

# NACEP ISSUE BRIEF

## INITIAL COURSE-SPECIFIC TRAINING FOR CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT INSTRUCTORS

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**NACEP**  
Advancing Quality College  
Courses For High School Students

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## FOCUS

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At the heart of the NACEP Accreditation Standards is a belief that college faculty play an integral role in ensuring parity in concurrent enrollment course content, assessments, and expectations. NACEP's 16 standards in six categories serve to ensure the post-secondary institution offers the same college course in the high school as is offered on the campus and provides sufficient academic and program oversight to ensure course integrity. Integral to this process are the Faculty Standards which address the selection, preparation, and support of Concurrent Enrollment Instructors (CEIs).

Onboarding new CEIs through "course-specific training" is central to NACEP's F2 Faculty Standard, which focuses on initial instructor training. This approach orients CEIs to the important building blocks of the course they are preparing to teach and provides a foundation for the student learning and achievement that will take place in the classroom. It also serves as a first step in establishing a collaborative, ongoing partnership between the CEI and the Faculty Liaison (FL).

So, how should FLs go about ensuring they provide new CEI's with sufficient training on all the aspects of the course to be taught, while also building rapport? This brief provides a blueprint and resources to answer that question with the goal of helping FLs create course-specific training that is useful, meaningful, and supportive.

## SECTION 1 NACEP STANDARDS REGARDING INITIAL COURSE-SPECIFIC TRAINING

Among the 16 NACEP Accreditation Standards, four focus on the role of FLs in helping to approve, train, prepare, and support CEIs in their work. Specifically, the F2 Standard requires that “Faculty liaisons at the college/university provide all new concurrent enrollment instructors with course-specific training in **course philosophy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment** prior to the instructor teaching the course.” Of particular note in this description is the phrase “course-specific training,” which differentiates this initial training from any general orientation to campus procedures for CEIs that may occur at the administrative level. In other words, F2 is about situating CEIs from a disciplinary perspective to the courses they will be teaching.

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## SECTION 2 NUTS AND BOLTS OF INITIAL COURSE-SPECIFIC TRAINING

Depending on the size of the program/institution, the number of instructors, and the logistics involved (some programs serve populations in remote areas), the training of new CEIs can be approached in various ways, including

- individual or small group meetings between the FL and CEI(s) (face-to-face or virtually);
- asynchronous training (group or self-paced);
- synchronous group training (face-to-face or virtually).

In each case, the FL’s task is to acquaint the CEI with the course philosophy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessments as well as strategies to teach the course that mirror those used in on-campus sections.

The length of the training may vary depending upon the CEI’s prior graduate coursework, teaching experience, and the content of the course. For example, if the CEI has a master’s degree in content and extensive teaching experience, then the training might take place via one or two synchronous meetings or by having the CEI complete a series of asynchronous modules designed to walk new instructors through key aspects of the course. However, if the CEI has coursework in the discipline

(e.g. English) but not in the specific content area (e.g. composition), then the training may be more intense (e.g. graduate seminar, extended training/workshop). Such an approach might also result in graduate credits or Continuing Education Units for the high school teacher. Ultimately, the program knows the training is sufficient when the new teachers understand and can articulate, as well as put into action, the course philosophy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessments associated with the course.

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## SECTION 3

### BUILDING THE FOUNDATION OF THE COURSE

Regardless of the approach, all new CEI training must include the following as outlined in the F2 Standard: **course philosophy, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment**. These four elements work together to establish a foundation for teaching the course. The philosophy lays the groundwork for how the course is structured, while the curriculum provides the building blocks of the course's content. Pedagogy refers to the specific teaching approaches used to bring the philosophy and curriculum together. Finally, the assessment assures that the other pieces are functioning as a whole by measuring if students have learned what they should. These four factors help build parity and alignment in the course and common understanding between the instructors. Each is outlined in more detail below.

