STALLED AT THE HURDLES

HCC’s Running Start Program
Fourth Year Evaluation

FALL 2005

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Running Start Program Background

During the summer of 2000, Honolulu Community College linked with Honolulu School District high schools to launch a legislatively mandated Running Start program (inspired by a similar program in Washington) in Hawaii.

Three previous studies - Out of the Blocks, The Second Lap, and Getting in Stride - reported on each of the first three years of the Running Start program at HCC.

The goals of the Running Start Program include:

- Accelerate student educational progress
- Ease the transition from high school to college
- Reduce taxpayer and family educational expenses
  (State of Washington - 2004 - Taxpayer savings: $36.4 million; Family savings: $23.1 million)
- Enrich/expand educational options for talented high school students
- Improve articulation - linking Hawaii’s high schools and colleges
- Provide an alternative educational environment for talented, but disenchanted, high school students
- Link high school and college educators to coordinate and improve preparatory education
- Prepare students for the independence and freedom they experience within the collegiate environment

Running Start students simultaneously earn high school and college credits while adjusting to college expectations/culture. If Washington’s experience is any indicator of the direction of the Hawaii program, increasing numbers of high school students will gradually shift to heavy college loads (numerous Washington RS students complete high school and Associate of Arts degrees simultaneously and, therefore, become full fledged college juniors after high school graduation).

CONTENTS OF THIS REPORT

This report includes findings from the Spring/Summer 2005 Running Start student survey, a survey of HCC RS faculty, discussions with high school counselors, RS student demographic and performance data, an evaluation of the HCC Running Start Orientation Session, discussions with HCC administrators, dual enrollment findings from the mainland, and comments/recommendations by the researchers - Professors David Cleveland (Sociology) and Jean Maslowski (Counseling).

SURVEY DESIGN AND RESULTS

Spring and Summer 2005 RS students were invited (personalized letters from the researchers) to complete an on-line (hard copy was available) questionnaire.
Respondent Demographics

- Response rate = 54% (65 of 141 students)
- Gender = 74% Female; 26% Male
- Median age = 15.8
- Age Distribution =
  - 5% age 15
  - 50% age 16
  - 39% age 17
  - 6% age 18
- Ethnic Identification =
  (Primary)
  - 53% Chinese
  - 21% Japanese
  - 4% Filipino
  - 0% Hawn./Part Hawn.
  - 4% Caucasian
  - 2% Other Pacific Islander
  - 16% Other

FEEDER HIGH SCHOOLS - McKinley REMAINS PRIMARY FEEDER

While qualified students from any public high school are eligible to enroll in Running Start, HCC’s Spring and Summer Programs drew students from only a handful of high schools. 54% (37) of respondents came from a single high school - McKinley. This suggests that the publicity effort for RS remains largely within the Honolulu School District and is far more effective at McKinley (coordinated by MHS Counselor - Cynthia Kunimura) than at other Honolulu public schools. Only three respondents attended Farrington High School (closest high school to HCC).

If McKinley’s recruitment efforts can be duplicated at nearby Farrington and Moanalua High Schools and then extended to other Hawaii public and private high schools, RS enrollments at the college and throughout the UH System will skyrocket.

Chart/Table # 1

![Chart/Table # 1](image)

Last summer’s Getting In Stride report noted the low participation rate by students from neighboring high schools with high minority student populations. The report recommended that recruitment efforts at these schools (to boost minority RS enrollment) be strengthened.
While a few more students from these high schools are now enrolled in the RS program, participation by students from these high schools continues to lag.

**MOST (76%) RS STUDENTS PLAN GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL DEGREES**

RS students aim high. All respondents plan to earn college degrees. Over three-fourths of respondents plan to earn graduate or professional degrees.

**Chart/Table # 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degrees</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate's</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DIVERSE COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY PLANS**

RS student academic goals demonstrate the degree to which they differ from traditional community college students. They also consider a far wider range of transfer options than do other HCC Associate of Arts students. A 1993 study of HCC Associate of Arts students (*Reaching for the Ring*) reported that 82% planned to transfer and most of those (82%) planned to transfer to UH-Manoa.

While most of 2005 RS respondents include UH-Manoa as a possible college choice after high school, dozens of other colleges/universities are being considered:


While most of 2005 RS respondents include UH-Manoa as a possible college choice after high school, dozens of other colleges/universities are being considered:

These students begin their college education at Honolulu Community College; however, **only three respondents are considering HCC after high school graduation.**

Almost all RS students will enroll at four year institutions. They use the RS experience to hone college academic and social skills, launch college careers, gain confidence, and earn credits that accelerate the completion of baccalaureate and advanced degrees.
RS STUDENTS CONTEMPLATE DIVERSE CAREERS

Eventual career/professions contemplated by RS students include:

Medicine, nursing, pharmacy, computer science, physical therapy, engineering, music, pediatrician, family medicine, optometry, business, psychology, education, travel industry management interior/fashion design, law, philosophy, accounting, interior design, dentistry, journalism, art design, civil engineering, physical therapy, dentistry, broadcast journalism, film/television production, early childhood education, pediatrics, chiropractic, cosmetology.

