

# FACT SHEET

## COMPREHENSIVE CREDIT-BASED TRANSITION PROGRAMS<sup>1</sup>

Comprehensive credit-based transition programs typically encompass most of a student's last year or two of high school (11th and 12th grade). The programs offer classes to students either as an articulated<sup>2</sup> sequence of courses spanning many semesters or as their entire curriculum. The International Baccalaureate (IB) program<sup>3</sup>, some dual credit programs and some Tech Prep<sup>4</sup> programs are examples of comprehensive transition programs.

In a typical program, students experience what it is like to be a college student by learning to balance challenging courses with other activities, organizing their time wisely to complete all of their work, and acting in ways expected of a regular college student. The majority of students in comprehensive programs are academically advanced and ready for college-level work.

Comprehensive programs can be located on either a high school or college campus, and are taught by either high school or college teachers. High school students may take their courses with college students, or may be in a classroom with only their high school peers. Moreover, students may earn college credit through an end of course/program examination, through

## AT-A-GLANCE

**Comprehensive credit-based transition programs** encompass the majority of a student's academic coursework during the 11th and 12th grade. These programs provide students with academic preparation, exposure to rigorous coursework, and the ability to earn college credit.

completion of coursework, or in-escrow. Credit-in-escrow is an arrangement between a secondary and postsecondary partner whereby students receive college credit for high school work only if they subsequently enroll in and complete additional courses at the postsecondary level.

The goal of comprehensive credit-based transition programs is to offer students a program of classes based on academic rigor and enrichment. Given the high level of intensity of comprehensive programs, students are provided with more of an opportunity to learn the behaviors and attitudes required for success in college than in singleton credit-based transition programs.<sup>5</sup> However, the primary focus of comprehensive programs remains on providing students with academic preparation, exposure to rigorous coursework, and the ability to earn college credit.

---

<sup>1</sup>This fact sheet on comprehensive credit-based transition programs was prepared under contract for the U.S. Department of Education by DTI Associates, Inc. (DTI) and the Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University (CCRC). The purpose of this fact sheet, and others related to this project, is to give a broad overview and description of the types of programs that the *Accelerating Student Success* project is studying. For more information on the *Accelerating Student Success* study, please see the study's webpage on the U.S. Department of Education's website at: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/cclo/cbtrans/index.html>.

<sup>2</sup>Articulated courses generally entail students taking a series of classes in a specific academic/technical area over several semesters, building their skills over time.

<sup>3</sup>For more information on International Baccalaureate, please go to: <http://www.ibo.org>.

<sup>4</sup>For more information on Tech Prep programs, please go to: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/cte/tpreptopic.html>.

<sup>5</sup>Singleton programs are credit-based transition programs that focus on exposing students to college-level academics, and providing them with the option of taking one or more college-level classes that may allow them to earn college credit.