**Course philosophy** refers to the specific ideologies, assumptions, and theories that provide the basis for the curriculum and instructional goals of the course. As CEIs become acquainted with the philosophy of a course, they gain a better understanding of how that course is situated within the discipline as well as how the course relates to the values, mission, and culture of the partner institution.

Course philosophy training should include

- the disciplinary philosophies and theories that ground the course and its approach to disciplinary ways of knowing;
- the “what” of the course (content) as well as the “why” of the course (why the course is taught the way it is on campus; this includes the pedagogical approach);
- how the course and curriculum are conceptually situated within the discipline or field.

It is common for NACEP Accreditation Standards to be iterative—referencing, reinforcing, and building upon one another. We see this in the relationship between F2 and other standards. Beyond setting the basis for F2, training in course philosophy also supports work in Standard C2, which requires the higher education partner to ensure that courses “reflect the learning objectives, and the pedagogical, theoretical, and philosophical orientation of the respective college/university discipline.”

**Curriculum** training is an opportunity for FLs to demonstrate how the course philosophy is achieved through delivery of the course content.

In this part of the orientation, FLs should

- share and review the course syllabus;
- discuss student learning outcomes and how they are measured;
- explain key or required assignments as well as the grading scale;
- provide the CEI with discipline-specific resources and support for instruction;
- discuss whether or not the course is part of the general education curriculum, and if so, which course objectives align to the partner institution's general education requirements;
- review any pertinent discipline-specific readings or texts that a CEI should use to inform course instruction.

How much freedom a CEI has in building a custom syllabus or course assignments may vary and is often dependent upon the CEI's experience, the individual course, the course philosophy, and the placement of the course within the discipline and the institution (or curriculum). FLs should work with their departments to determine the extent to which CEIs can individualize their course content. As with course philosophy, F2 training in curriculum reinforces the intentions of the C2 Standard.



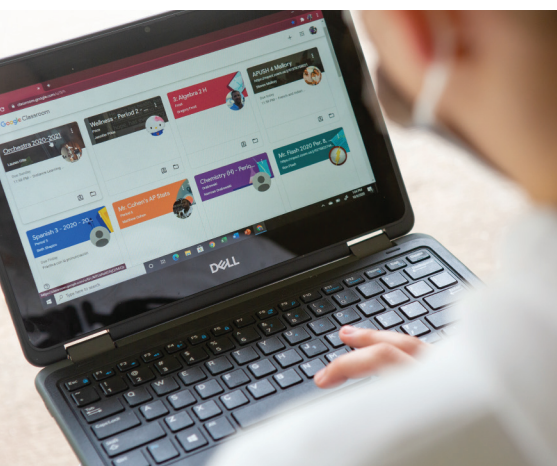
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**Pedagogy** for the CE course puts the curriculum in action; it's the tools used to aid students in achieving the learning outcomes for the course.

In the pedagogical portion of the training, FLs are encouraged to

- delve into the teaching strategies used to support and encourage student learning in the course—including why these instructional strategies are relevant/appropriate for learning the specific concepts;
- loop back to course philosophy in order to underscore how instructional strategies help achieve the overall goals of the course (e.g. active learning v. lecture);
- model the teaching practices to be utilized in the course;
- provide opportunities for CEIs to observe a class taught by an experienced instructor (either live or recorded) in order to analyze the pedagogical approach expected for the course.

Regardless of how CEIs are introduced to the pedagogical techniques used in the college classroom, the FL and CEI will have multiple opportunities to continue to communicate and share ideas about teaching approaches. Standards F3 (annual professional development) and C3 (classroom observation) help assure that the pedagogical, discipline-specific discussion is ongoing.

#### **Assessment**

Assessment, the final aspect of training, brings together all three of the previous F2 elements. Course assessments measure students' success in meeting curricular goals which are based on the course philosophy. Likewise, students' performance on the assessments reveals something about how the pedagogy supported learning. Assessment is also a key component of ensuring parity in the rigor of the concurrent enrollment course.