MAJORITY: 1ST GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS

A major mission of community colleges is to broaden access to higher education by offering students an opportunity to begin college at a low cost, close to home, student-centered institution that prioritizes teaching and individual student attention.

The Running Start Program provides an early opportunity for capable high school students to discover that they can succeed in college. These successful experiences translate to a higher “college going rate” for students who may otherwise not attend college.

Only 24% of the fathers of respondents have baccalaureate or higher degrees (three possess graduate degrees); only 26% of the mothers of respondents have baccalaureate or higher degrees (nine possess graduate degrees).

53% of their fathers and 55% of RS mothers never attended any college.

The fact that less than a third of their parents possess any type of college degree suggests that the RS Program helps HCC fulfill its basic mission: broadening higher educational access.

While these RS students have fairly clear college and career goals, since many come from non-college educated families, extra college counseling/guiding assistance may be required to maximize their transfer options. Parents who have not attended college are far less likely to understand college application, admission, financial aid, and matriculation processes.

MOST ARE SOLID HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMERS - Mean HS GPA = 3.42

RS students report high school GPA’s that range from 2.0 to 4.12 with a mean of 3.42.

Many mainland dual enrollment/dual credit programs limit admission to high performing high school students. When the Hawaii RS pilot program was designed (collaborative effort between UH-HCC and the Department of Education), planners decided to open the Hawaii RS program to any student who qualified for college classes (placement test scores) and who was deemed capable by the sending high school. This liberalized eligibility policy was adopted to permit the entry of students who may be quite talented and prepared for college, but, who for whatever reason (boredom, alienation, dislike of the high school environment, lack of motivation) don’t possess high grade point averages.

To date, this liberalized open admissions policy seems to be working effectively as almost all Running Start students fare well in their HCC courses - regardless of their high school grade point averages. This is likely the result of careful screening and monitoring of RS students. High school and HCC counselors intervene when a RS student encounters difficulty in a class.
41% OF RESPONDENTS HAVE TAKEN AP CLASSES

Nearly half (41%) of the respondents report having previous AP experience. Students with AP experience feel somewhat better prepared for college than students without such AP experience.

15 YEAR OLDS MATCH OLDER PEERS

Three (5%) respondents are fifteen years old. Presumably, these younger students are carefully screened on the basis of academic preparation and maturity before being allowed to enter the RS Program. In any case, their perceptions about their preparation for college coursework and their performance in their classes match (or exceed) those of their older RS peers.

OVER HALF (55%) ARE SUPPORTED BY Gear Up FUNDING

A major difference between the Hawaii and Washington Running Start Programs is Washington public schools pay the college tuition expenses for their RS students. Hawaii Act #236 (Year 2000) mandated the development of the Running Start Program in Hawaii; however, the mandate was unfunded and specifies that RS students will pay their own tuition/fees.

This significant difference caused many in Hawaii to be concerned that our Running Start program would draw only relatively affluent students who were already planning college careers and who could easily afford UH Community College fees. High school students from less affluent backgrounds would be far less likely to participate in the RS Program - lowering the probability that they would earn college degrees.

The serendipitous, nearly simultaneous launch of Hawaii’s Gear Up Program ($10 million Federal grant to support a federal program whose mission is to significantly increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education) that pays the tuition and book expenses for RS students who are designated as financially needy as a result of their free or subsidized lunch status at their high schools has assured students from less advantaged backgrounds entrance into our Running Start Program. The Gear Up grant has recently been renewed; however, it remains a temporary federally funded grant program, therefore, the future enrollment of economically disadvantaged students has a somewhat cloudy future. (Gear Up website: http://gearup.hawaii.edu/about.htm)

55% of respondents had their tuition, fees, and textbooks paid for by Gear Up.
While the RS Program is well reviewed by virtually all respondents (97% rate it as Excellent or Good), Gear Up students are even more enthusiastic about the RS Program than are students from more affluent backgrounds - 78% of Gear Up students gave the RS Program an EXCELLENT rating as compared to 69% of students whose parents paid their tuition.

Gear Up funding facilitated early college enrollment for over half of these RS students. The fact that most of RS participants are first generation college students suggests that Gear Up funding successfully targets students who need an additional financial/counseling boost to enter college programs. Further evidence that Gear Up reaches their targeted group is revealed with cross tabulation analysis that shows that 48% of Non-Gear Up fathers have baccalaureate or higher college degrees compared to only 12% of fathers (completing baccalaureate or higher) of Gear Up students.

Fewer than a third (30%) of Gear Up supported students report that they definitely or probably would have enrolled in RS Program if Gear Up funding had not been available. Obviously, without Gear Up funding, many of the neediest RS students would not be in the program.

HIGH SUCCESS RATE - RS STUDENTS EXPECT TO PASS THEIR CLASSES

56 of 60 respondents (93%) expected to pass all of their HCC classes.

HIGH SCHOOL EXTRACURRICULAR INVOLVEMENT MAINTAINED

A frequently heard concern from high school educators and families is that enrollment in RS may decrease involvement in high school extracurricular activities.

