



Guidance Counselor Handbook

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Program Overview

Project EXCEL, Indiana's first dual credit/concurrent enrollment program, offers transcribed college credit to eligible high school students who enroll in Vincennes University (VU) courses, offered at an approved Indiana partner high school or career center. The number and selection of Project EXCEL dual credit courses provided at each high school or career center varies in accordance with eligible, approved instructors at each location.

High School Instructors – VU Approval Process

Qualifications and Approval

1. Approvals for all Project EXCEL instructors are processed in accordance with the same credentialing requirements established for faculty members on the VU campus, as established by Vincennes University and developed in accordance with the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association accreditation requirements for faculty appointments.
2. Project EXCEL utilizes four faculty credentialing categories in its faculty approval process. These categories include traditional, tested experience, provisional, and emergency. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) provides general guidance that faculty possess an academic degree relevant to the discipline in which they teach, at least one level above the level at which they teach, except in terminal degree programs, where equivalent experience may be considered.
3. In order to begin the approval process, each high school teacher must submit the following items:
 - a. A current, detailed resume – including all professional experience related to the discipline.
 - b. Copies of all undergraduate and graduate college transcripts – must be legible, current, and indicate degree(s) earned (**official transcripts required upon approval**).
 - c. All applicable licensures/certifications, related to the content area, including an Indiana teaching license or workplace specialist license.
 - d. A signed [Liberal Arts OR Career & Technical Instructor Application Checklist](#).
 - e. A completed [Classroom/Lab/Equipment Information & Approval Form](#) (if teaching a course with a lab component).
4. Prior to final approval to teach a VU Project EXCEL dual credit course, new instructors must:
 - a. Submit all required HR paperwork.
 - b. Have all, requested, official transcripts sent directly to VU – Attn: Project EXCEL.
 - c. Complete the required curriculum and administrative orientation sessions on the VU campus.
5. Only approved Project EXCEL instructors are authorized to deliver course content for Project EXCEL courses. Project EXCEL does not allow an approved instructor to serve as the instructor of record, while another individual delivers course content. For courses that are taught by more than one instructor, all instructors (including teacher assistants/aides) must be approved Project EXCEL instructors. In such cases, one instructor will be designated as the primary instructor and will be responsible for submitting student grades; however, all instructors will be considered instructors of record, for each course.

Application materials should be submitted by March 1 for the following fall semester approval, and October 15 for spring semester approval. Application materials should be sent to D'Lee Thomas at dthomas@vinu.edu.

Curriculum Standards

Assessment

In accordance with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) accreditation standards, Vincennes University embraces assessment as a fundamental tool for continuous quality improvement. The institution's assessment of academic and co-curricular programs is evidence-based, using quantitative and qualitative measurements of students' demonstration of program learning outcomes, and supports data-driven decisions to improve VU's services and processes for all students.

Course Syllabus

The course syllabus used in each Vincennes University (VU) dual credit course must be the same or equivalent to the corresponding course taught on the VU campus, including learning outcomes, course objectives, grading standards, evaluation, and assessment. Syllabi must be provided to, and adhered by, all students participating in the dual credit class.

- Fall, 1st & 2nd Trimester, and Yearlong Syllabi Due: May 1
- Spring and 3rd Trimester Syllabi Due: November 1

Grading Standards

While our partner schools may utilize their own grading policies for the high school grade, in accordance with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), VU dual credit courses must follow the grading criteria and standards, as established by the respective department or program, for the corresponding course on the VU campus. Given that the grading policies for the high school and dual credit courses may differ, and citing the standards listed above, we encourage our partner schools to adopt the VU grading policies for the high school grade in order to maintain consistency and transparency of transcripts between the high school and Vincennes University courses.

Textbook/Course Materials

Each VU academic department determines whether a dual credit course must be taught using the same textbook and course materials as used on campus or whether another college-level textbook may be utilized. Determination and approval varies by course and department. This topic will generally be discussed during the curriculum orientation. Please contact the faculty liaison with questions regarding course materials.

