116$ or 85% responded. The average number of years that instructors have been teaching EWU courses in their high school was 4 years with several instructors stating that they have been with the program for at least 12 or more years. In Figure 1 the respondents are broken down by their corresponding EWU college that they are representing.

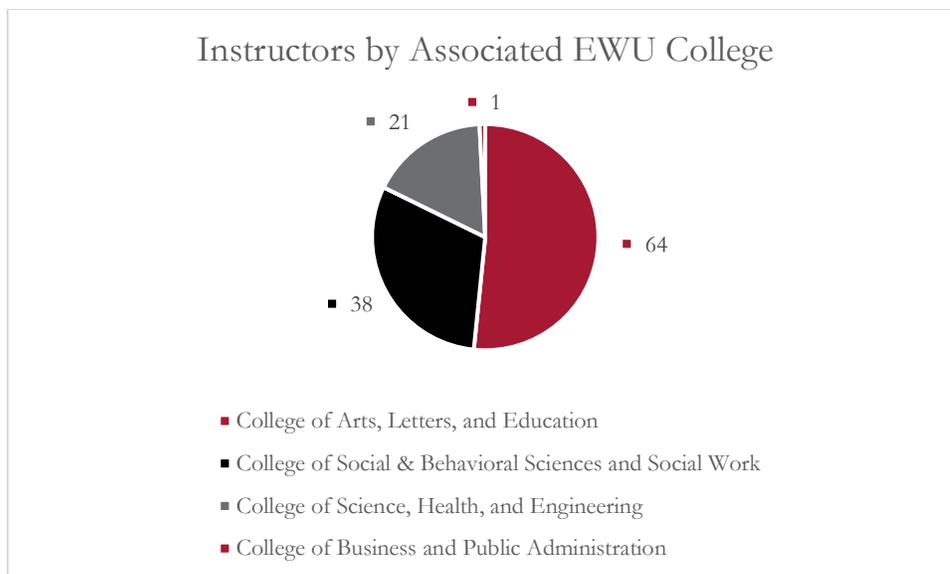


Figure 1. Number of instructors approved by EWU academic college. This figure groups departments into their respective colleges in order to make the graph easier to read.

English, foreign languages, government and history are the largest representatives in the survey. This is also true across the course offerings and serves as good gauge of our current EWU RS/CHS instructors.

Course Impact and Quality

Impact. High school instructors who teach EWU RS/CHS courses were asked a series of questions regarding the impact concurrent enrollment courses had on their students and schools. An overwhelming majority agreed that partnering with EWU helped students participate in rigorous learning, improved students' college readiness, and increased the likelihood that their students would pursue higher education after graduation. Table 9 outlines responses in what the instructors perceived as the positive results of offering EWU RSHS courses in their high schools.

TABLE 9

Areas of Impact for Students

Variables	Response Percentage
Participate in rigorous learning	97.37%
Develop realistic expectations of postsecondary coursework	97.32%
Increase their likelihood of pursuing postsecondary education	96.49%
Develop a better understanding of their academic skills	95.53%
Raise their postsecondary educational aspirations	92.80%

High school instructors had a far more positive response rate than the counselors. This is perhaps due to the more frequent and meaningful interaction instructors have with their students.

Additionally, instructors were asked about their perceived impact concurrent enrollment had on their high school as a whole. The majority answered in a positive way and felt that these courses helped their school improve. In Table 10, the positive responses are presented.

 TABLE 10
Areas of Impact for High Schools

Variables	Response Percentage
Offers more rigorous classes	85.97%
Offers prerequisite courses that prepare students for college courses in upper grades	81.58%

Demonstrates to parents that students are doing challenging work	92.98%
Enhances its prestige and academic reputation	89.48%
Has more students continuing on to postsecondary education	77.19%
Has more students succeed in postsecondary education	76.31%

As with the principals and counselors' responses to the last two questions, I believe that the low percentages is due to the high schools not tracking their students once they graduate from high school. Many of the instructors (9%) answered neutral or disagreed to the last two statements.

Instructors were asked to reflect on how teaching a concurrent enrollment course impacted the quality of their instruction. Results were mixed across the categories with approximately 4% saying that they strongly disagreed with the amount of support offered by the faculty liaison or mentor. Another interesting find is that another 4% disagreed with all of the statements. The neutral responses were also quite high. In Table 11, the positive responses are outlined.

TABLE 11

Areas of Impact on Instruction

Variables	Response Percentage
Learned about new ideas and developments in my academic discipline(s)	85.97%

Taken leadership positions within my department, school, district, or professional association	62.28%
Been energized as a teacher	83.19%
Benefited from the support of and contact with RSHS/CHS colleagues in other high schools or career centers	78.76%
A better understanding of the knowledge and skills that college faculty in my discipline expect of my students	85.09%
Incorporated the content and/or pedagogy of the RSHS/CHS course in other classes	72.32%
Established higher standards for student work	79.47%
Felt supported by the Eastern Washington University liaison/mentor	80.53%
Been hired to teach a college course on a college campus and/or online	15.10%

Although the majority of instructors felt favorably about the impact teaching for EWU had on their instruction and craft, it is disconcerting that the positive percentages are not higher. I believe this reflects a disjointed faculty liaison/mentor structure but is clearly not across all departments. Additionally, we need to increase our input with the faculty and make sure they are following the standards as well as providing high quality professional development and mentorship. We continue to improve our teacher training day to make it of value to our instructors.

When asked what they felt was the greatest impact on their students, the instructors almost unanimously cited increased rigor and exposure to college level curriculum. One instructor stated “Students who took my geology class now have a better understanding of how demanding a college course is in terms of studying and preparation outside the class.” They also felt that the greatest impact these courses had on their schools was that concurrent enrollment courses keep students on campus and provided more opportunity for their students and creating a culture of rigorous learning.

The instructors also had the opportunity to tell what the greatest impact of teaching a concurrent enrollment course had on them as an instructor. About half the respondents said that the opportunity to teach an EWU course helped them raise their student expectations while allowing them more freedom to teach engaging and thought-provoking lessons as compared to the AP courses they had taught. Many liked the mentorship with the EWU faculty.

The areas of improvement mentioned by instructors is mentorship with EWU faculty, creating a more engaging training day, and offering more departmental training. There is also a greater need to have more training day interaction with faculty. There is also a consistent theme of wanting more interaction with liaisons and mentors. There are several suggestions of the site visits being more interactive with the professors instead of just a quick 1 time a semester drop in.

Summary

The results of the survey were valuable in the sense that they outline places we need to improve and provided suggestions on how to strengthen the partnership between EWU and the high schools. Where EWU RSHS/CHS shines is in our campus visits, impact of offering EWU

RSHS/CHS courses on instructors by helping them better align their courses and increasing course rigor. The areas in which we need to improve our program. Teacher training day is a continued work in progress and still needs more revamping to better meet the needs of the high school instructors as well as university faculty. Faculty need to have a more open and mutually interactive relationship with the high school instructors. Instructors want more departmental trainings and professional development. We also haven't done enough to let administrators and instructors know how to access all the campus resources available to them. We also need to improve and increase our communication with parents and other stakeholders in regards to the benefits and considerations when offering or register for EWU RSHS/CHS courses. We also need to find ways to better engage and support our high school counselors. Overall, we are doing a fairly good job in providing college level courses at high schools across the state, but we have plenty of room for improvement.