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The Amesbury Early College Program: Preliminary First-Year Outcomes

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ABSTRACT

This year, an experimental group of 31 academically average high school sophomores were dual enrolled in both high school and college and will earn nine college credits by June. This paper presents a mid-year evaluation of student academic outcomes, which will be used for program improvement and future planning. The researcher is a member of the design team. Both quantitative (student transcripts and surveys) and qualitative (interviews and classroom documents) data were collected and analyzed. Specifically, the report demonstrates that the students match the middle two academic quartiles of the school, that the dual enrollment courses match or exceed college standards in almost every respect and that most of the students are thriving and committed to remaining with the project next year.

INTRODUCTION

In September 2009, 31 sophomores in Amesbury MA began their school year as fully enrolled students in both high school and college. During the regular school day, these students take three courses alongside their high school classmates and three courses offered by a local community college. This new dual enrollment program is a collaboration between Amesbury High School (AHS) and Northern Essex Community College (NECC), both located in the northeast corner of Massachusetts. What makes this program unique is that this dual enrollment program begins early in 10th grade, the students were deliberately recruited from the middle of the academic distribution, and the cost is only \$600/year/student. Students will earn nine credits by the end of their first year and anywhere from 30 to 45 credits by the end of high school, launching them well on their way through college. They call this the Early College (EC) program.

The author of this article works closely with the planning team for this experiment and this is a preliminary report on first-year academic outcomes, which will be used to help plan for school year 2010-2011 and the next cohort of students.

PROBLEM

In recent years, there has been growing concern that high school graduates are not ready for college, despite twenty-five years of standards-based reform (Conley, 2005; Kirst, 2008). Even though many more students are going off to college, too many fail the college placement exams and waste valuable time and money while taking non-credit-bearing remedial courses. Many drop out along the way. Others delay going to college, thus endangering their chances of success. The Amesbury EC program is attempting to “stack the deck” so that students will be familiar with the culture of the college, confident with college expectations, and will have accumulated so many credits that it is unlikely they will delay or defer attending college.

A second problem, which is readily apparent at AHS, is that the college readiness courses – both dual enrollment and Advanced Placement (AP) courses – are typically accessed by only

the top 25 percent of high school students. Dual enrollment courses are first-year college courses offered right on the high school campus. Such courses may be taught by college faculty, high school faculty in an adjunct role, or even online. In general, the same students who take Advanced Placement courses are the ones who take advantage of opportunities in enroll in dual enrollment courses. The Amesbury EC Program targets academically average students who have weak college aspirations.

A final problem is that the cost of college is prohibitive, even at state schools. Dual enrollment can be free in Massachusetts, but the state support is unreliable and insufficient for large numbers of students. Students at Amesbury will take nine to twelve credits per year for an annual cost of \$600. This is a significant savings bonus for families and an important motivator in the success of this program.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this research project is to assess the initial results of the Amesbury EC program to determine if these students are succeeding academically and can handle the challenges of college coursework at this age. We were also interested to learn how the students are faring emotionally and psychologically. To do this, I take a close look at the students themselves, the rigor of the academic courses, and the preliminary outcomes.

RATIONALE

This study will provide valuable information on the first-year outcomes of the EC program in Amesbury High School, which will be used by the planning team to inform and guide decisions for subsequent years. In addition, the information will inform replication projects now under consideration in several area high schools.

Furthermore, this study will help fill a gap in the literature, which has been noted by others:

The literature regarding the academic and postsecondary transition outcomes of participants in dual enrollment programs is unfortunately sparse....Much of the research that is available has been conducted by the programs themselves, and therefore has a tendency to be “cheerleading,” emphasizing positive outcomes rather than objectively reporting student impacts. (Bailey, Hughes, & Karp, 2002, p. 26)

The research methodology for this program evaluation is specifically designed to be rigorous, with ample triangulation of data and in-depth analysis, to avoid any tendency toward cheer-leading.

The EC program has already caught the attention of the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education as well as Jobs for the Future, which is leading a nationwide effort to boost the college graduation rate through dual enrollment programs. JFF writes that dual enrollment programs promise to be the “next best thing” for states wishing to increase the number of underrepresented students gaining a postsecondary credential” (Hoffman, 2005, p. 7).

CONTEXT

Amesbury High School is the sole high school in a suburban town of 15,000 people located in the Northeastern corner of Massachusetts. According to the state records, there are 674 high school students in grades 9 through 12 this year who are 7.4 percent minority, 21.2 percent low income, 14.4 percent with special needs and less than 1 percent with limited English proficiency (MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2010b). The high school offers AP courses in Statistics, Calculus, Music Theory, Literature, Spanish and US History in grades 11 and 12. In addition, they have offered numerous dual enrollment courses with Northern Essex Community College for fifteen years as well as a smaller dual enrollment program with Salem State College. Classes at AHS are offered at three levels: AP (the highest), followed by Honors and College Prep. The school follows a 4x4 block schedule with classes of 90 minutes each; most courses last one quarter (10 weeks) or one semester (20 weeks).

In June 2009, there were 145 graduates with 66.9 percent signaling intentions to attend a 4-year college, 20.7 percent declaring plans for a 2-year college or trade school and 11.8 percent heading for work or the military (MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2010a). (Unfortunately, data on matriculation and four-year persistence rates for AHS are not available). The school has made Adequately Yearly Progress under the NCLB guidelines in both Math and English for the past six years (MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2010b).

In 2009, the high school ranked number 125 on the state graduation exam (MCAS) out of 353 state high schools, on a par with other suburban schools such as Auburn, Danvers, Foxborough, Hanover, Marshfield, Melrose, Nantucket, Northampton, North Andover, Norton, and Pembroke (Schooldigger, 2010). By all outward appearances, this is a traditional, happy high school that is the pride of the town.

The Amesbury EC program began with a vision in 2007 to expand the partnership with Northern Essex Community College to increase the college readiness of all their students. Meeting monthly for over a year, a planning team (consisting of two top administrators from NECC, the district superintendent and director of curriculum, the high school principal and one guidance counselor, and this author) crafted the following goals:

- More AHS students will earn college credit before high school graduation
- More AHS students will take AP courses at the high school in their junior and senior years
- More AHS students will attend college after high school graduation
- Fewer AHS students will need remedial coursework when they attend college
- More AHS students will complete a college certificate or degree within four years of graduating from high school

Arguing that the top quartile students were already in line to meet these goals, the planning team decided to target the two middle academic quartiles of students and to begin when the students were in grade 10. They decided to offer college courses during the day right on the high school campus.

The final plan provides a learning community where classes that are team-taught; one high school teacher is in the classroom every day and two college faculty members alternate days. The college coursework is carefully integrated with the high school curriculum, so academic standards for both institutions are fully addressed. Students take college courses in American Literature, US History and College Success (a course that emphasizes planning, time management, how to be a self-directed learner and college-level reading and writing skills). The College Success course is fully integrated with the other two courses, so students actively apply the new skills as they learn them. In contrast to other courses at AHS, the integrated learning community courses run all year, every day, during the second block. Students engage the college curriculum, but they have twice as much time to succeed. They also have more support. Their academic transcript at the community college is indistinguishable from that of any college adult, which will facilitate any future transfer of credits.

In spring 2009, the EC program was pitched to the freshmen class and their parents. The entire class was tested for reading and writing (using the *Scholastic Reading Inventory* and a home-grown writing assessment). Students who were passing freshman English and could demonstrate reading proficiency were eligible for the program. Applicants for the EC program were given the standard NECC college placement exam in English (the *Accuplacer*; this testing is a state requirement for all entering college students). The purpose of this latter test, however, was not to screen out students but to gather data for comparison purposes later. Academically-average middle students were actively recruited. The guidance office focused on students who took College Prep classes, had passable marks, and could read well. In the end, 31 students were chosen to begin classes in September 2009. The composition of this final cohort is summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Demographic Comparison of EC students and Grade 10

	All 10 th Graders	Early College Students
Number	159	31
Gender	53% boys	61% boys
Race	90% White	87% White
Special Needs	11%	0%
English Language Learners	0%	0%
Low Income	19%	16%
Average Age at start of year	15 years, 8 months	15 years, 8 months

If we assume there are 40 students in each quartile of grade 10, then there are 80 students in this “middle group,” of which 31 have agreed to participate in this first year of the Amesbury Early College program.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to evaluate preliminary outcomes on the Amesbury EC program, we must first determine if the program succeeded in drafting academically average students:

1. Do the 31 students in the EC Program truly represent the academically-average students in the high school? The null hypothesis is that there is no significant difference between the 31 EC students and the middle two quartiles of the sophomore class.

A sub-question is posed to help us understand how these 31 students compare to middle students across the Commonwealth.

- a. How do these students compare to 10th graders across the Commonwealth?

Next, we want to verify that the program is actually delivering college content to these students at AHS:

2. To what degree are the college courses, taught in the EC program, equivalent to courses of the same title that are regularly taught to post-secondary students on the NECC campus?

The third question then addresses the preliminary evaluation of outcomes:

3. What are the academic outcomes for these 31 students, both in the college courses and in their regular high school courses? In light of the academic load, how are they faring emotionally and psychologically?

LITERATURE REVIEW

This review of the literature focuses on the challenge of college readiness and the troubling story of college completion rates in America. There is a discussion of students who are often over-looked in America: those who are in the middle academic quartiles of their schools. The review concludes with an introduction to dual enrollment.