Advanced Placement (AP)

Providing that the VU curriculum and standards are followed and all VU dual credit policies and procedures are adhered to, the approved dual credit instructor may choose to incorporate Advanced Placement (AP) curriculum as an addendum to the VU course outline and syllabus.

Students who wish to earn dual credit must register for the dual credit course at the beginning of the corresponding term. Students may not enroll for dual credit past the registration deadline, nor opt for dual credit should they not pass the AP exam with an acceptable score.

Credit from Two Institutions for the Same Class

Approved VU dual credit instructors may NOT offer dual credit for another institution to students within the same class being taught for Vincennes University credit. The same/comparable course may be offered through another institution provided the courses are offered independently from one another, at different class times, and do not have the same students enrolled in both courses.

Project EXCEL Instructor Deadlines

DUE AUGUST 15

- ☐ **PROJECT EXCEL ONLINE APPLICATION**
All new & returning dual credit students must successfully complete and submit the online application.

DUE SEPTEMBER 1

- ☐ **FALL REGISTRATION DEADLINE**
All Fall Semester, 1st & 2nd Trimester, and Yearlong student registration forms are due in the Project EXCEL (PE) office.

DUE NOVEMBER 1

- ☐ **COURSE INFORMATION FORMS (CIF)**
Spring & 3rd Trimester CIFs are due in the PE office.
- ☐ **STUDENT DROP DEADLINE**
Last day for students to drop Fall Semester courses.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional Development will take place during the month of November. Please watch email for additional information each year.

DUE NOVEMBER 8

*Approx. Date **

- ☐ **SIGNED CLASS ROSTERS**
Verified and signed Fall Semester & 1st Trimester class rosters need to be emailed to PE office.
**Please watch your email for specific due dates*

DUE DECEMBER 1

- ☐ **SYLLABI DEADLINE**
Spring & 3rd Trimester course syllabi are due to the PE office.

DUE JANUARY 15

- ☐ **PROJECT EXCEL ONLINE APPLICATION ****
All new & returning dual credit students must successfully complete and submit the online application.
***This step is not required if the student completed the application in the Fall of the current academic year*

DUE FEBRUARY 1

- ☐ **SPRING REGISTRATION DEADLINE**
All Spring Semester & 3rd Trimester student registration forms are due in the PE office.
- ☐ **STUDENT DROP DEADLINE**
Last day for students to drop Yearlong courses.

DUE APRIL 1

- ☐ **STUDENT DROP DEADLINE**
Last day for students to drop Spring Semester courses.

DUE APRIL 8

*Approx. Date **

- ☐ **SIGNED CLASS ROSTERS**
Verified and signed Spring Semester & 3rd Trimester class rosters need to be emailed to PE office.
**Please watch your email for specific due dates*

DUE APRIL 30

*Approx. Date **

- ☐ **SIGNED PERFORMANCE REVIEW (PR) & COURSE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP)**
Signed PR and CIP (if required) are due back in the PE office.
**Please watch your email for specific due dates*

DUE MAY 1

- ☐ **SYLLABI DEADLINE**
Fall Semester, 1st & 2nd Trimester, and Yearlong course syllabi are due to the PE office.

DUE MAY 31

- ☐ **COURSE INFORMATION FORMS (CIF)**
Fall Semester, 1st & 2nd Trimester, and Yearlong CIFs are due in the PE office.

RESOURCES

PROJECT EXCEL ONLINE APPLICATION
<https://www.viuu.edu/web/project-excel/projectexcel/online/application>

STUDENT DROP FORMS
<https://www.viuu.edu/web/project-excel/important-resources>

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
<https://www.viuu.edu/web/project-excel/dual-credit-professional-development>

PERFORMANCE REVIEW & COURSE IMPROVEMENT PLAN
<https://www.viuu.edu/web/project-excel/course-improvement-plans-performance-reviews>



Instructor Requirements - Prior to Each Course Term

Course Information Form (CIF)

Instructors are required to submit a Course Information Form (CIF) for each course and each term in which they are teaching a Project EXCEL course. This information is used to create the instructors' course(s) within VU's Banner system, and to create the student registration packets that are mailed to each instructor.