RS student responses should dispel such concerns: 95% of respondents plan to maintain or increase their participation in high school extracurricular activities. More students actually plan to increase their participation in high school activities (23%) than decrease participation in high school activities (5%).

CHART/TABLE # 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increase</th>
<th>Decrease</th>
<th>Stay the same</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
HCC CLASSES AND FACULTY LAUDED

*RS* students give very high marks to their HCC classes (96% *Excellent* or *Good*) and the individual attention and support they receive from HCC faculty. (95% *Excellent* or *Good*)

**CHART/TABLE # 5**

As seen in the bar graph below, *RS* students report that they were generally well prepared for the their *RS* experiences. They understood the necessity to be individually responsible, understood college coursework expectations, and felt comfortable with the behavioral expectations of the college environment. They feel less prepared for *Critical Thinking/Theoretical Application & Mathematical Reasoning* and least prepared for *Classroom Discussions*.

**CHART/TABLE # 6**

Perception of Preparedness - Rank ordered by Mean Value

(1.0 = *Extremely Well Prepared* ..... 5.0 = *Poorly Prepared*)

(Interpretation: the lower the mean value, the better the student preparation in the area)
RESPONDENTS FEEL WELL ACCEPTED

RS students feel their college enrollment is well accepted by their high schools, friends, family, and faculty. They feel somewhat less accepted by “regular” HCC students; however, even here none of them felt poorly accepted and 85% report that they are well or extremely well accepted.

CHART/TABLE # 7
(1.0 = Extremely Well Accepted … 5.0 = Poorly Accepted)

Figure 10: Acceptance of RS Students by HCC Non-RS Students - All Respondents (N = 66)

RAVE REVIEWS FROM PARTICIPANTS

73% of respondents rated the OVERALL RS experience as EXCELLENT and 24% rated it as GOOD. No respondent rated the experience as POOR and only two respondents (3%) rated RS as FAIR.

While all aspects of the RS Program received favorable reviews, RS students gave the highest marks to the overall quality of RS Program, the quality of the assistance provided by the high school and college counselors, the individual attention and support provided by the college instructor(s).

Lowest marks (still fine marks - over 90% Excellent or Good) were given to the application and registration processes.

CHART/TABLE # 8 Rating Aspect of RS (1.0 = Excellent 5.0 = Poor)
RESPONDENTS RECOMMEND RS TO CLASSMATES

74% of RS students will Definitely Recommend RS to their high school classmates; 20% will Probably Recommend RS; and only 5% will Maybe Recommend - one respondent will Probably Not Recommend RS.

CHART/TABLE # 9

RS STUDENTS PREFER COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT

62% of respondents strongly preferred or preferred the collegiate environment; 27% had no preference; and only 11% of respondents strongly preferred or preferred the high school environment.

CHART/TABLE # 10
RUNNING START STUDENT COMMENTS

Respondents were given an opportunity to add comments about what they liked best and least about the program; and anything else they wanted to say about the program.

Comments are often the richest source of insights of an evaluative process.

WHAT THEY LIKE BEST

As can be seen in the selected responses below, students liked getting dual credit, the preparation for the transition to college, their classes, the freedom of the college environment, their instructors, the individual assistance they received, the financial support provided by Gear Up, the overall college environment, and the confidence they developed by succeeding in college courses.

I like the fact that you are in a class with actual college students. ...

The support and teachings the professor gives and the Gear Up funding. ...

The ability to partake in college-level classes and earn college credits while still in high school.

Taking serious courses where all of the time we have is spent learning. No pointless assignments. Mature, responsible, and respectful classmates. Better facilities. Greater variety of courses. Freedom. ...

I enjoy working with people older than me. ...

I liked the way college was more laid back, and that you were responsible for your own actions. It makes you a more responsible person. ...

I think you have a better feel in what your getting to (college), when you just step out of high school. Now, I would know what is going on better than people who never attended running start. ...

I appreciate that Running Start students are able to earn high school and college credits at the same time. Also, I enjoy being in an environment where students are serious about their education and work hard in their classes. ...

Running Start is a great program for high school student to participate in. It not the same as high school, in college you have more freedom then high school. You have more life experience that college then high school. In college it is about choices you make. Either you do it or not. ...

Being more independent. ...

How the program is run and how it was easy to register and how counselors and professors are able to help and easily explain things. ...

The atmosphere is very relaxed, the teacher is well prepared and knows exactly what he’s teaching. The duration of each class is just about right, lectures are not too long and not too short.
The orientation for running start was a lot of help, everyone was friendly. Running start is a really helpful program that gives high school students a chance to experience college.

I think the GEAR UP scholarship was the best part, because without it, I don’t think I would’ve bothered to take Psychology at a school so far away from my regular school district. ...

I like the different learning environment. It requires student to have a greater sense of responsibility and time management than high school does. ...

The class was fantastic. In high school we pretty much just read the textbook - my HCC Sociology prof’s lectures were so insightful that I have begun to understand the world around me. I was nervous about going to college and not so sure that I wanted to go right after graduation, but now I have completed my application to Manoa and am looking forward to my classes there. It's a great experience in learning about the college environment and an alternate way to earn advanced credits because the public high school summer program is too weak.