College Readiness

Despite 25 years of standards-based reform, there is a crisis in college readiness. Rigorous standards and high-stakes exit exams (such as the MCAS in Massachusetts) do not guarantee that students are ready for college. College remediation rates for new students approach 40 percent in most four-year colleges and 60 percent in two-year community colleges (Conley, 2005, p. 37). The president of NECC pointed out that in 1996, the first year of the MCAS, 76 percent of applicants to NECC failed the college placement exam (*Accuplacer*) and had to take at least one remedial course; thirteen years later, the failure rate remained stuck at exactly 76 percent (Glenn, 2009). While increased enrollments might account for this frozen figure, this rate of remediation is unacceptable. More troubling is the estimation that 40 to 60 percent of students who fail the *Accuplacer* at NECC give up and do not enroll in the developmental courses; they simply give up on college.

Taking college courses while still in high school increases college readiness. Dual enrollment programs have been shown to lead to “statistically significantly higher postsecondary grade point averages one year after high school graduation” (Karp, Calcagno, Hughes, Jeong, & Bailey, 2007). A well-designed dual enrollment program will address all four facets of college readiness, which have been put forth by Conley (2005) as essential to college success:

- a. Cognitive strategies, such as “analysis, interpretation, precision and accuracy, problem solving, and reasoning” (Conley, 2008, p. 1).
- b. Content knowledge, with an emphasis on the “big ideas of each content area” as well as writing skills (Conley, 2008, p. 1).
- c. Academic behaviors, such as “time management, strategic study skills, and awareness of one’s true performance, persistence and the ability to utilize study groups (Conley, 2008, p. 1).
- d. Contextual skills and knowledge, which address the foreign application and acclimatization aspects of the college environment (Conley, 2008, p. 1).

Conley’s rubric is useful for analyzing the Amesbury EC program as we think about future design improvements.

College Completion

The low rate of college completion is a national problem. According to the latest information from National Center for Education Statistics, “Approximately 58 percent of first-time students seeking a bachelor's degree or its equivalent and attending a 4-year institution full time in 2000-01 completed a bachelor's degree or its equivalent at that institution within 6 years” (Fast Facts, 2010b). As a result, we are interested in factors that promise to raise the completion rate. We do know that if young people begin college full-time, instead of part-time, they are far more likely to complete college (Adelman, 2006; Karp, et al., 2007). Educators are now thinking about ways to “tip the balance” so that high school graduates enter college as full-time students and work through to completion. Preliminary evidence suggests that if students accumulate between 12 and 20 college credits while still in high school, they are far more likely to enter and complete college in four years (Adelman, 2006; Karp, et al., 2007). This argues for an aggressive dual enrollment program that includes more than a few courses late in high school.

Underserved Populations

Related to the problems outlined above is the fact that academically average students – those students in the middle two quartiles in high school – display less readiness for college and less persistence than those students in the top quartile.

The students targeted in the EC Program have been the particular passion of M. C. Swanson, who has worked on behalf of what she calls the “forgotten middle” for two decades (Delisio, 2009; Swanson, 2005). In the rush to provide services to students at the extremes (special education plus the gifted and talented), these students have been overlooked. This list of identifying characteristics is adapted from her discussions (Delisio, 2009; Swanson, 2005); the “forgotten middle” high school student:

- Comes to school regularly
- Seldom gets into trouble
- Never signs up for Honors classes
- Earns C-grades in classes that rigor
- Sits in the back of the classroom
- Rarely raises a hand or does anything to draw attention
- Parents are overworked with little time to advocate for children
- May move on to a community college and quit after a few courses
- May be first in the family to attend college

As Swanson says, “Their parents and teachers are content that they are making it through and no alarm bells are going off. They constitute a large part of the middle two quartiles of students. They’ll graduate, but won’t be prepared for college” (Swanson, 2005, p. 31). These were the target students for the Amesbury EC program. There is growing evidence that presenting

unmotivated students with high expectations and unprecedented opportunities can motivate them to work harder in their current studies (Bailey, et al., 2002; Killough, 2009)

Getting mediocre students to succeed with college coursework is challenging; finding success in grade ten is even more daunting. Can 10th graders to the work? One piece of evidence comes from the 4th Annual AP Report to the Nation, which reveals that over 80 percent of the AP World History exams taken in 2007 were completed by students in grade 10 or less (*The 4th annual AP report to the nation*, 2008). However, AP tests are usually taken by the best students in the best schools; for this reason, these results do not predict how the “forgotten middle” students will do with college work.

More recently, high schools across the country have enrolled sophomores in dual enrollment classes. The Collegiate High School (CHS), which is located on the campus of Northwest Florida State College in Niceville Florida, is a public charter school that offers up to two years of college credits to students while still in high school. While CHS is open to all students, they suggest that a transcript with a 3.0 grade point average (a B average) would be appropriate and there is an 18-page application package ("Collegiate High School at Northwest Florida State College," 2009). Another experimental program at Florida Atlantic University accepted 11 students in grades 10 through 12 out of 165 applicants for the opportunity to attend high school on the college campus with a college curriculum (Wright & Bogotch, 2006). These programs are selective. They are non-traditional high schools. In short, there are few examples of traditional, comprehensive high schools that have enrolled a large number of sophomores from the “forgotten middle” in college coursework.

Sizing Up the EC Program

Jobs for the Future, in Boston MA, has been a national leader on dual enrollment programs, describing and defining various options, while calling on states to forge seamless K-16 systems of education that will bring all students to college and career success (Hoffman, 2003, 2005, 2009a, 2009b; Hoffman & Robins, 2005; Hoffman & Vargas, 2005; Kazis, Vargas, & Hoffman, 2004; Killough, 2009; Webb, 2004). They offer the following standards for dual enrollment programs, which is presented here to provide some perspective on the Amesbury EC program (Hoffman & Robins, 2005, p. 7):

- a. Does the *mission* of the program serve a wide range of students? The Amesbury EC program targets the middle range of students, knowing that the top quartile already takes advantage of the AP and dual enrollment offerings at the high school. At this time, the EC program does not address the lowest quartile of students and does not include students with disabilities.

- b. Is the program *embedded in a K-16 and high school reform initiative*? Massachusetts has no developed initiative, so the Amesbury project is a local K-16 reform initiative between the school district and NECC.
- c. Is there *equitable access* for all qualified students? As explained above, the *Accuplacer* was used diagnostically, but not as a benchmark for entrance into the EC program. Students who might otherwise be rejected or steered into remedial classes were welcomed, a very unusual step for colleges to take. There was no cap on enrollments; in fact, the first-year enrollment goal was 45. As a result, there is equitable access for qualified students.
- d. Students earn *concurrent credit*. EC students gain credits on both high school and college transcripts – and the college credits are automatically transferable to other state colleges and universities under the new Mass Transfer program.
- e. The two institutions *share responsibility* for the program in that they both supply faculty members, contribute to the integrated curriculum, and share the overall risks and costs. Power is equally distributed between both institutions.
- f. The EC program does have a *data collection and assessment function*, of which this paper is one reflection.
- g. The Amesbury EC program does involve a cost to students and shared risk/cost to the partnering institutions. In this respect, the program does not meet the JFF criteria for “*no cost*” and “*no harm.*” However, given the lack of state monies and the daunting costs of post-secondary education, the EC program can be considered very affordable and very sustainable.

METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for this program evaluation was crafted over time by the planning team (see above). From the early stages, the planning team showed a concern for careful documentation and evaluation; in fact, the author was asked to join the team in January 2009 for this purpose. Meetings were recorded and transcribed; the notes were used in planning for subsequent meetings and to document specific details of the EC program. In this respect, this team-invented evaluation differs from the work of an outside evaluator. We did not always know what we wanted to look for, or what we should be looking for. As a result, our early questions were vague and tentative. Data-collection was sometimes postponed for this reason. Eventually, goals, questions, and methods solidified. The research questions came out organically from the team meetings; the data points were agreed upon slowly and tentatively; the data-instruments were invented, passed around, discussed and revised over time. In the end, we agreed that quantitative (demographic, achievement and survey) data would be needed in order to address

the parameters so commonly used under NCLB; we also agreed that qualitative data (interviews) would be desirable for finer detail and in-depth understanding.

This investigation stands in contrast to a one-time snapshot by an outside evaluation agency. Our evaluation is personalized, offers more thoughtful questions, captures data over a longer time frame from a wide range of sources, but also lacks the independence of an outside evaluation.

Logically, a program evaluation such as this one would occur at the end of the year, when classes are over and final marks are posted. The EC program, however, is a work-in-progress. Plans for next year's juniors and the second cohort of sophomores are still being formulated. A preliminary mid-year evaluation can serve as a "check-in" and offer important information to be used by the planning team to shape next year's EC program.

The research sample includes the 31 sophomores who are now enrolled in the first cohort of the EC program at Amesbury High School. , as well as their parents, teachers, guidance counselor and school administrators are included in this study.

In order to answer the first research question (*are these students truly average?*), we collected data from the 8th and 9th grade that would allow us to compare these 31 students to their counterparts. The following elements were collected and analyzed:

1. Grade point average (GPA) for school year 2008-2009 for all students in grade 9. The distribution of GPAs for the 31 EC students was compared to the GPA distribution for the middle two quartiles of the remaining sophomore class, using the *t*-test for independent means.
2. MCAS scores from school year 2007-2008 (grade 8) for all students currently in grade 10. Scaled scores on the English and Math tests were compared for the 31 EC students and the rest of their class, using the *t*-test for independent means to test the significance of any observed differences. We also compared student MCAS results to overall Commonwealth grade 8 English MCAS results in an effort to better "place" these students among their teenage counterparts across the state.
3. Transcripts for the 31 students. We wanted to determine how many were enrolled in College Prep and/or Honors-level classes. The hypothesis was that academically-average students would primarily take "College Prep" classes.
4. Finally, interviews were conducted with students, parents and teacher in order to better understand who these students are and to generate a picture of their academic history, habits, ambitions, and skills.