CIF Due Dates:

Fall, Yearlong, 1st and 2nd Trimester Course CIF's are due May 31

Spring and 3rd Trimester CIF's are due November 1

Course Syllabi

Instructors must submit the VU dual credit course syllabus, for each course and each term in which the course is taught, through Simple Syllabus for approval, by the designated due date. All dual credit syllabi must replicate or demonstrate equivalency for course content, objectives, assignments, grading standards, assessments, and outcomes, as established for the corresponding course on the VU campus.

Course Syllabi Due Dates:

Fall, Yearlong, 1st and 2nd Trimester Course Syllabi are due May 1

Spring and 3rd Trimester Course Syllabi are due December 1

Student - Tuition, Billing, and Textbook Fees

Tuition

There is a fee of \$25 per credit hour for each course, unless an applicable fee waiver applies to the student or the course. Fees for Project EXCEL courses are non-refundable.

Fee Waivers

F/R Lunch – Students eligible for the National Free and Reduced (F/R) Lunch Program will have the \$25 per credit hour tuition fee waived. In order to receive this benefit, a school representative must verify eligibility on the student's registration form. Documentation of eligibility shall be kept on file within the school corporation and made available, as requested by VU or the Project EXCEL office.

CTE – A tuition fee waiver is currently in effect for select career & technical courses. Please refer to the VU Career and Technology Course Fee Waiver list to view a list of eligible courses.

Electronic Billing

VU utilizes an electronic billing system for all students, allowing students, or their parents, to submit an online payment using a credit card or e-check. Electronic billing statements for Project EXCEL dual credit courses will be sent directly to the student's MyVU account. Students will be notified of account activity via the preferred email address listed when the student completed the Online Application.

Textbooks/Course Materials

Schools may choose to pass along associated costs either in full, or in part, to the student. School corporations may wish to inquire about reimbursement from the State, as stipulated on the Indiana Department of Education website.

Student – Eligibility and Accommodations

Eligibility

1. Students must have a junior or senior level standing in order to enroll in most Project EXCEL courses. Sophomores are permitted to enroll in first year world language courses, given the criteria listed below. Sophomores are also permitted to enroll in select Career and Technical courses – please refer to the [Project EXCEL Course Listing and Placement Chart](#) for a full listing or contact the Project EXCEL office for more information.
 - a. Sophomores, who have had two or more years of the corresponding high school world language course, will be permitted to enroll in FREN 101 or SPAN 101 for VU credit. This allows students who began taking world language courses in eighth grade to enroll in dual credit world language courses commensurate with their level of knowledge. Upon completion of the associated VU 101 course, with a grade of C or better, sophomore students will be permitted to enroll in FREN 103 or SPAN 103, respectively, the following semester.
2. Home schooled students, who meet the eligibility criteria, may enroll in Project EXCEL courses through their local high school, with permission of the high school principal/administrator.
3. Students may retake a Project EXCEL course one time. However, all students must pay the \$25 per credit hour fee if taking the course for a second time, regardless of waiver eligibility.
4. Students participating in a Project EXCEL course, who are choosing not to enroll in the course for college credit, shall still meet all applicable course prerequisite and placement requirements, and shall adhere to the same rigor, curriculum, and evaluation criteria of the Project EXCEL course.

Accommodations

Students wishing to request accommodations may receive support from VU's [Office of Diverse Abilities and Accommodations](#) by submitting a request and documentation prior to, or at the beginning of, the semester in which they are enrolling for dual credit courses. The Office of Diverse Abilities and Accommodations has the right to request additional, or updated, documentation. Project EXCEL students are enrolling in a college level course, therefore, documentation will be reviewed to determine if the guidelines for a college student, not a high school student, have been met. If approved, accommodations will be issued to the student. Additional information may be found [here](#).