As a first timer taking Running Start, I am very glad that the Gear Up Fund was provided, or else I most likely wouldn't have tried this out. Its such a great advantage to get ahead, and to also learn new things at another perspective, Running Start teaches you how to prepare for college and life after high school.

The animated professors made classes fun and interesting. The pacing of the classes were good. They weren't too fast, nor were they too slow either. They were just right- short and sweet. ...

I really liked it that we were able to work very independently. On the first day of class, it was very different from high school where we have to spend the first couple of days getting to know our classmates; when we were in the RS class, we started working right away. We are not bothered by the normal classroom rules that we are so used to. ...

Having an instructor being there for you on an individual time basis, is great for 1 on 1 learning. As well as the set schedules we have for our class. Having to know what we are going to learn before hand, helps me be prepared for that day's class. The HCC faculty are really organized and I could see that they really wanted me to learn and succeed. They treat me with respect as an adult and not a kid looking to get away with something. ...

The teachers are very supportive. They are always there to help you if you need it. The work load isn’t too bad, and it’s enough where you won’t stress out. ..

I truly found inspiration to try my best, a determination that I had never felt while taking regular high school courses. In Running Start I became the student that I’d always been too lazy to become, a diligent, hard working student. Now that I have succeeded in a college course and have found that I really enjoy being challenged and learning, I am confident that I will enroll in college after high school graduation and will excel. Mahalo nui loa for this opportunity!

WHAT THEY LIKE LEAST

The comments below reveal that many RS students are dissatisfied with the limited number of HCC courses that are eligible for RS credit. Several expressed some degree of dissatisfaction with the admissions/registration processes and want more access to counselors. Some didn’t like the lecture format of many college classrooms. Others felt the class sessions were too long. Some
commented negatively about the expense of tuition and books.

The thing about Running Start that I like the least is that there aren’t enough students who sign up for classes like Calculus 206, so we can’t take it. ...

I thought there were too little classes being offered. There should be a greater variety of classes available so we could experience more from the college life. I wanted to take Math 205 during the summer but it was not offered. ...

It was very hard to talk to a counselor because most of them went to a vacation. ...

It is very expensive and it is hard to afford. ...

I didn’t like being in the class for an hour and 25 minutes just listening and taking notes on the lecture and sometimes watching a video. I find that to be boring at times. ...

The lectures, because that’s all we do in class it drags because its the same routine everyday. ...

They or at least my class didn’t have breaks to rest or just to absorb the information. ... it goes by very fast ...

I liked the registration process least, how it did not specify that I needed a TB shot to be valid within a "school year" rather than a regular year. I also had a bit of a hard time getting in touch with the running start counselor. ...

Registration process. Tuition ..

Don’t get to interact with other students as much as in HS

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS/COMMENTS

Many respondents want broader RS class choices to meet their individual collegiate needs, more Running Start publicity, an improved registration process, more convenient class times, more financial assistance, better coordination between community colleges, and the elimination of limits on the number of RS classes students can take.

Reward the kids who wish to get ahead by lowering or dropping the price for high school Running Start students. ...

Try to get more schools and students involved in the program. ...

Have more convenient time for classes...like right after school from 3:30-5:00 ...

I would suggest that you have a wider range of classes offered in the program in the future. ...

GEAR-UP scholarship should continue to support underprivileged students ...

Actually enroll students in the college with no special statuses or restrictions. Don’t make
students reapply every semester and go and get new tuberculosis screenings, and don’t make them retake the Compass test. Allow the students to continue coursework even after they graduate without having to fill out forms to switch status. Allow movement between campuses. ...

Have a more convenient place for registration instead of always having to come to HCC. ...

Maybe, have sessions at the beginning of the day instead of the end. ...

more advertisements to get other students to join … none … Make the program known to everyone in high school, freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. Give everyone a chance to participate because then they will know what to expect in a future college surrounding. ...

It would help to have better advertisement for the program in order to allow more students to experience the benefits of the program. I probably would not have known about this program if it weren’t for a close friend of mine. ...

Provide a brief description of all the courses, so that students would have an easier time choosing a class …

make registration an easier process … The students who wish to attend RS should take a survey on the different classes they want to take. It would be great if the RS Program would try to make these classes available. ...

They should have some late classes so for some of the student could attend two classes for one summer. ...

I suggest offering the Running Start Program to Sophomore students. … more money to everyone who wants to join RS. …

One suggestion that I have is that, the Running Start program at all colleges (HCC and KCC) should have the same schedule or something. That way there is a convenient for those who live next to a community college and will have the same schedule. For me, I would have liked a schedule that would start early in the summer (like the schedule I have now), but at a location (like KCC) that is a convenient for me to get to. ...

Tell students specifically what the courses are about, what are expected from students, and what students can expect to learn. …

I think that students should have the option of taking more than one class at a time during Running Start. … I don’t really have suggestions on improving it. Even though I didn’t like that my class didn’t have breaks-I got used to it, sort of adapted to it. … Accept more walk in registration.