In order to answer the second research question (*are these real college courses?*), we interviewed teachers, students and the Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences at NECC. In order to verify that these were rigorous college courses, we wanted to look at the qualifications and training of the instructors, the course syllabi, course materials such as textbooks and readings, and the assignments and assessments. Throughout this search, we were asking “in what ways are these courses identical to those at NECC” and “in what are they different?” My experience, as well as that of the Dean, is that college personnel sometimes scoff at dual enrollment courses, reasoning that any course offered to high school students must be “watered down.” We wanted to test that assumption.

In order to answer the third research question (*how are the students faring academically?*), we decided to look not only at marks, but also to inquire about students’ struggles and strategies for success. The belief was that marks alone do not tell the full academic story. We wanted to know how the EC program is affecting their study habits, marks, goals and self-image. To answer this question, we created a survey with a combination of short answers and a Likert Scale (which offers provocative statements designed to draw out reactions from students who may be unclear about their stance; see Appendix for the full survey). The questions clustered around four topics: factors affecting their *enrollment* in the EC program, their *feelings* about being in the EC program, their assessment of the *academic* rigor, and their *aspirations* for the future. (The analysis of the *enrollment* questions will be handled in a separate study, which focuses on support mechanisms for the EC program). We decided to ask students to identify themselves on the survey, a decision which threatens the honesty of the answers, but also allows us to zero in on struggling students. The questions were analyzed statistically for mean response and variability (standard deviation). We also interviewed 16 students, about half the parents, all three teachers and one guidance counselor for personal insights and reflections on student outcomes.

RESULTS

When we look at the composition of the 31 EC students, we note that there is a larger percentage of boys in this group than in the overall 10th grade. One explanation for this is that girls are more likely to sign up for Honors classes, beginning in the freshmen year, leaving more under-achieving boys who are then eligible for this program. The EC cohort also contains a slightly larger percentage of non-White students than the overall class ($t_{(157)} = -1.05, p > .05$). The percentage of low income students is slightly smaller than the overall class ($t_{(157)} = -.007, p > .05$), which is understandable in light of the \$600 annual fee for the program (even though the school offered financial aid when needed). There are no special needs students in this first year, a deliberate (if controversial) decision made out of consideration for the difficulty of the curriculum and the lack of special needs certification among the teaching team.

First Research Question

In response to the first research question (are these students truly average?), we did a quartile analysis of the 9th grade GPA. There were 147 students in grade 9, with 72 students in the middle two quartiles. One of the EC students did not attend Amesbury High School in grade 9, so there was no GPA for this student. Of the remaining 30 EC students, two students were in the 1st quartile, 11 students in the 2nd quartile, 14 in the 3rd quartile, and three students in the top quartile (see Table 2).

Table 2: Distribution of Early College Students in Each Quartile for Grade 9 GPA

	Early College Students (n = 30)	Remaining Grade 10 Students (n = 47)
Quartile I	2	
Quartile II	11	25
Quartile III	14	22
Quartile IV	3	

Null Hypothesis: $H_0: \mu_{EC} = \mu_{(\text{middle quartiles})}$

A comparison of the 9th grade GPA for the 30 EC students with the remaining students in the second and third quartiles of the school ($n = 47$), using the t -test for independent samples, resulted in $t_{(75)} = .96, p > .05$. We can safely assume that the two cohorts are equivalent.

To further verify that the EC students are indeed the middle students, we examined scores from the grade 8 English and Math MCAS. Scores for these students ($n = 28$) fall into the following scoring levels:

Table 3: Distribution by Level on Grade 8 English & Math MCAS scores by Early College Program, School and State

	Grade 8 English MCAS			Grade 8 Math MCAS		
	EC students	School	State	EC students	School	State
Level I: Warning	0	5	5129	1	20	17608
Level II: Needs Improvement	1	16	13188	12	46	19809
Level III: Proficient	25	99	46158	13	53	22010
Level IV: Advanced	2	14	8792	2	20	13940

With the exception of one student, all the EC students scored in the proficient range (or better) on the grade 8 English MCAS. Table 3 demonstrates that the school was able to identify students in the middle group who were still good readers and writers. On the grade 8 Math MCAS, however, students were largely split between Levels II and III, representing students in the school and across the Commonwealth who scored in the Needs Improvement and Proficient range in Math.

Lots of AHS students scored at the Proficient or Advanced level on the English MCAS. We had to remind ourselves that the middle students do not represent Levels II and III on the MCAS; instead, they represent the middle two quartiles of the school. So, we did a quartile analysis of MCAS scaled scores to see how the EC students would compare with the remaining students in the second and third quartiles of the school ($n = 48$ and $n = 55$ respectively; $H_0: \mu_{EC} = \mu_{(\text{middle quartiles})}$), again using the t -test for independent samples. We considered the English MCAS to be a better predictor of readiness for the grade 10 EC program, since the curriculum focuses on the Humanities, rather than Science or Math. However, we also compared grade 8 Math MCAS distributions to further verify that these are indeed the “middle” students. Parametric t -test comparisons of the EC students and Quartile II and III students in grade 10 confirmed the null hypothesis; there is little significant difference between the two cohorts:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{English MCAS: } & t_{(74)} = -.26, p > .05 \\ \text{Math MCAS: } & t_{(81)} = -.97, p > .05 \end{aligned}$$

Finally, we examined the grade 9 transcripts of our Early College students in order to determine the frequency of Honors versus College Prep courses. Our assumption was that “middle” students would take primarily College Prep courses, with the Honors level courses being reserved for those students in Quartile IV (*see explanation of courses and weights above*). We only examined marks in English, Math, Science and History, since an Honors-level option may not be available in language and elective courses. The results are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4: Grade 9 Enrollment in College Prep vs. Honors classes for Early College Students

	English	Math	Science	History
TOTAL College Prep	28	26	30	21
TOTAL Honors	1	4	0	7
1 semester of each	1			

So, we can safely assume that the 30 Early College students are representative of the students in the middle two quartiles and are academically average students for this high school.

Information gleaned from interviews with teachers and parents reinforce the picture of these students as very normal teenagers, under-achievers rather than super-dedicated, exam-school-quality students. As freshmen, the average final mark in English was 78 (a C+) and 81 (B-) in Math – and most of these students were taking the lower level College Prep classes. Their teachers characterize them as “boisterous” with a 15-minute attention span. The students tend to talk off topic when working in small groups. They struggle to complete the homework assignments. One delightful girl, once known as the “Queen of Zeroes,” openly discussed her ability to get passing marks (C’s) last year without completing writing assignments. This does not work in the EC classroom. Even now, interviews with nearly half the students indicate that

most do not complete all the reading assignments. They average just one hour a night on homework – for all their classes! Nevertheless, as I will discuss below, all the students are passing.

Second Research Question

The second research question was designed to test if the EC students are getting a real college course, instead of a watered down version that is not worthy of college credit. To answer this question, we looked at the teachers, the syllabus, the materials and assignments/assessments.

The faculty members were interviewed and selected by the Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences at NECC and the AHS principal. The History teacher is an adjunct professor from NECC, with prior experience on the faculty of the University of New Hampshire as well. She teaches the very same course (US History) to post-secondary students on the NECC campus. She is in an ideal position to compare the courses and deliver the same content and standards to both. The College Success instructor is also an adjunct professor from NECC. He helped create the course at NECC and comes with years of experience. These teachers were selected on the basis of their interest and availability to teach a course that paid well, but required more than double the normal time commitment, as well as the challenge of working with less mature students. The English teacher is a veteran member of the AHS English department who taught AP courses, but never an NECC course. He met with the college faculty during the summer to compare curricula and integrate the content so students would get one, combined course. He had access to the American Literature and American Studies syllabi from NECC. In this way, he was mentored in college standards and expectations.

The syllabus is very similar to a standard NECC syllabus, except there are three instructors and three combined subject areas (see Appendix). (Students receive one grade for this integrated course). There is a course overview, followed by course objectives (with a heavy emphasis on reading and writing), plus a required reading list of five books and various articles and primary documents, and this is just for the first quarter. The EC students have an NECC email address and access to an online learning platform (*Blackboard*) where assignments and readings are posted. The syllabus presents expectations for homework assignments, essays, a journal, group work, attendance, presentations and exams and reviews the grading policy. In nearly all respects, this is a typical college syllabus. The syllabus differs in that the class meets daily instead of weekly. There is far more time available for project-based work and collaborative learning, so the lesson plans were stretched and new ones were invented.

The materials for this class include the required readings outlined in the syllabus, as well as excerpts and primary documents posted on *Blackboard*. The main history textbook is not the same as the one used at NECC, largely because the high school already had a text available, which was used in the past for the Advanced Placement US History course (thus, a college-level

text). A second book, *Reading the American Past* (2005), is a primary document book and is used in this class as well as the NECC class. Another book, *Social Fabric* (2009), contains articles written by well-known historians. The history teacher explained, “I would like to have used it in my NECC class, but it is too expensive for most of my students. Fortunately, AHS was willing to pick up the cost...” As a result, the EC students are actually getting *better* materials than the students at NECC. Some of these materials help the high school students access the reading; the history teacher explained, “I do have to pass out worksheets for some of the readings to help them.” The English readings also parallel common offerings in the freshmen American Literature course at NECC. The English teacher writes,

The material/content is similar. In addition to the course work from the literature textbook (which consists mostly of primary sources, poems, essays, and short stories), we also read four novels (*Autobiography of Ben Franklin*, *Julius Caesar*, *Scarlet Letter*, and *Huck Finn*). We also have two supplemental texts that we use.