Student - Placement Testing and Course Prerequisites

Students must meet all applicable placement scores, and/or course prerequisite requirements, established for enrollment in select Project EXCEL course(s). For courses that require placement scores, students must have qualifying PSAT, SAT, ACT, and/or Accuplacer scores on record with their high school prior to the beginning of the semester in which the course is offered. Please refer to the [Project EXCEL Course Listing and Placement Chart](#) for course specific prerequisites and any applicable placement scores. For more information regarding placement testing please see [click here](#), including information on becoming a VU approved Accuplacer proctor.

Students needing to take VU's Accuplacer exam must complete the Project EXCEL Online Application (see above) at least one week prior to testing in order to obtain a VU A#, which is required to take the test.

In accordance with Indiana HEA 1213, a student must achieve, at a minimum, the equivalent of a 2.0, on a 4.0 unweighted grading scale in order to enroll in subsequent dual credit course work in the same discipline.

Student - Registration Process

Project EXCEL Online Application

Instructors are responsible for ensuring that students who wish to participate in VU's Project EXCEL program complete the Project EXCEL Online Application prior to submitting the four-part student registration form, **each year**. Please click [here](#) for more information and to access the form

1. **New Students**: Completion of the Online Application will result in the generation of a student ID (A#) that will be emailed to the preferred email address entered on the application. Students must have a valid personal or school-issued email address that they can, and will, utilize as a requirement of program participation.
2. **Returning Students**: Completion of the Online Application is required each year to reactivate the student's account, verify the student's term of enrollment, and to ensure that all information on file is current and accurate. **Reminder - returning students will not receive another email with their MyVU information.**
3. Student social security numbers are required in accordance with IRS Code 1.6050S-1 for all U.S. Citizens and Permanent Residents in order for the University to provide students and their parents with a 1098T form regarding educational tax benefits they may be eligible to receive.
4. Students must provide a valid high school-issued or personal email address, that can and will be checked in a timely manner. Once the OEF has been received, an email will be sent to the student that contains their student ID (A#) and their MyVU login credentials. Students having trouble with their MyVU account should contact the Information Technology office (IT) at 812-888-4332.

Student Registration Deadlines

In addition to the Online Application, instructors are responsible for submitting the top two copies of the four-part Project EXCEL student registration forms by the designated deadlines. These four-part registration forms will be mailed to the instructor. The instructor should review each registration form for accuracy and completion, prior to submitting the forms to the Project EXCEL office.

Project EXCEL Registration Deadlines

Fall, Yearlong, and 1st & 2nd Trimester: September 1
Spring and 3rd Trimester: February 1

Instructor - Course Management

Class Rosters

After all Project EXCEL registration forms have been processed, instructors will be sent a VU class roster. Instructors must review the class rosters to verify accuracy and returned a signed class roster by the designated due date. The Project EXCEL office should be notified immediately to discuss any discrepancies.

Student Drop Deadlines

If a student wishes to drop a course, the instructor is responsible for submitting a fully completed and signed (student and parent signatures are also required) Student Drop Form to the Project EXCEL office.

Student Drop Deadlines:

November 1 for Fall and 1st Trimester Courses
February 1 for Yearlong and 2nd Trimester Courses
April 1 for Spring and 3rd Trimester Courses

Web Grading

All instructors are responsible for submitting final course grades (no mid-term grades will be posted), electronically, in VU's Banner system. Notices on the submission deadlines are emailed to instructors by the Project EXCEL office, each semester.

Absence from the Classroom

If an instructor has been, or will be, absent for 10 or more consecutive days, the instructor, counselor, or school administrator must notify Project EXCEL immediately to discuss the status of the instructor's dual credit course(s).

Instructor - Professional Development

All dual credit instructors, in accordance with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and the National Alliance for Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) accreditation guidelines, must participate in annual VU discipline-specific professional development (PD).

HLC 3.C.4. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.

NACEP Faculty Standard 3 (F3) Concurrent enrollment instructors participate in college/university provided annual discipline-specific professional development and ongoing collegial interaction to further enhance instructors' pedagogy and breadth of knowledge in the discipline.