Make the elevator look less like its going to free fall at any given minute. …

THE BOTTOM LINE - RS STUDENT PERFORMANCE

The goal of an evaluation is to determine if the program meets its objectives. The RS program was implemented to accelerate student academic progress, ease the transition from high school to college, and, ultimately, save taxpayer dollars by streamlining the educational process.
While respondent comments and responses demonstrate RS Student satisfaction with the program, ultimately the success of the program lies in the performance of RS students in their college classes.

An analysis of the actual grades (not self reported, but gathered from HCC student records) of RS student performance for the Spring and Summer Semesters of 2002 demonstrates that RS students fare very well at HCC.

**SUMMER ‘05 RS EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE: 3.34 GPA - 32% A’s**

*Running Start* students completed 97% of their classes (enrolled: 523 credits; completed 508 credits) - a far higher completion rate than experienced by traditional first semester HCC liberal arts students.

Only three RS students received failing (“F”) grades. Overall (including the “F” grades), the grade point average for Summer 2003 RS students was 3.34 (“W” and “N” Grades not included in calculation.) 32% of the grades received by RS students were at the “A” level versus only 3% at the “D” or “F” level.

![Chart/Table #11](chart.png)

**Gear Up STUDENTS MATCH NON-GEAR UP STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

*Gear Up* is the federally funded grant program funded to boost college attendance rates for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

*Gear Up* pays the college tuition and textbook expenses for *Running Start* students who are eligible for the “free” or a “subsidized” lunch programs.

As one might expect, fewer *Gear Up* students come from college educated families. For example: only 18% of the fathers of *Gear Up* students hold Bachelor’s Degree (or higher) compared to 53% of Non-Gear Up students.

In last year’s evaluation of the program, *Gear Up* students trailed Non *Gear Up* students in academic performance and perceived preparedness for college; however, this summer’s *Gear Up* students fared as well in both areas.
GENDER NOT A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR

Cross tabulations of the data reveal that gender does not appear to be a significant factor affecting respondent performance or respondent review of the RS Program.

FACULTY VIEWS OF Running Start STUDENTS/PROGRAM

HCC’s RS Counselor (co-researcher) Jean Maslowski collected responses from HCC RS faculty to add their views to this RS Evaluation.

Sample comments from HCC faculty:

Student Preparedness

While most feel that RS students are well prepared, the comments below reveal that some students were insufficiently prepared and/or motivated:

The four RS students in this class were among the best in the class. Consistently prepared for class sessions and exams. I was particularly impressed with their level of writing skills as evident in the essay portion of all three exams.

Excellent - those who did come to class did so consistently worked hard, finished homework at a higher rate than the class as a whole and received higher grades. One student, though, disappeared in the second week of class, reappeared around midterm time, then disappeared again...

I had ______ for two semesters. I did not know she was a high school student. Her maturity and quality work on all assignments and tests indicate she is more than ready for college work. I would judge her to be in the highest 10% of the class. Her work was consistently excellent.

Average.

Probably below average.

He was very well prepared academically.

He seemed to be somewhat better prepared than some of my “regular” students. At first, he was a little shy, but after a few weeks, he took off!

Very good to excellent!...

One student was not prepared for the rigors of academic work....

Were equally adept and competitive as HCC students.

Not prepared, poor attendance, did not take any of the three exams, and completed few assignments.
Did RS Students Seek Additional Help Outside of Class? Some Do/Some Don’t

While many RS students did seek out of class assistance from their faculty, about half of responding faculty report that their RS students did not see them outside of class. This suggests that the RS Orientation Session may place greater emphasis on the advisability of seeing instructors outside of class for assistance.

Yes, I received many emails from them, and they also asked questions during class breaks to be sure they understood the assignments.

(They) both took good advantage of the office hours that were available for them...I was able to meet with both of them individually on several occasions outside of class.

Not really.... Yes... Never asked a single question in or out of class, nor ever emailed questions.

Yes, from time to time he would come and ask questions about his essays to try and clean up.

No, however, she did attend every recitation section held weekly.... No, she really didn’t need it.

To What Degree Did RS Students Participate in Class Discussions?

While a few faculty reported that their RS students participated less in classroom discussions that non-RS students, most faculty reported that RS students participated as much or more than non-RS students.

About the same degree as others.

Yes, ____ was very involved in group discussions and collaborative learning and assisting peers.

All RS students were reticent at first, but eventually most were able to overcome their reluctance and participate fully.

In-class participation was probably to a lesser degree than average students - however, she was more verbal in lab. Greater degree.... Same level of participation as my other students.

Additional Faculty Comments:

Many faculty commented on the excellent performance of their RS students; a few expressed some degree of disappointment with the RS students; and a few made suggestions about how the program could be improved.

I wish more of my students were as good at the RS students! In addition to their general intelligence, I very much appreciated the fact that they took the class seriously, keeping up with the assigned reading and other work and they clearly know how to study for exams.