The assignments and assessments for the EC class both match and out-number those on the NECC campus, again because there is so much more time devoted to the class. Here is a sample of assignments and assessments, taken from week 8 of the syllabus:

Students will read Jonathan Edwards’ *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, Benjamin Franklin’s *Thirteen Virtues*, a colonial newspaper, and chapters 5-10 of *Benjamin Franklin’s Autobiography*. There will be two quizzes of ten questions each, on the reading and on vocabulary. Groups of students will compare *Sinners* with *Thirteen Virtues* and then write the headlines for the front page of their own newspaper and attempt to sell their paper to the rest of the class, using the headlines. Students will write a one-page essay comparing Edwards and Franklin writings (typed, double-spaced with proper citations in MLA format); students will submit their 7th journal entry.

As a general rule, students write twice each week (one essay and one journal entry), read 25 pages and work on projects in class. They have quickly discovered that they have to do these writing assignments. Their work is marked down when it is late, but they will not get a mark for the course until all the writing assignments are complete. One student commented,

First quarter, I was up until 1:00 in the morning. I had like four missed papers. I was like, “Oh no!” Now, I do all of them! I don’t have any missing ones now. No more staying up until 1:00 in the morning.

The History teacher offered another comparison to the campus History class at NECC:

Our AHS students are working on a research paper (combining English & History) which is something my NECC students have not done. I actually had my survey classes at UNH

work on a research paper and for about 50 percent, it was a disaster. AHS are doing their research in steps. They cannot move on to the next step until they have completed their work. For instance, they just completed their literary analysis of the novel, short stories, or poems they chose for the paper. The next step is the historical research section. The third step is the thesis statement and outline followed by the paper. Hopefully, by the time they reach college they will be able to write a decent research paper.

The English teacher added, “The final result of which will be 5-plus pages. This comprises literary analysis, as well as history and an author study.”

The history teacher also pointed out, “They also have a final at the end of each quarter which contains multiple choice, matching, and two essays, which is the same criteria as my NECC finals.” The NECC classes do not include the weekly quizzes on the reading; these are employed to “to keep the students on their toes and to make sure they are understanding the material.”

We also checked in with the College Success professor:

Interviewer: “So, does the, how does this course compare with what you normally do; is it the same; is it different?”

College Success Professor: “To me, it’s the same; I make sure it’s the same.”

The College Success professor teaches the same kinds of skills that he does to his campus students, hammering home certain procedures (such as use of a calendar and binder for organization, use of flash cards for key words and concepts) over and over again for mastery. He also introduces them to the college culture:

The way the college operates; I mean literally we went from cradle to grave. First day, what’s a registrar? The terminology, understanding your role, classroom behavior, expected, what’s not accepted in terms of, you know, some professors. You know, like it or not, these are the rules; it is non-negotiable....An 18-year-old mind compared to a 16-year-old mind is basically the same except maybe two years more experience. I never assume that they know. Because that assumption is deadly....Never assume that. Ok, let’s go back; this is a syllabus, who is your professor? “I don’t know” and the same thing I did in college I did here.

The students have also visited the NECC campus and some have taken a trip to the University of Massachusetts in Amherst.

So, the College Success professor offers content which is identical to the campus version, including valuable information on the college environment. To summarize, the EC course offers content, material, assignments and assessments that are equal to or superior to those in the campus class; the longer time allotment also allows greater opportunities for learning.

In addition to the information above, notes from the planning team meetings underscore the high standards that both institutions hold for the EC program. The principal is responsible to address the state frameworks in English and History; in addition, his students must pass the English MCAS at the end of this year to graduate. The college faces similar standards and requirements. Both have a reputation to uphold in the community. In addition, both NECC and AHS are accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, an evaluation which they take very seriously. A course such as the Early College program will face scrutiny on both ends. Finally, the planning team is truly committed to college readiness; they know that a watered-down college course will not help anyone.

This leads us to conclude that the EC program offers three rigorous college courses, which match or exceed the NECC campus courses in content and overall work load by virtue of being stretched out over a longer period of time.

Third Research Question

After establishing that the students represent the middle quartiles of the school and that they are doing real college work, we then want to answer the third research question: *How are they doing?*

Academic progress in the EC program

After two quarters, no students are failing the college courses. At the end of both quarters, several students received “Incompletes,” which meant that they had to make up the work for a final mark (which they did). Report cards from the first two quarters show that quarterly marks range from D to A, or from 65 to 95. The first quarter average mark was 81.5 (a B–); the mode was 85; one student finished with a D, one with an A and the rest were in between. The second quarter average was 80.8; the mode was 82; two students finished with a D (one name being the same as the first quarter) and one student ended with an A (not the same student as the first quarter).

Table 5: Academic Achievement in the Early College Class 2009-2010

	1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter
Mean	81.52	80.77
Median	82	82
Mode	85	82
Standard Deviation	6.90	7.48
Range	30 (65 – 95)	30 (65 – 95)
Number	31	31

A final mark of D is sufficient for credit toward graduation at AHS as well as NECC; however, the NECC credits will not be transferable. At this point, two students are in danger. However, all four quarters will be averaged for the final annual mark. Regardless of the final outcome, students are learning valuable lessons about college standards and expectations.

Students in the EC program are taking one combined English/History/College Success course in an integrated learning community. We wanted to know how their performance here compared to their marks last year in English and History. All marks were changed to their weighted value, using the AHS document for computing final GPA (where A in a College Prep class is equal to a 4.0 and Honors classes are worth more, etc.). The average mark for the EC class is higher than the average freshmen English mark ($p < .05$) despite the greater difficulty of the course; comparison of grade 9 History marks and the EC mark (first semester) are close ($p > .05$). This will bear further examination at the end of the year.

Academic progress in other courses

We were also interested to see if students' engagement in the EC program affected their academic performance in other subjects. Report cards for the first half of grade 10 were compared to the grade 9 report cards (SY2008-2009) to see if there were any changes. The average weighted GPA for the first semester of Grade 10 was 10 percent larger than the Grade 9 average ($t_{(30)} = -5.02, p < .01$); in fact, 27 out of 31 students demonstrated an increase in their GPA. Of course, final marks for grade 10 are not in yet, so this could change if students get tired. We were also unable to compare these students to the non-EC sophomores to see if score improvement is a common phenomenon as students grow up; this will bear further investigation in the future. Nevertheless, it is encouraging to see that students are not failing other courses because of the added work load of the EC program.

We wondered how many students made Honor Roll in grade 9 versus grade 10. We learned from the handbook that:

To be named to the Honor Roll, the student must have no grade lower than a B- and a Pass in Pass/Fail courses....For purposes of the honor roll, a C in an honors course counts as a B and a B in an honors course counts as an A. (Amesbury High School, 2009)

This year, 11 students were counted as Honor Roll students overall in the 1st quarter and 8 students in the 2nd quarter. Last year, only 4 students were on the Honor Roll for the year. Of course, students take at least 8 courses in a year, so more challenges lie ahead for the EC students.

Did the students take more Honors courses this year; did their new status as college students make them more ambitious? There was no significant difference in the rate of Honors

courses attempted between grade 9 and grade 10. Most students are advised in the selection of their courses by the guidance staff; it is unlikely that they would be advised to step up to previously-unattempted Honors courses this year on top of the college courses. Still, we were encouraged by this response from one parent:

For the first time since fifth grade, _____ received Honors [Honor Roll] on his report card. And though he hadn't previously taken any Honors classes, _____ is now enrolled in Honors Algebra with [teacher], and plans to take Honors Biology later this year. It's amazing; I feel that it's really done wonders. It has lifted his self-esteem and gave him a belief that he can do anything with hard work and determination.

Student perceptions on the program

In order to get a fuller picture of student outcomes, we administered a survey. Questions clustered around *feelings*, *academic* experiences, and *plans* for the future. On a Likert Scale, the most interesting answers lie at the extremes where students strongly agreed or disagreed and did not offer ambivalence. (See the Appendix for a summary of students answers, where “1” means Strongly Disagree, “3” is No Opinion and “5” means Strongly Agree). There were also some short answer questions.

The *feeling* questions elicited the following reactions. Most students agreed “Usually I am confident I can handle the work in the Early College program” ($X = 3.84$, $\sigma = .94$). However, their academic tentativeness was reflected in two questions; the class tilted slightly toward “I expect to score in the top half of my class in the Early College program” ($X = 3.55$, $\sigma = 1.04$) and disagreed with “I will probably score in the bottom half of my class in the Early College program” ($X = 2.13$, $\sigma = 1.07$). They seem to have no intentions of giving up; they most strongly disagreed with this statement: “If the work gets too tough, I plan to drop out of the Early College program” ($X = 1.48$) with the second smallest variability of all the questions posed ($\sigma = 0.56$).

Students were asked to circle or suggest emotional words that described their feelings about enrollment in the EC program (more than one circle was allowed). The word most commonly circled was “proud” (20 times), followed by “honored (15), special (14), confident (14), happy (11), and superior” (8). Students also circled “worried (4), weird (4), anxious (2), scared (2), nervous (2), and fearful” (1). Other suggestions written in by the students included “accomplished, sophisticated, mixed, none (2), old,” and the best-of-the-bunch, “super-duper ninja happy.”

The *academic* statement that drew the strongest agreement was, “This class requires me to do more writing than any other class” ($X = 4.42$); this question also drew the smallest variability of all questions ($\sigma = .51$). Students agreed with “College Success makes me a better student in this class” ($X = 3.97$, $\sigma = .82$) and “This work is harder than my other classes” ($X =$

3.81, $\sigma = 1.00$). Many agreed that “This class requires me to do more reading than any other class” ($X = 3.77$, $\sigma = .87$), but the conviction was not as strong as around the writing requirements. They tended to disagree that “In this class, you don’t get very much help; you’re pretty much on your own” ($X = 2.19$, $\sigma = 1.03$) and “College Success doesn’t really help me with my other classes” ($X = 2.26$, $\sigma = .98$).

