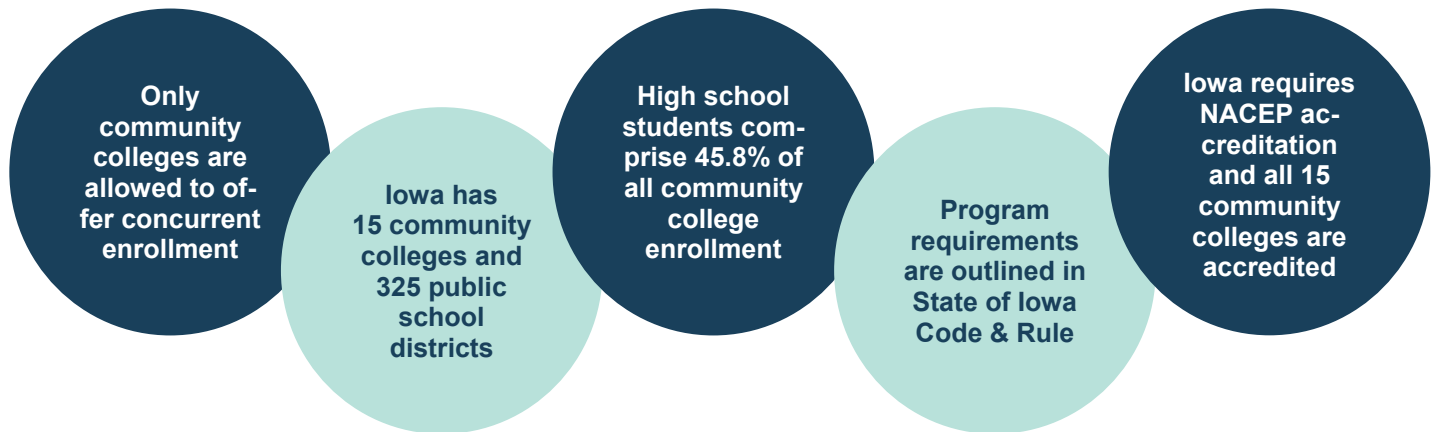


State of Iowa Profile for NACEP Peer Reviewers



Concurrent Enrollment in Iowa

The Concurrent Enrollment Program, also known as district-to-community college sharing, promotes rigorous academic or career and technical pursuits by providing opportunities for high school students in grades 9 through 12 to enroll in eligible courses at or through one of Iowa's 15 community colleges.

Administered as a single program, the courses may be taken at a high school, on a college campus or through online/distance education. The instructors may be a college employed instructor or a high school instructor serving as a community college adjunct faculty member. Even though there is variation in the mechanisms available, consistency in expectations for students, instructors, school districts and postsecondary institutions is mandated by state policy [281 IAC Chapter 22](#). However, in alignment with NACEP requirements, only those courses taught by a high school instructor are included with each institution's NACEP application for reaccreditation.

Senior Year Plus (SYP) serves as an umbrella term for a variety of programs designed to provide high school students with access to courses that may generate high school and college credit. SYP includes programs such as Advanced Placement, Concurrent Enrollment, Postsecondary Enrollment Option and Career Academies.

Program Accreditation

The Iowa Department of Education (the Department) utilizes the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) accreditation process to ensure compliance with many state statutory requirements. State of Iowa requirements for concurrent enrollment directly align with 15 of NACEP's standards. The Department has prepared a [crosswalk](#) which details the alignment between Senior Year Plus statutory requirements and NACEP standards. Compliance with state standards is also monitored through the state.

Community College State Accreditation Process

Community colleges are accredited by the Iowa State Board of Education. The state accreditation process supplements the HLC accreditation process by ensuring compliance with state standards not specifically reviewed through the HLC review. State evaluations occur on a 10-year cycle, with interim evaluations on the fifth year and comprehensive evaluations on the tenth year. Through the [state community college accreditation process](#), Senior Year Plus is reviewed, including concurrent enrollment programs.

Postsecondary Course Audit Process

Up until May 2024, Iowa Code 256.17 mandated the Postsecondary Course Audit Committee (PSCAC) with providing quality assurance initiatives for postsecondary courses delivered through Senior Year Plus programs. This included setting the standards for concurrent enrollment and the process by the Department assessed the program. The committee focused on concurrent enrollment sections delivered at high school locations and utilized the NACEP accreditation process for concurrent enrollment programs. In May 2024, the Postsecondary Course Audit Committee was eliminated by SF 2385, which transferred these responsibilities to the Department.