I enjoyed both students very much. They were a blessing in the class because they were able to interact with other students and build “ohana” (family relationships). Both students learned core value and cultural information from Hawaiian language.

______ is by far the best student I have encountered in this program. She should be encouraged to enroll in the most challenging classes.
The other student came to class 12 of 31 days, missed a test, turned in 50% of assignment and earned a D for the course, although she was capable of doing much better.

One of the best students I have had in my years teaching at HCC; was focused, prepared, punctual, bright, pleasant/courteous, and will be bi-lingual if she wants.

I’ve had some “A” students who were in high school - ____________ was not one them.

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS - RS GROWTH STALLED

Since the release of A Nation At Risk (1983 study that documented the crisis facing our educational system), increasing attention has been paid to the critical linkages of the American educational system. The documented gap between the preparation level of students leaving our high schools and the expectations associated with performing in the college classroom and in careers has led to the dramatic expansion of remedial/developmental coursework at our colleges and universities. However, the consequences of being underprepared for jobs and higher education at high school graduation are not limited to slowed matriculation as a result of diversion to remedial/developmental classes. Underprepared students are far less likely to enroll in any form of higher education and even when they do, they are far less likely to complete college degrees/programs.

MAJOR FUNCTION: LINKING SECONDARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

A major function of operating dual enrollment/dual credit programs is the tightened linkage between our high schools and colleges. Administrators, faculty, and students develop effective communication channels that connect individuals, programs, and institutions resulting in the coordination of standards and curriculum. Other states are finding that these new relationships serve as a catalyst to launch additional innovative educational partnerships. These efforts, dovetailed with standards based secondary education, should play a significant role in improving the preparation of high school graduates.

SLOWER THAN ANTICIPATED PROGRAM GROWTH - DECLINE AT HCC

Running Start is a institutionalized component of Hawaii’s public education system. However, to date, the promise and potential of the program remain in an embryonic form. Interim UH President McClain and the new UH Strategic Plan address the need to integrate Pre-Kindergarten to graduate level education (Pre-K to 20) to ensure the future of this society. RS offers Hawaii an opportunity to transform part of the “seamless web” rhetoric into reality. As the State of Washington and, indeed, the nation now demonstrate, high school to college transitions are greatly enhanced through such dual enrollment/dual credit programs.

Instead of expected growth, HCC RS enrollments declined by 18% in the 2004-2005 academic year (from 251 to 209). In the UH System, RS enrollments gained 31% during the year If Hawaii’s Running Start program had matched Washington’s Running Start rate of growth (adjusting for population size differences), there would now be about 1000 RS students enrolled in the UH System - instead, there are now approximately 200 students enrolled at the seven UH Community Colleges. Currently, in the State of Washington, 9% of high school juniors and seniors are taking college courses through Running Start - if 9% of Hawaii’s public school junior and seniors were enrolled in Running Start, Hawaii would now have over 2,500 Running Start students.
Growth in Hawaii’s Running Start Program has been slower than anticipated. As seen in the table above, some campuses are actually experiencing declining rather than increasing enrollments.
WHY THE SLOWER THAN EXPECTED GROWTH IN ENROLLMENTS?

The researchers have limited insights about the RS environment at other UH campuses, as their experience is largely with the Running Start Program at Honolulu Community College and with their relationships with the Department of Education, the UH System, and Gear Up representatives; however, by this point there are some fairly obvious differences in the approach to Hawaii’s dual enrollment/dual credit program as compared to that in many other states.

At this point many Hawaii public schools seem to define the program as an academic extra rather than an integrated component of efforts to improve college enrollments and college success. Despite the several reports detailing the effectiveness of Hawaii’s RS program and the success of students in the program coupled with dozens of mainland reports, RS gets relatively little publicity at the high schools (the exception is McKinley High School where Counselor Cynthia Kunimura is an active promoter and recruiter).

Furthermore, the Department of Education’s insistence that RS courses be matched with existing DOE courses has resulted, until recently, in the identification of only a few dozen classes (many of which are foreign language classes) in which our RS students can enroll. The number of eligible classes has now expanded to about 60 - which may boost enrollments.

While the liberalized list of eligible courses is a very positive sign, the eligibility policy is still highly restrictive to compared to most mainland models where no exact course match is expected - for example, college social science courses are accepted as social studies high school units regardless of the existence of an approximately equivalent course at the high school. Perhaps the largest problem in this regard is the fact that, to date, not a single occupational/technical college course has gained approval for RS enrollment. This despite the fact that before the enabling legislature was enacted, it was specifically amended to include enrollment in occupational/technical programs.

SOME PROGRESS, BUT MUCH TO BE DONE

While some progress has been made on recommendations from the third study (*Getting In Stride*), much work remains:

- **Improve RS publicity efforts at the high schools and the community.**

  Some progress is being made on this front. Brochures and posters have been improved; radio, TV, and newspaper articles have publicized the program; high school visitations routinely involve discussions of the RS Program; and private schools have been informed of the program.

  HCC RS faculty, RS students, and regular HCC students who are graduates of Oahu high schools are being recruited for presentations to high school students and their families.