On the three questions about future *plans*, the question that drew the strongest response was this one: “I plan to stay in the Early College program next year” ($X = 4.13$, $\sigma = .79$). When asked specifically about post-secondary goals, 24 students pointed to a 4-year college, followed by military (3), 2-year college (2), work (2), travel (1) and “don’t know” (5). One student wrote in “beauty school” and one other wrote “get my Ph.D.” (this probably indicates some confusion about degree pathways after high school).

Students were also asked if they help pay for the Early College program (a total cost of \$600/year); six of the 31 students indicated that this was true.

Student behavior

Other outcomes became apparent through the interviews. For example, the learning community model of the EC program has positively affected student behavior. The students work daily in groups (which are rotated each quarter) and they have grown to respect and support one another. Two students discussed this:

Boy: Feels like everybody in that class is going together too, like everybody seems to get along; there’s no issues or anything.

Girl: People get up to talk and nobody’s like “what are they saying?”

Boy: Nobody’s obnoxious.

The principal was also impressed; “We haven’t had one office referral.” The students reassured me that they rarely skip this class (even if they do other classes), they never get detention, are never tossed out, and there are no fights. One girl pointed out, “Kids act a lot more mature in this class.”

Teacher observations on student progress

The teachers are all impressed with the academic progress and performance of the students. The English teacher remarked, “The progress in their writing alone is unbelievable.” He elaborated,

Looking at this stuff from the first week to this week [February], looking at the open response essays, in the beginning they were writing almost a full page. Now they are all writing almost two pages with parenthetical citations. They are picking up on what is expected from them.

The History teacher agreed and offered a useful comparison to her equivalent campus class:

I think I get better writing out of the high school kids. I have [the campus students] write every week too, an essay in my college class, which I'm sure they're complaining about, too but that's just once a week, a short paragraph kind of homework assignment just to make sure they've done the reading. These students at Amesbury have to write a one-page paper every week so their writing has improved on the most part greatly since when you got three sentences to begin with to now you get a page. And we have some very good writers at Amesbury High.

The English teacher also pointed out, "The students are turning in the homework at a much higher rate than they are in the other classes" (those he teaches at AHS). Not that the students are perfect, however; the History teacher confided,

We do require a bit of work from them and I'd say 80 percent have risen to the occasion and 10-15 percent are probably struggling with the amount of work and five percent could do it but just don't want to just because of their maturity....They're having trouble in the classroom because they're just so immature.

Later, she admitted, "A major problem with both groups of students – passing in their work on time. AHS students have improved gradually over the year."

College Success and college readiness skills

The students reflected on the program. Nearly every student remarked on the heavy reading and writing responsibilities; evidently, the weekly load was recently re-negotiated with the teachers. Still, the students' estimation of hard work must be taken in context; these are still middle students. I asked the students how much time they spent on homework each night; a typical answer was, "Yea, probably like 45 minutes for all my homework and probably 20-25 minutes for the Early College." Even with this modest assessment, however, one student reminded me, "I do a lot less homework in other classes."

They all felt the College Success class made them a better student; some felt there was an impact in other classes too. Most of all, they were excited by their own confidence.

Boy: Seriously, this class has made me grow up. Now I actually care and I get that stuff done before anything else at home. It's important.

Girl: it makes you realize how important the future....like I've had my journal entry for Wednesday done [this is Monday] done for like three days now....getting it done ahead of time.

The students also talked about the strategies they have learned through the College Success that have helped them, such as time management: “You have to do it on time because once you get far behind, it’s really hard to catch up. One of my friends did that, like ten papers – she got an Incomplete at the end of the quarter.” They shared the secret of creating flash cards each week to help them master major concepts and vocabulary words. One group has been meeting at a student’s house on Monday nights to study together.

Girl1: We actually started having study nights for this class, every Monday night. We really do!

Girl2: We make flash cards.

Girl1: We make a lot of flash cards. Every Monday night; we get a lot more done. It’s so much more fun that way.

One parent pointed to the syllabus as a key to success:

I just wanted to say as far as my son goes, he’s handling it but I think that’s due in part to the syllable is very clear and the communication and the expectation. I mean I’ve accessed that myself. The syllabus is so cut and dry and this is what we expect and that’s helped.

One concern that was shared by the teachers was that it was easier to teach College Success than to get the students to utilize the new skills in English and History. The integration of the three classes helps, but implementation of study skills is a slow process. At the same time, however, we have seen that the students talked about creating flash cards to help them memorize details from the reading and they all named time management as their secret to success. They are far more aware of the incorporation of College Success strategies than the teachers. The students see what how far they have come; the teachers see what could be. As an example, the English teacher noted,

While *Blackboard* could prove to be very effective, only a few of the students utilize it. [The History teacher] posts all of her PowerPoints there, so students will have access to them before lectures. Students would definitely benefit by using it.

This tells us that students have made progress, but still have much to learn among the college readiness skills.

Confidence

We were curious about other benefits from the EC program. One teacher offered,

One of them is confidence. These are not necessarily the Honors students from 9th grade. For them to see themselves doing this, which is at least as rigorous as Honors classes.... It is good for them. They rise to the occasion.

The parents are also enthusiastic. One parent exclaimed,

Part of me should admit that when he came home excited about doing the Northern Essex thing, I was very excited and supportive of that. But when he started saying, “And then I’m going to do Honors ‘this’ and Honors ‘that,’” I was like, “Whoa, wait a minute here! You want to work toward success.”

The teachers have noted the parental feedback. The History teacher recalled one parent’s reaction,

‘What? You’re talking about my son?’ – when we’re saying good things. This father kept on repeating this kid’s name because he couldn’t believe what I was saying. This kid’s always raising his hand; he always has really good thoughts.

Student Schedules

We wondered what impact the EC program had on students’ schedule and their ability to participate in clubs, after-school sports and other extra-curricular activities. One parent said, “The program does involve a lot of work on my daughter’s part, but she is able to manage her time and pace herself to accomplish the expectations. These expectations are clear and easily located on *Blackboard*.” Other parents expressed their surprise that their child was now signing up for the school newspaper or the yearbook – résumé-building activities that they had previously shunned.

The students tended to agree:

Boy: I cut back on some things, but I can live without them anyway. Spending a little less time on the computer, something like that.

Girl: I still go to the barn every day for three hours and take care of my horse. I can still fit this in....We still fit everything else in.

When we interviewed the students, we asked specifically about the sacrifice of other activities and the possible cost of friends who were not enrolled in the EC program. Not one student could name a lost activity or friend. At the most, they lost some sleep at the end of the semester, struggling to make up missing assignments.

Struggling students

Since a few students are barely passing the EC class, we decided to look more closely at the seven students with the lowest average marks after two semesters (see Table 6). We picked

seven students because there was a natural break between their grades and the rest of the class. In what ways did their survey answers differ?

Table 6: 1st and 2nd Quarter Report Card Grades for Lowest Students in EC Class

Student	Quarter 1	Quarter 2
1	B-	D
2	C	C
3	C	C
4	C	C
5	C+	C-
6	D	D
7	D+	C-

Of all the questions on the Likert Scale, the seven students most agreed with and showed the lowest variability on this one: “This class requires me to do more writing than any other class” ($X = 4.57$; $\sigma = 0.49$). They showed strong agreement with this claim: “College Success makes me a better student in this class” ($X = 4.14$; $\sigma = 0.64$); in fact, they were stronger in agreement than the rest of the EC class, perhaps confessing their own need and appreciation for the study skills. Students also strongly agreed with “I enrolled in the EC program because I plan to go to college” ($X = 4.43$; $\sigma = 0.73$) and, indeed, six out of seven students indicated that they plan to attend a four-year college after high school.

The ambivalence around academic confidence was revealed with this statement: “Usually I am confident that I can handle the work in the Early College Program,” which drew a dead-center mean of 3 and large variability ($\sigma = 1.25$). Likewise, the statement, “Sometimes I worry that I may not succeed in the Early College Program” drew ambivalent responses ($X = 3.43$; $\sigma = 0.73$) and revealed more anxiety than the larger EC class. When faced with “I’m not sure I belong in the EC program,” they disagreed, but less strongly than the larger class and with large variability ($X = 2.28$; $\sigma = 1.28$). However, when posed with the suggestion, “I do not really want to be in the EC program,” students also disagreed ($X = 2.28$; $\sigma = 1.08$). They strongly agreed with this statement: “I plan to stay in the EC Program next year” ($X = 4.14$; $\sigma = 0.64$); in fact, their response matched that of the larger class and showed even less variability. Which statement drew the strongest disagreement? The same statement that drew the strongest disagreement from the entire class: “If the work gets too touch, I plan to drop out of the EC Program” ($X = 1.71$; $\sigma = 0.70$). Again, the variability was low. These results are summarized in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Sample Survey Responses from Seven Struggling Students in the EC class

Statement from Likert Scale	7 students		Full cohort	
	Mean	σ	Mean	σ
If the work gets too tough, I plan to drop out of the Early College Program	1.71	0.70	1.48	0.56
I do not really want to be in the Early College Program	2.28	1.08	1.77	0.86
I'm not sure I belong in the Early College Program	2.28	1.28	2.00	1.02
Usually I am confident that I can handle the work in the Early College Program	3.00	1.25	3.84	0.94
Sometimes I worry that I may not succeed in the Early College Program	3.43	0.73	3.00	1.16
College Success makes me a better student in this class	4.14	0.64	3.97	0.82
I plan to stay in the Early College Program next year.	4.14	0.64	4.13	0.79
I enrolled in the Early College Program because I plan to go to college	4.43	0.73	4.48	0.76
This class requires me to do more writing than any other class	4.57	0.49	4.42	0.51

In summary, the seven struggling students seem to show an appreciation for the College Success class and an almost fierce determination to stick with the EC program and not drop out next year despite internal anxieties and lack of confidence. Their eyes are still fixed on a long-term plan to attend a four-year college.

