

Early College Access at Maine's Public Universities

Students who participate in Early College in Maine have higher GPA's, are more likely to persist in college and graduate, and are less likely to need remediation. Leaders of Early College programs within the University of Maine System are committed to ensuring access to these benefits to underserved students. We can enact positive change in the State of Maine by enabling students to explore Early College and the opportunities that a college education can provide.

We have identified barriers to access including requirements such as transcripts and test scores and a complex registration process. This process is different than what is required of matriculated students, as students are applying to take Early College courses, not applying for admittance to a college program. In order to streamline the registration process and ensure access, for introductory level/general education courses with no course prerequisites:

- guidance counselor will provide student GPA
- guidance counselor will recommend/not recommend a student for the particular course they are applying to take
- Early College administrator at each campus will review all requests and applications and make the final decision to ensure that course selections are appropriate

For advanced courses (particularly in science, math, foreign languages), or courses with prerequisites, additional information may be requested and required of students and guidance counselors at the discretion of the EC coordinator. These may include:

- verification that course prerequisites have been met
- student transcript
- standardized test scores
- placement test
- discussions with appropriate stakeholders (this may include faculty, EC coordinator, guidance counselor, parent and student)

The Department of Education suggests students must maintain a minimum secondary school GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent of a "B" average unless the University grants a waiver. Juniors and seniors with a GPA below 3.0 or "B" average may be granted a waiver with the support of the guidance counselor and Early College Coordinator. The Department of Education does allow qualified freshmen and sophomores to access Early College funding through the Aspirations Program. Maine's Public Universities will follow DOE guidelines, but priority will be given to juniors and seniors.

As we broaden our outreach to schools and communities by expanding access, we are also committed to providing support mechanisms to ensure student success. This will include student monitoring, early intervention, and the system-wide pilot of a online, 24/7 tutoring program (NetTutor) for all Early College students.