  However, it is clear from RS student responses that college and **media publicity efforts have little to do with their decisions to enroll in Running Start.** If *Running Start* is to truly take off in Hawaii, it will be as a result of efforts by high school counselors. The pie chart below shows that the high school counselor remains the major source of information about the program:
CHART/TABLE # 13

HOW STUDENTS LEARNED ABOUT RS (N=57)
Summer '05 RS Student Survey (N= 66)

- Improve DOE/UH schedule coordination to ensure that college classes are offered at times/dates that facilitate student enrollment.

High School RS counselors and conversations with RS students make it clear that the current expectation is for students to take HCC college classes before (early morning) or after (late afternoon, evening, or weekend) their high school courses.

HCC attempts to accommodate RS student schedules; however, the college wants, if at all possible, to avoid “special” sections of its courses as one of the key components of RS is to place RS participants in integrated classrooms so they can gain actual college classroom experience.

As the program matures, we expect increasing numbers of RS students to enroll for half, most, or even all of their class work at the college - while maintaining high school enrollment. (This has been the experience in the State of Washington where many RS students simultaneously receive high school diplomas and A.A. degrees and where the “average” RS student takes half of a full time college class load.

As RS students seek heavier college loads, high schools and community colleges will have to work together to ensure that the students can be released to attend “prime time” hour courses as many essential core courses are only offered at these hours.

While the various components of the UH System now operate on a uniform Fall/Spring/Summer semester system, until the 1980's UH campuses did not coordinate schedules (start, end, study period, and evaluation period dates). We now adhere to a universal calendar, ensuring that students can efficiently enroll at more than one UH campus. Our new computerized registration system has made it possible for UH students to enroll for classes at two or more community colleges.
without seeking special concurrent registration permission. And while some articulation problems remain within the UH System, the vast majority of classes now transfer fluidly between UH campuses and the UH System is developing a new articulation agreement that will absolutely assure the transfer of credit within the system.

For RS to fulfill its enrollment potential, some changes may be necessary in high school scheduling:

- **NEW UNIVERSAL PUBLIC SCHOOL CALENDAR**

  A factor affecting the expansion of Running Start has been the lack of a uniform State of Hawaii public school calendar. Schools and school districts maintained an array of calendars, making it difficult for the college to effectively coordinate programs with our feeder high schools.

  However, Legislation passed in 2004 called for the Board to adopt a single school calendar for public schools, starting with the 2006-2007 school year.

  The new, universal Hawaii public school calendar calls for a start date on July 27, 2006, a Fall recess in the first week of October, and a semester end date on December 20. The second semester begins on January 15, 2007, includes a recess from March 19 to March 30, and ends on June 8.

  While these dates are not perfectly aligned with the University of Hawaii calendar (UH classes start about three week later in the Fall and end about three weeks earlier in the Spring), public school students should be available for both semesters.

  A significant change for which UH campuses must make some adjustments is the shortened summer (since public school classes will begin on July 27) which should cause UH campuses to ensure that some Summer Session classes are scheduled with the public school Spring 2006 and Fall 2006 end/start dates in mind.

- **HIGH SCHOOL CLASS ROTATING DAYS/TIMES**

  Some high schools have a rotating schedule of classes, so that students start a class at one time on Mondays and then advance the start time on every other day of the school week.

  College classes are scheduled for day/time slots - meeting at the same hour on the days of the week when the class is offered. This mismatch between the rotating high school schedule and the fixed college class schedule means that students from these high schools are limited to late afternoon, evening, weekend, and/or summer classes.
Expand **Running Start Course Options**

At the pilot program’s launch, there was a desire to reduce program complexity by limiting the number of classes RS students could take - only a few courses with direct “matching” Hawaii public high school courses were included on the list of possible HCC classes for RS participants. Now that the program has demonstrated its efficacy, Hawaii should follow Washington’s example and permit RS students to take the entire range of degree-oriented college courses and match simply by distribution area (Math, History, Social Science, Humanities/Art, Computer Science, Foreign/Hawaiian Language, Technical, etc.).

For students who wish to complete a full year or two of college credit before graduating from high school, this is absolutely necessary. Furthermore, RS participants will ultimately attend a wide array of colleges/universities. Given the realities of different Core/General Education requirements, students need to select from an array of courses to ensure that their credits fulfill General Education Requirements at the college/university that they plan to attend.

Another compelling reason for broadening Running Start course selection is that our public educational system is particularly hard pressed by recent budget cutbacks. While recent windfall tax collections are improving public school funding, years of budget restrictions have resulted in fewer specialized courses that attract limited numbers of students (advanced courses in an array of disciplines and an array of performing arts classes). Shifting these sophisticated, specialized classes to community colleges (where they are part of the regular curriculum) is part of a national trend. (Robertson, Chapman, Gaskin, 2001).