Finally, we focused on survey questions that signaled future intentions. “I plan to stay in the EC program next year” ($X = 4.13$; $\sigma = 0.79$) included 23 students who agree or strongly agree and 8 students who have no opinion. Four students “want to take a dual enrollment course this summer” and 11 do not, while 16 have no opinion. Nine students “would like to sign up for an Advanced Placement course next year,” ten would not and 12 have no opinion at this time. These questions are useful in plumbing the long-term commitment to the program, to college readiness and to the EC program goals of increasing the number of students taking AP and dual enrollment classes.

DISCUSSION

This paper is the first of several reports on an early college experiment between Amesbury High School and Northern Essex Community College. I have briefly described the program and tried to demonstrate (using the criteria of Jobs for the Future) that the program is constructed in a manner that is equitable and sustainable. While matching the criteria, in many respects this model is unique among all the dual enrollment and early college experiments across the country.

In this paper, we took extra precautions to examine the nature of the sophomore students enrolled in the EC program to see if they matched the criteria of the “forgotten middle” students described by Swanson (2005). The lack of Honors classes and mediocre marks in 9th grade help confirm this. On their grade 8 MCAS scores, they are practically the same. Admittedly, they are

good readers (and it's hard to imagine how they would handle a college curriculum otherwise) but they not impressive in Math. Statistically, they match the middle two quartiles in the school in almost every respect.

We also tried to assess the rigor of the college courses being offered in the EC program, since the charge is often made that such courses offered on a high school campus must be "watered down." From one perspective, the course is diluted, since the students have twice the normal time allotment to complete the work. Unlike most college students, they are not allowed to fail; those with a grade of Incomplete must make up the work and earn a grade. However, we also noted that these students actually do a lot more work over the year; they read more, complete far more projects, write more essays and research papers, and must take weekly quizzes. We also wondered about the students' own report on their work habits; most students confessed that they could do the EC homework in less than 30 minutes a night. They sometimes skipped the reading. This hardly seems like college rigor. However, the students do some of their homework in class under teacher supervision; plus, unlike the campus classes, they have homework five nights a week. We have noted that all written homework assignments must be completed or they will not get a final grade. In the end, this amounts to a lot of homework. The fact that students may cut corners on the reading does not make them different than real college students. The presence of two teachers who instruct classes at the high school and the NECC campus was certainly helpful for the purposes of comparison. Triangulation of data from teachers and students reassures us that the EC program is delivering an authentic college curriculum. This allows us to focus on the academic outcomes for these students.

First, we note that they are all succeeding academically, some more than others, but all passing the college courses. Some of the grades are truly impressive. No one has dropped out; no one has given up; no one is failing after two terms. They are all determined to see this through to the end of the year.

The extra work required by college courses has not so stretched them that they are suffering in other areas of their life. Students deny that they have had to give up anything to participate in the EC program. Overall, their grades are good; there are some early indications that they are doing better overall than they did last year. Furthermore, they are still able to pursue all their extra-curricular activities. Some have even added new activities, such as the school newspaper and yearbook. While the seven struggling students expressed some anxiety on the survey, the overall impact on their life, their schedule and their grades in other classes does seem acceptable. There are far more stories about what students have gained this year and there are no stories about what they have lost, despite a host of probing interview questions for both students and parents.

The college cache of the EC program seems to have encouraged more mature behavior. Several people noted the absence of normal adolescent arguments, fights, skipped classes and

behavioral problems that are associated with 10th graders. One teacher pointed out that these students are more responsible than his other 10th graders when it comes to turning in homework. The fact that 20 percent of the students are helping to pay for the tuition for the EC program speaks well of their commitment and their maturity.

What is most encouraging is that the students are not only succeeding academically but slowly developing some of the college readiness skills described as so important for college success by Conley (2008). The EC program appears to address all four areas in Conley's list. The standards and expectations for the weekly writing assignments and the quarterly research papers emphasize just the kind of analysis and interpretation work described under "cognitive skills." Under "content knowledge," we find true college content in the course syllabus; plus Conley also adds writing skills under this set and this is clearly a highlight in the EC program. Students themselves noted the use of some of Conley's "academic behaviors," such as time management and the use of study groups (even if the employment is rudimentary at this point). Even the "contextual skills and knowledge" are being addressed in the College Success class. These will only be strengthened in future years as EC students take more and more classes on the college campus. Overall, it appears that the EC program has the right focus on the college readiness skills outlined by Conley, even if more time is needed by the students to master them. The students have three years, after all, to accomplish this.

There are notable indications that the EC program is a great confidence booster. The students feel "proud, confident, honored, sophisticated." Parents are noting the new confidence and new goals and habits in their children. Teachers are observing greater academic perseverance. In a school where 67 percent of the entire graduating class signaled intentions to attend a four-year college in June 2009, the fact that 77 percent of this middle group (the ones with weak college aspirations) is now planning to attend a four-year college after high school is very encouraging.

This preliminary student also turned up some thought-provoking details about students' future plans. According to survey results, there are eight students "on the fence" in regards to their participation in the EC program next year. Some students may be planning to complete the year and then drop out of the program. Others may still be eyeing the "Honors" route in the school, which traditionally was the way to go if you wanted an impressive transcript. Maybe, they may want more AP courses instead. These are questions yet to be answered. Are students more likely to sign up for Honors courses next year? Will they take AP courses with the EC program or will we find that this is a more reasonable senior year goal for these students? How many will stick with the program for three years?

In retrospect, the enhanced partnership with Northern Essex Community College is timely. The President's plan for reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act puts new emphasis on getting all students "college-and-career ready" (McNeil, 2010). NECC

really offers both options: college courses, which are transferable to a four-year institution, as well as career-and-technical education courses for those who want to get to work. While many of the EC students have confessed that they have no intention of attending NECC, the partnership they are enjoying with the college is right in line with the President's goals.

The EC program also addresses another problem: the slumping college attendance rates among young men. Female college enrollments have outnumbered male enrollments since 1980; more importantly, from 1997 to 2007, "the number of females rose 29 percent, compared to an increase of 22 percent in the number of males" (Fast Facts, 2010a). The EC program is remarkable for the preponderance of boys who are succeeding in a college-readiness program that is heavy on reading and writing. On a related note, girls have been out-scoring boys on the high school English MCAS for a while (MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2009). As a result of this EC program, School officials are eager to examine the MCAS scores of these 31 students at the end of this year.

LIMITATIONS

As noted above, a self-evaluation can lack the objectivity of an evaluation performed by an outside agency. However, the use of quantitative as well as qualitative data, in combination with the triangulation of data, increases the opportunity to gain an objective evaluation. The advantages of an "in-house" evaluation seemed to out-weigh those of an independent evaluation.

This study examined the academic outcomes of the first cohort of students in the Amesbury EC program. However, further study is needed; some gaps were noted in the Results section above. What are the final outcomes at the end of this year? Will all these students continue with the EC program next year? How do these students compare to the other 10th grade students at this point in time? What is the impact of the heavy reading and writing load of the EC program on 10th grade English MCAS scores this spring?

FUTURE RESEARCH

Specifically, three other related research topics come to mind:

- a. What kind of support was required to help these students succeed? A 100 percent success rate is remarkable; how did this happen? (This is the research question for a subsequent paper for the American Education Research Association annual meeting in Denver CO in late April).
- b. How was the early college partnership forged? What were the questions, the issues, the things negotiated, the costs and risks encountered? What lessons can we learn for other schools who want to replicate this work (such as the three schools who approached NECC this year).

- c. What can we learn about the leadership that brought about the EC program? While other area high schools have expressed interest, there are also reservations. Not everyone has the “stomach” for this kind of entrepreneurial work.

Finally, we note that the EC program is a three-year cohort plan, so more work needs to be done. Students have yet to take college courses in Science or Math. One of the goals of the EC program was to get more students to take AP courses; this will have to be worked out in subsequent years. Longitudinal data will be needed to determine if these students do, in fact, attend college at a higher rate, take fewer developmental courses, and graduate on time.

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Amesbury High School
Early College Program
Student Survey
February 2010

The classroom teacher should read this introductory section out loud to the students and provide explanation or answer questions where appropriate.

Thank you for agreeing to complete this survey on the Early College Program, which allows high school sophomores to take college classes. This survey should only take 20-25 minutes at the most. We will collect them when everyone is done.

Your answers will help us better understand your experience and may help us improve the program for more students in the future. The survey is not long and should be easy to complete.

This survey is entirely voluntary. You will not get a grade for completing this survey and you will not be penalized if you refuse. We hope that your answers will make the Early College Program even better for you and future students.

If you do not want to take the survey, simply tell the teacher. If, at any time, you feel uncomfortable during the survey, for whatever reason, you may stop at any time. If you feel any distress and would like someone to talk to (such as a Guidance Counselor), please tell your teacher and we will arrange a meeting.

There are 27 questions and they are all short answer. This survey should take you about 15 minutes to complete. Please take your time and read the questions carefully. If you have any questions, please raise your hand and we'll help you.

Student Number _____

Date _____

Circle the word or the words that describe your thoughts about each question below.

1. Being enrolled in the Early College Program makes me feel (circle as many words as you like):

Anxious Worried Superior Confident Scared Happy
Fearful Special Honored Weird Nervous Proud

Other (write the best word that describes your feeling) _____

Make a double circle around the word that describes you **the most**.

2. Who were the people who influenced you to join the Early College Program? Circle as many words as you want:

Parent Relative Guidance Counselor Teacher
Principal Friend Someone Else (describe here) _____

Make a double circle around the person who influenced you **the most**.

Each item below is followed by 5 choices, indicating how strongly you agree or disagree with the statement. Check off the ONE box that best describes your opinion.