The Department requires all community colleges maintain NACEP accredited status in order to demonstrate that the criteria for auditing courses are met. The audit plan does not provide for an alternative means for demonstrating state standards are met. All community colleges must demonstrate standards are met through NACEP accredited status. The audit process is coupled with NACEP accreditation and aligned with the community college's state accreditation process. Concurrent enrollment courses provided by community colleges without NACEP accredited status will not be eligible for supplemental weighting to school districts per Iowa Code 256.17. This includes any modality with which concurrent enrollment is delivered.

Cost of Tuition and State Support

Students are not required to pay for their participation in concurrent enrollment. Tuition is paid for by the school district, and the cost of tuition is negotiated between the school district and community college. The state of Iowa annually supports participating districts with additional funds called [supplementary weighted funding](#). Weighted funding is designed to help districts offset the costs associated with concurrent enrollment and encourage districts to offer programs and extend services deemed necessary or desirable which might not otherwise be provided.

Faculty Qualifications & Quality Faculty Plan (QFP)

Iowa law establishes the process for community colleges to plan for the hiring and professional development of faculty. Concurrent enrollment instructors must be included in the college's institutional QFP (281 IAC 24.5(5)). Concurrent enrollment instructors must meet state minimum faculty standards, as well as the same college hiring requirements as instructors employed by the college (281-IAC 22.3(1)).

Student Admission Criteria

The program is open to eligible students in grades 9 through 12 (281 IAC 22.11(1)). Students must meet the academic requirements of both the school district and postsecondary institution. While Iowa community colleges are open access institutions, they have college placement requirements for enrollment in certain courses. Students must meet the same assessment requirements of the postsecondary institution as all other college students including placement exams and course prerequisites, if any, prior to enrollment in the postsecondary course (281 IAC 22.2(1)(c)).

There is no limit on the number of college credit a high school student may enroll in, except per community college full-time enrollment cap policies.

Course Auditing

Students are not allowed to audit a concurrent enrollment course. Students enrolled in the course must take the course for college credit. Students may not be enrolled for high school credit only (281 IAC 22.11(5)).

Course Eligibility

Courses must apply towards a two-year degree program or toward completion of a diploma program; the course may not apply solely to a community college certificate program. Courses may not be developed for concurrent enrollment students only; the course must be open to all registered community college students. However, sections of the course delivered at school district sites may be closed to regular college students,

provided other sections are available for regular student enrollment. Additionally, the course must be included in the college course catalog or an addendum or amendment to the catalog (281 IAC 97.2(5)).

The school board of each school district must annually approve courses to be made available through the concurrent enrollment program using locally developed criteria (281 IAC 22.11(3)).

Year-long Courses

In Iowa, spreading a postsecondary concurrent enrollment course over an entire year is not permissible. It is the expectation that concurrent enrollment courses are comparable and taught to the same standard and rigor of the postsecondary on campus. Concurrent enrollment courses that significantly exceed the contact hours established by the community college are no longer considered comparable courses.

Geographic Extent of the Program

Each community college has a defined service region and serves school districts within its designated region. Prevailing practice for each community college is to confine their concurrent enrollment practices to their own region unless there are extenuating circumstances (i.e., a college does not offer a certain program or course). The community colleges have also agreed that prior to entering into a concurrent enrollment contractual agreement which crosses a community college regional border, they will contact the community college in which the school is located to have the arrangement approved by each community college impacted, and included in the contract.

Nearly every Iowa school district offers access to concurrent enrollment programming; however, the depth of this access varies by district and community college service region.

Partnership Engagement

Community colleges and school districts enter into contractual agreements to provide concurrent enrollment programming opportunities to eligible students (281 IAC 22.6). Additionally, [regional planning partnerships](#) with each of Iowa's community colleges support school districts in developing the best approaches for delivering high-quality career and technical education (CTE) and expanding college credit opportunities for high school students. Community colleges, school districts, area education agencies, representatives of economic and workforce development organizations and business and industry work together to ensure students graduate from high school ready for college and career training.

Senior Year Plus: Guide for Educators and Educational Administrators

This [SYP Guide](#) is designed to assist educators, counselors, and administrators in understanding the requirements and expectations of the Senior Year Plus programs. It contains program descriptions, requirements, timelines and other useful resources.