Attendance Policy

Instructors are required to attend/participate in VU professional development sessions, annually. This includes instructors who are not teaching dual credit courses during the academic year. Failure to attend the required professional development session for two or more consecutive years, without an excused absence prior to the session date, may result in a suspension of teaching privileges for the following academic year.

Absences

Instructors who are unable to participate must send a rationale to the Project EXCEL office for approval prior to the session date. Lack of or late rationales will result in an unexcused absence. Instructors who are unable to participate in a full session, due to extenuating circumstances, must submit an approval request for late arrival or early departure to the Project EXCEL office prior to the event date.

Student - Rating of Instruction

SurveyDIG

Students are expected to participate in, and provide anonymous feedback to the dual credit instructors through, the SurveyDIG end of course evaluation system. Approximately 2-3 weeks prior to the end of the course term, a survey link will be emailed to the students via their university preferred email address.

VU would like for instructors to take 10-15 minutes of class time for students to complete the survey. SurveyDIG is mobile-friendly. If necessary, please ask students to complete the survey outside of class time.

Instructor - Faculty Performance Reviews

In accordance with HLC accreditation criteria, Vincennes University is required to implement annual faculty performance reviews, regardless of location or modality.

HLC 3.C.4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.

Adjunct Faculty Performance Review

An annual Adjunct Faculty Performance Review (PR) is completed for all active VU adjunct faculty, including Project EXCEL instructors. This review evaluates nine areas of instructional responsibilities, such as timely submission of course syllabi, student registration forms, final grades, etc.

Course Improvement Plan

An initial Course Improvement Plan (CIP) must be completed by all new instructors, following their first term of instruction. Thereafter, CIP's are only required for instructors whose aggregate SurveyDIG data fall below the established threshold.

Course Assessment

In keeping with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) accreditation criteria, Vincennes University embraces assessment as a fundamental tool for continuous quality improvement. The institution's assessment of academic and co-curricular programs is evidence-based, using quantitative and qualitative measurements of students' demonstration of program learning outcomes, and supports data-driven decisions to improve VU's services and processes for all students.

HLC 4.B. The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

HLC 4.B.4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

NACEP Assessment Standard 1 (A1) The college/university ensures concurrent enrollment students' proficiency of learning outcomes is measured using comparable grading standards and assessment methods to on campus sections.

VU's assessment paradigm encourages collaboration among the faculty and staff and is guided by the program mission statements and focused learning outcomes reflecting the structure and content of the curriculum. The assessment process values faculty and staff autonomy and creativity while providing the institution with valuable data to drive improvement efforts.

For additional information regarding VU's assessment process, please contact Carmen Ridgway, Dual Credit Quality Assurance Coordinator, at cridgway@vinu.edu or Chad Bebee, Director of Assessment, at cbebee@vinu.edu.

Senior Students – Credit Transfer

Transcript Requests

Students must request official college transcripts, from every college in which they earned dual credit, be sent to their college of choice. **Colleges do not evaluate transferability of dual credit courses based upon a student's high school transcript.**

Official transcripts are marked with the official seal of the University and are mailed or emailed directly to official representatives of other universities, prospective employers, certification agencies, etc. **Transcripts will not be released until all University financial obligations have been met.**

Online Transcript Request - Students should visit the [VU Registrar webpage](#) to request an electronic transcript for a fee of \$5.00. Official transcripts can be delivered electronically in as little as 15 minutes from when the order is placed.

Unofficial Transcripts - Students may access their unofficial transcript via their [MyVU](#) portal. We recommend that students take copies of all unofficial transcripts to any academic advising appointments as first time college freshmen.

Additional Resources

Detailed information and processes can be found in the [Project EXCEL Policies and Procedures](#) and the [Instructor Handbook](#). For additional Project EXCEL resources or information, please contact the Project EXCEL office at projectexcel@vinu.edu or (812) 888-4337, or visit the [Project EXCEL website](#).