While earning and accumulating college credits is an important positive function of Running Start (builds confidence and shortens the college career), an often overlooked benefit of dual enrollment/dual credit is the acclimatization effect of the experience. Many extremely well prepared (high GPA and high SAT scores) high school students experience culture shock when they first arrive at a college campus. Data from dual enrollment studies in other states (this research has yet to be conducted in Hawaii) demonstrate that not only do dual enrollment students tend to outperform non dual enrollment students at their colleges, they tend to have fewer adjustment problems and demonstrate higher persistence/retention rates. For example, longitudinal analysis of New York’s College Now Program reveals that these dual enrollment students are twice as likely to graduate from college on time and far less likely to require any remedial classes when they enter college. (Project Advance - Syracuse University: [http://supa.syr.edu/](http://supa.syr.edu/); Arizona - Puyear, Thorn, Mills, 2001; New York - Kleinman, 2001)
• **FURTHER DEVELOP RS ORIENTATION, WORKSHOPS AT HIGH SCHOOLS, AND CONDUCT AN ANNUAL RS UH/DOE MEETING**

All of the above programs are identified as critical to the success of Washington’s *RS* Program.

HCC Student Services organized and conducted a special orientation session for Summer 2005 *RS* students to acquaint them with the expectations of the program, introduce some of their faculty members, link them with their college counselor, and the resources of the college. Feedback from that orientation session led to its refinement.

A structured evaluation of the Summer ‘05 RS Orientation Session provided the following insights:

- Only 35% planned to enroll in RS in the Fall of ‘05
- 90% would recommend the Orientation
- 93% had all their questions answered in the Orientation
- The Campus Tour was deemed the most helpful
- All found the staff/facilitators to be helpful
- All found the overall event to be helpful
- Overall the Orientation received very high marks (About a 4.4 on a 5 point maximum scale)

Planning is underway to improve and streamline the admission and registration processes for *Running Start* students. Placement testing opportunities will also be expanded/extended. Health clearance instructions will be clearer and will be distributed in a more timely fashion; however, student comments suggest that the process needs to be further streamlined. The HCC schedule of classes is now distributed to high schools earlier. HCC counselors and faculty will be made for available for high school visitations. Potential *RS* students will be invited to the campus. High school counselors are regularly invited to the campus and their visits include a presentation on the *RS* Program.
EXPAND RS TO TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

Many capable high school students plan to enter technical/occupational programs (just a few HCC programs: Aviation Maintenance, Automotive Technology, Aviation, Administration of Justice, Refrigeration, Carpentry, Early Childhood, and Computer Electronics and Network Technician).

Running Start’s enabling legislation included vocational courses as part of the RS vision:

“Qualified course” means any vocational or academic course offered by the University of Hawaii system that also applies to the department of education’s graduation requirements or is otherwise permitted by department of education rule or policy. (Act 236)

While dual enrollment programs are certainly desirable for baccalaureate seeking students, they are probably even more beneficial for the education of technical/occupational students. The cost of running technical/occupational programs (equipment, supplies, faculty training, facilities) has skyrocketed in the past three decades. Community college technical/occupational programs possess the faculty and equipment to provide students the skills and knowledge they require to enter the job market. Few high school technical programs can adequately prepare graduates for the marketplace. The Running Start Program can well serve students, employers, and the community by opening occupational/technical programs to qualified high school juniors and seniors. (Rafn, 2002)

Some suggest that high school age students lack the intellectual and social maturity to engage in rigorous technical/occupational community college programs. However, a review of technical/occupational education policies around the rest of the developed world reveals that these programs are routinely completed in late adolescence. It should also be remembered that before the University of Hawaii launched its community college system, until it was renamed Honolulu Community College in 1966, the school was operated by McKinley High School as Honolulu Technical School (earlier named Honolulu Vocational School & Territorial Vocational School). So, before becoming a community college, the institution served as a magnet school for high school juniors and seniors (in some years admission was as early as age 14). When HCC became a community college, admission requirements were raised to: either a high school graduate or 18 years of age. This sudden shift of age eligibility has negatively impacted academic and workforce preparation.
HCC RS faculty, counselors, and administrators will meet to discuss this report and to then plot the future of RS on the campus.

Probable goals include:

- Tightening ties with existing RS feeder high schools.
- Developing ties with other public high schools.
- Opening “RS” (Early Admit) opportunities for private high school students.
- Working with the D.O.E. to expand the range of courses available to RS students.
- Exploring RS opportunities for occupational/technical programs.
- Developing more sophisticated brochures, posters, and publicity efforts for the RS program.
- Communicating more effectively with Parent/Teacher organizations.
- Expanding “RS” (Early Admit) opportunities for Home Schooled students.
- Expanding orientation and support services for RS students.
- Continuing/expanding the structured evaluation/assessment of the program.
- Launching a longitudinal research project that focuses on former RS students to determine the impact of their participation upon college preparation and performance.
- Expand recruitment efforts at HCC’s Gear Up partner high schools: McKinley, Farrington, and Kailua

The above goals will, however, be difficult to achieve without adequate funding for staffing and coordinating responsibilities.

The renewal of Gear Up Grant funding has averted the crisis that would have negatively impacted disadvantaged student enrollments; however, as the program grows, Hawaii will have to follow the lead of other dual enrollment programs and fund public school and UH positions to coordinate and support the program.

Questions? Comments?
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REFERENCES

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