Questions about your enrollment in the Early College Program

		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3.	My parents (at least one) made me enroll in the Early College Program					
4.	I enrolled in the Early College Program because I need a challenge					
5.	I do not really want to be in the Early College Program					
6.	I enrolled in the Early College Program because I plan to go to college					
8.	I'm not sure I belong in the Early College Program					
9.	I enrolled in the Early College Program because my friends also enrolled					
10.	My parents (at least one) encouraged me to enroll in the Early College Program					
11.	I help pay for the cost of the Early College Program					

Questions about your expectations for this class

		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12.	Sometimes I worry that I may not succeed in the Early College Program					
13.	I expect to score in the top half of my class in the Early College Program					
14.	Usually I am confident that I can handle the work in the Early College Program					
15.	I will probably score in the bottom half of my class in the Early College Program					
16.	If the work gets too tough, I plan to drop out of the Early College Program					

Questions about the work in Humanities (American Literature & US History) and College Success:

		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17.	This work is harder than my other classes					
18.	College Success makes me a better student in this class					
19.	I have less homework in this class than in my other classes					
20.	This class requires me to do more writing than any other class					
21.	In this class, you don't get very much help; you're pretty much on your own					
22.	This class requires me to do more reading than any other class					
23.	College Success doesn't really help me with my other classes					

Questions about your future

		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
24.	I would like to sign up for an Advanced Placement class next year					
25.	I want to take a Dual Enrollment college course this summer					
26.	I plan to stay in the Early College Program next year.					

27. At this time, what are your plans for the year after you graduate from high school? Circle the best choice.

2-year College

4-year College

Work

Travel

Military

Other (name here) _____

Don't Know

Amesbury High School/ Northern Essex Community College

Amesbury High Early College Program

First Quarter Syllabus

Instructors:

(names and contact information have been removed)

Course Descriptions

NECC LIT 201-American Literature I. This course presents the works of selected American writers from the beginnings to the Civil War and will include a study of the works' historical and literary settings. 3 Credits, 3 Lecture Hours.

Course Satisfies: Humanities, Liberal Arts, Literature, Open/Free, Reading Content

NECC CSS 101-College Success Seminar. This course explores the ways to take the initiative for personal, professional, and academic success. The focus is on techniques and resources to improve self-understanding, information literacy and critical thinking skills, and to foster teamwork and community building. 3 Credits, 3 Lecture Hours.

Course Satisfies: Open/Free

NECC HIS 101-U.S. History I. This course is survey of American history from 1607-1865. It will trace the political, social, cultural and economic development of the United States from colonial times through the Civil War. Special attention will be given to political theory, the role of leadership, America's expansion across the continent and the rising tide of sectionalism that results in the Civil War. 3 Credits, 3 Lecture Hours.

Course Satisfies: History & Government, Liberal Arts, Open/Free, Reading Content, Social Science

Course Overview

This Learning Community class integrates U.S. History I, American Literature I and a College Success Seminar into a one-year course for high school and college credit. The course is designed to introduce students to the social, political, and cultural lives of early Americans through lecture, discussions, literary works, primary and secondary historical documents, film, and specific projects in addition to providing students with college level supports for learning. The class also incorporates the mandatory components needed to pass the English MCAS Test: vocabulary, grammar, and writing. The year-long course is divided into four quarters and each quarter examines a specific time frame in American literature and history and builds upon skills learned to achieve college success. The quarters are divided into: the Colonial period, the Revolutionary Age, the Early Republic, and the Civil War era.

Course Objectives

Students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the assigned American literature and history topics
- Demonstrate critical thinking through evaluation, cause-and-effect relationships, and compare and contrast
- Read, interpret and evaluate literary works, as well as historical primary and secondary sources
- Improve reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, and writing skills
- Complete reading and writing assignments by the designated due date
- Improve study habits, take reliable class notes, and maintain a portfolio of completed work
- Write two short weekly response papers a week on the assigned topic or theme
- Use evidence to support your argument in each paper
- Work effectively in teams to critically discuss assigned topics and produce student projects
- Maintain a journal detailing life in early America through the eyes of a teenager
- Write a formal academic research paper at the end of the year
- Keep an informal reading journal for own use and compose one discussion question a week for in-class use
- Pass weekly quizzes
- Pass the final exam at the end of each quarter
- Pass the English MCAS Test
- Obtain high school credit and 9 college credits from Northern Essex Community College

First Quarter Required Readings

Appleby, et al. *The American Vision*. (New York: McGraw Hill, 2005.)

Franklin, Benjamin, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* (URL: www.earlyamerica.com/lives/franklin/).

Johnson, Michael P. *Reading the American Past: Volume I: to 1877*. (Boston: Bedford/ St. Martins, 2005).

Probst, Robert, et al. *Elements of Literature*. (Boston: Holt, Reinhart, and Winston Inc., 1997).

Wheeler, Robert, A., et al. *The Social Fabric: American Life from 1607-1877* (Upper Saddle, N J: Prentice Hall, 2009.)

There will also be various articles and primary documents provided by the instructors.

Blackboard: This course uses the Northern Essex Community College Blackboard. The course syllabus, many of the primary documents, “Benjamin Franklin’s Autobiography”, grading standards, test and paper dates, essay questions, discussion group assignments, review outline for *Social Fabric* articles, College Success outline, writing expectations and tips are all posted on Blackboard. Students may access Blackboard with their NECC email address and password.

URL: <http://bbce6.necc.mass.edu>

Contact with the instructors: Contact the instructors immediately if you any problems with the lecture material, the readings, or the assignments. This is a new experience for everyone involved and the instructors are happy to discuss the assignments and progress. The instructors would appreciate if emails be sent to all three instructors. As this is a new course, students’ parents or guardians are encouraged to sign up for a first quarter bi-monthly email

progress report on their child. This progress report will follow a simple template of student's level of preparedness for class and areas of concern or success.

Course Evaluation:

Students will be graded based on their performance on

- Participation in class (including portfolio) (15%)
- Essays (25%)
- Journal (15%)
- Quizzes (15%)
- Presentations (15%)
- Final Exam (15%)
- **All work must be completed to pass the course**
- **Grading will be done by all three instructors**

Participation: The success of this class relies on the active participation of all students. Participation will be evaluated in terms of attendance, but also on active listening, active participation, and completing your portfolio. If you consistently miss class, fail to be prepared for group discussion, or disrupt class then your grade will reflect your lack of commitment to this class. All students will keep an informal reading journal and take notes while completing the reading assignments. At the end of each reading assignment, students will prepare one (1) question concerning the content of the reading which instructors will pass out for group discussion. The discussion questions will be graded upon how well the question incorporates the reading and stimulates discussion. The question grade is factored into your participation grade.

Attendance: See the Amesbury High School Student Handbook on attendance. Attendance and participation are integral components of your grade, so it is important for you to attend class and come prepared to discuss the assigned readings. Please review the school's policy on electronic devices. Cell phones, iPods, beepers, and text messaging devices are not to be used in class.

Essays: There will be at least one, and frequently two questions posted every Friday on the NECC Blackboard for each group. The questions will help focus your thoughts for our discussion sessions and prevent you from falling behind in your reading. Students will write a one-page essay (approximately two paragraphs) answering your group's questions each week. Your essays will be based on the assigned readings and lectures and late papers will be penalized. See due dates on class Blackboard calendar.

Essay Requirements: Essays must be typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-pt font, and have 1" margins. Each paper will be approximately two paragraphs in length. If you use a quote or paraphrase an author's idea you must cite using the MLA format. The paper should have a strong thesis statement and use supporting evidence. Correct grammar, spelling, and proper citation are also important elements of each essay. See grading standards.

Late Papers: Papers are due on the assigned due date and it is your responsibility to keep track utilizing your calendar. One grade will be deducted for every day the paper is late, and you must complete all work to pass the course. For instance, if you are given a grade of B+ on your essay, but your essay is one day late, you will receive a

grade of C+. If you have an excused absence then your paper is not considered late unless you return to class without the essay.

Journal: You will keep a journal as a teenager living in early America. This is your opportunity to experiment with creative writing because your journal will be a collection of thoughts, ideas, and reactions to life in the colonies. You will write in first person (the only time you will do so unless otherwise instructed). For this assignment, create a name and background and write about the events or people that are affecting your life. For instance, you may write on your experiences traveling on the *Mayflower*, working as an indentured servant in Philadelphia, living as a slave on a southern plantation, apprenticing in Benjamin Franklin's printing office, or growing tobacco in Virginia. The possibilities are endless. See handouts for specifics.

Quizzes: Two quizzes will be given at the beginning and at the end of each week. They will include all aspects of the course: literature, vocabulary, history, and college success. The quiz at the beginning of the week will usually weigh in more heavily on history while the end of the week, the quiz will incorporate more vocabulary questions. The typical quiz will have ten (10) questions and each question will be worth one (1) point.

Presentations: Groups will be awarded a grade for their collective work on in-class projects. There is a presentation rubric used by instructors which will grade each portion of the presentation.

Groups: Each student has been randomly placed in a discussion group by Blackboard and you will sit together during class. The goals are for students to learn how to discuss topics critically and also to appreciate teamwork. Students will critically discuss the reading assignments and share well-thought out ideas with their group and then with the class. Each group will be assigned at least one different discussion topic every week and students from different groups are encouraged to offer courteous remarks, make observations, or play devil's advocate regarding another group's ideas. Groups will also work together to present small projects that they have completed in class. Each group will be assigned a leader on a rotating basis. In addition, one person will be chosen each day to take class notes, type them and place them in a binder for absent peers or in some cases for students to reexamine a topic. Discussion questions and weekly group leaders are posted on Blackboard the week prior to the discussion sessions. Members of the discussion groups will be changed at the beginning of each quarter.

Final Exam: multiple choice, short answers, and essays will make up the quarter final exam.

Academic Honesty is an essential component in our learning community at Amesbury High and Northern Essex Community College. Please read the Amesbury High School handbook concerning academic policy and honesty. Submitting another person's work, whether from a fellow student, a sibling, or from the Internet, is plagiarism and you will fail the assignment. In addition, you will meet with all three course instructors and the Principal to review your status in the Integrated Learning Class.

First Quarter: Curriculum Objectives and Course Schedule

WEEK ONE: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE AND THE BEGINNINGS OF COLONIAL AMERICA
In order to understand an integrated learning community, the student will be able to:
A. Understand the concept of team teaching and an integrated learning community

B. Verbalize understanding of course expectations
C. Write a contract outlining acceptable behavior in class
D. Discuss motivation, goals, learning styles, and academic honesty
In order to understand first contact in North America, the student will be able to:
A. Describe why transatlantic travel was possible
B. Analyze the issues and conflicts of transatlantic contact
C. Demonstrate understanding of symbolism, imagery, conflict, repetition, and theme
Reading Assignments: Christopher Columbus diary; Native American Myths/Legends
Content: Reading primary documents, exploration, Native American culture, Columbian Exchange, literary techniques
Assessments: Dissect and discuss primary documents; begin to write mission statement, begin to write myth as a group

WEEK TWO: AN INTRODUCTION TO JAMESTOWN AND PLYMOUTH
In order to understand seventeenth-century colonial America, the student will be able to:
A. Describe the establishment of North American colonies by different European empires
B. Explain the relationship between colonists and their country of origin
C. Describe the demographics of Jamestown in comparison to Plymouth
D. Compare and contrast Byrd and Bradford observations
E. Demonstrate teamwork in class
Reading Assignments: <i>The American Vision</i> , (pp.62-64; 66-67)
William Bradford's "Plymouth Plantation" in <i>Elements of Literature</i>
William Byrd's "History of the Dividing Line" in <i>Elements of Literature</i>
Content: reasons for colonization, establishment of English colonies, problems in the New World, comparison of New England and Chesapeake settlements, Plain Style, William Bradford, William Byrd, satire, diversity and relationships, handling constructive criticism, handling conflict
Assessments: Quizzes; pass in original myth; response paper to assigned group question; group discussion and critique of response paper answers. Group project: each group makes a recruitment poster to entice new colonists to either Jamestown or

Plymouth. Begin journal—first entry.

WEEK THREE: COLONIAL RELIGION AND POLITICS IN THE BRITISH COLONIES

In order to understand the importance of religion in seventeenth-century colonial America, the student will be able to:

- A. Compare the Puritans to Pilgrims (Separatists)
- B. Interpret “a city on a hill” and Providence
- C. Compare and contrast religion/politics in the Chesapeake and New England colonies
- D. Discuss religion as a political and social force
- E. Analyze figurative language in Puritan poetry
- F. Learn to take class notes effectively

Reading Assignments: *American Vision* (pp.67-to the top of 70)

Anne Hutchinson’s Trial transcript (on Blackboard); Anne Bradstreet’s poetry in *Elements of Literature*

Content: the influences of religion in everyday colonial life, religion and government, predestination, Half-Way Covenant, poetry analysis, figurative language, listening critically, note taking strategies

Assessments: Quizzes. Each team reads and interprets a part of the Hutchinson’s transcript and rewrites in modern language. Each group will present their final version to the class; an essay on Anne Hutchinson; discussion on the role Providence plays in Puritan lives, notably Bradford and Bradstreet. Journal—second entry.

Week Four: Colonists and Native Americans in the Seventeenth Century

In order to understand the relationship between colonists and Native Americans, the student will be able to:

- A. Discuss original relationship between the two cultures
- B. Analyze the issues and conflicts between the two groups
- C. Interpret how the “starving time” influenced colonists’ behavior
- D. Identify the causes and end results of the seventeenth-century Indians wars
- E. Critically examine readings

Reading Assignments: *Social Fabric*, “White Captives”

Mary Rowlandson’s “Narrative of the Captivity” in *Elements of Literature*

<i>American Vision</i> (p.71, pp.74-75)
<i>Reading the American Past</i> , Document 3-5
Contents: “starving time”, Pequot War, Metacom’s War (King Philip’s War), Mary Rowlandson, Bacon’s Rebellion, college reading expectations, active and critical reading
Assessment: Quizzes. Discussion and paper contrasting Rowlandson’s document with the article “White Captives.”
Groups separate into colonists and Native Americans to air grievances and debate issues. Journal—third entry

WEEK FIVE SLAVERY IN THE COLONIAL ERA
In order to understand the origins and perpetuation of slavery in the colonies, the student will be able to:
A. Identify the origins of slavery in the New World
B. Compare indentured servitude with slavery
C. Analyze the reasons why slavery flourished in the Chesapeake colonies
D. Evaluate the importance of crops and the English Civil War on slavery
E. Compare Bradford’s Mayflower experience with Equiano’s Middle Passage
F. Learn to write effectively
Reading Assignments: “Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano” in <i>Elements of Literature</i>
<i>Social Fabric</i> : “The Creation of a Slave Society in the Chesapeake”; <i>American Vision</i> , (pp.89-90)
Contents: slavery, indentured servants, the English Civil War, the Middle Passage, tobacco, college level writing
Assessments: Quizzes; discussion of Bradford’s and Equiano’s voyage experiences; compare and contrast Puritans work and family life with that of slaves living in the Chesapeake; essays on Bradford and Equiano’s comparisons and slavery
Journal—fourth entry

WEEK SIX: THE SALEM WITCHCRAFT TRIALS
In order to understand the rationale behind the witchcraft trials, the student will be able to:
A. Identify the crisis in England and how it affected the English colonies
B. Analyze King James II actions
C. Place the trials in context of the political and economic upheavals of its time
D. Manage goals and priorities in your studies
Reading Assignments: <i>Social Fabric</i> , "The Witchcraft Scare"; <i>Reading the American Past</i> , Document: 4-5
Content: the Exclusion Crisis, Navigation acts and the Lords of Trade, the Dominion of New England, the Glorious Revolution, the Salem Witchcraft Trials, analyzing and managing time, getting organized
Assessments: Quizzes; groups will discuss trial transcript and present their interpretation of the primary document and discuss the primary motives for the trial, essay question on the trial. Journal—fifth entry

WEEK SEVEN: LIFE IN THE ENGLISH COLONIES IN THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
In order to understand colonial family life, social interactions, work, and gender roles, the student will be able to:
A. Compare and contrast 17 th and 18 th -century colonial households and Native American life
B. Evaluate the importance of the mercantile system
C. Trace the effects of immigration on the English colonies
D. Examine English colonists and Native American gender roles
E. Learn to study for tests effectively
Reading Assignments: Begin "The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin" (on Blackboard) Chapters 1-- 4
<i>Reading the American Past</i> , Document: 5-3
"The Obligations of a Wife" (primary document, 1712-- a handout)
<i>American Vision</i> , (pp 95-97)

Content: the mercantile system, immigration, social statuses changes, “coverture”, Benjamin Franklin’s early life, study tips, beating test taking anxiety
Assessments: Quizzes; discussion and essays on Franklin and gender; groups write a skit of presenting a “typical” colonial household. Write a letter home as a new immigrant arriving in Philadelphia; Journal—sixth entry.

Week Eight: The Great Awakening and the Print Culture
In order to understand the importance of the emerging print culture and its effects on colonial life, the student will be able to:
A. Define the Great Awakening
B. Compare and contrast the Great Awakening to seventeenth-century Puritan beliefs
C. Interpret the works of Jonathan Edwards and Benjamin Franklin
D. Evaluate the “freedom of the press” in the British colonies
E. Begin thinking about research paper topic
<u>Reading Assignment:</u> Jonathan Edwards’ “Sinners”
Benjamin Franklin’s Thirteen Virtues –included in Franklin’s Autobiography
colonial newspaper (primary document--handout)
“Benjamin Franklin’s Autobiography” (On Blackboard) Chapters 5-10
<u>Content :</u> Benjamin Franklin, John Peter Zenger, George Whitefield, John Wesley, Jonathan Edwards, revivals, long-term consequences of the revivals, newspapers and broadsheets, locate resources, evaluating web sources, research writing
<u>Assessments:</u> Quizzes; Groups compare “Sinners” with “Thirteen Virtues”. Presentation: Groups will write the headlines for the front page of their newspaper and attempt to sell their newspaper to the rest of the class with a sneak peak at its headlines; essay comparing Edwards and Franklin writings; Journal—seventh entry

Week Nine &Ten: The War for North America
In order to understand the Seven Years’ War and its effects on Britain and the British colonies, the student will be able to:

A. Define the origins of the war between France and Great Britain
B. Evaluate the role of the Albany Congress
C. Trace the major battles on the map and the outcomes
D. Identify the major repercussions of the Seven Years' War
<u>Reading Assignments:</u> <i>American Vision</i> , (pp. 116-118)
Finish Benjamin Franklin's "Autobiography" (on Blackboard) (Chapters 11-14)
Review notes for final exam
<u>Content:</u> colonial relationship with Britain, Albany Congress, the Iroquois League, Benjamin Franklin, colonial wars, colonial unification, George Washington and Great Meadows, Fort William Henry, Paris Treaty of 1763, British policies after 1763, Pontiac's Rebellion ; reinforce test taking and staying healthy
<u>Assessments:</u> Quizzes; group discussion and essays on the major repercussions of the war; essay and discussion on Autobiography; groups will be divided into Colonial militias and British soldiers and each group will write a letter to the editor and relate their experiences living and fighting with the other group; debate between colonial militias and the British.

Figure 1: Average Student Responses to Likert Scale Survey with Variability for Each Response Set