In the curriculum and pedagogy training, then, it's important to make sure that new CEIs have the information they need to develop and/or implement assessments that will allow students to demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes for the course, and that the evaluation of students by CEIs aligns with the standards and criteria used by the partner institution.

Here are some key points for FLs to consider when addressing course assessment with CEIs:

- explain how the assessments; demonstrate student achievement of the course learning outcomes;
- review the A1 Standard and discuss how the planned assessments will meet the standard for the course;
- review the criteria and standards for student work on those assessments (including any rubrics that should be used);
- calibrate grading and feedback by providing sample student work from actual college classes.

These efforts not only help meet the F2 criteria, but also support Standard A1, which “ensures CE students’ proficiency of learning outcomes is measured using comparable grading standards and assessment methods to on campus sections.” As with pedagogy, the conversation about the ways course assessments demonstrate student learning will be ongoing between the FL and CEI (and are often part of C2 observations and F3 annual discipline-specific professional development meetings).

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## SECTION 4 FORGING THE RELATIONSHIP

If the training includes all of the building blocks described in the previous section, new CEIs should be well prepared to teach their courses. However, the course-specific training for new instructors is about more than preparing the CEIs—it's also about establishing a collegial relationship upon which an ongoing partnership can be built. For this reason, it's important not only for FLs to share knowledge and expectations about the course, but also to hear and learn from the CEIs. Each person brings teaching strengths and experiences; earnest collaboration will ensure course parity and help create a rewarding partnership. Therefore, the training should not be configured as a one-way flow of information but should include opportunities for open dialogue.

Therefore, FLs should be sure to reserve time in the course-specific training to

- provide space for the CEI to contribute their teaching experience and knowledge of the discipline;
- ask questions about any contextual constraints the CEI has and help them prepare for those (e.g. class size, semester v. year-long course, availability of technology, etc.);
- ensure that the CEI has an opportunity to discuss any concerns about implementing the course in their classroom.

Establishing a mutually respectful, collaborative approach at the beginning of the relationship will not only prove beneficial later for the FL and CEI but also, and most importantly, for the students. Likewise, the partnership begun during the course-specific training has the potential to strengthen and deepen as FLs and CEIs interact during future classroom observations and professional development meetings.

**Course-specific training for new instructors is about more than preparation and creating course parity, it's also about establishing a collegial relationship upon which an ongoing partnership can be built.**



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## SECTION 5 INSIGHTS FROM THE FIELD

How do these elements look when woven into the work of building and delivering high quality concurrent enrollment courses? Voices from the field provide excellent insights of these features in action in a Concurrent Enrollment Partnership.

### **On the importance of a discipline-specific approach to CEI training:**

“The initial professional development training was exceedingly helpful in understanding not just what choices to make for the course, but why I would make those choices. Understanding the theory has been exceptionally helpful when deciding what to teach and how to teach it. Additionally, by doing the work with theory, I felt like I had a better understanding of what the university and the English department valued. A clearer concept of the culture I and my students were entering was helpful in laying the groundwork of the course.”

Jamie Erford,  
Bluffton High School (Ohio)

“[The] orientation is a great way for the FL to ensure [that the new CEI] is equipped with the tools they need to teach the college curriculum. Most CEI's have been in education for years, but some might not be familiar with the college they will now be partnering with or might be unfamiliar with the course content. The initial training was a chance for me to go over the curriculum and state standards, discuss and hopefully alleviate any concerns or anxieties they might have, and build that level of communication for the future.”

Karen Pack, Wiregrass Georgia  
Technical College (Georgia)

### **On how the course-specific training sets the stage for a collaborative relationship between the FL and the CEI:**

“The most valuable portion of the initial training meeting was developing a collaborative relationship with my FL and other [CEIs]. This relationship has been utilized throughout the school year for curriculum advice and professional development opportunities to improve my teaching practices.”

Amy Obermeyer,  
Rocky Mountain High School (Idaho)

“The new instructor training provides a foundation in the relationship between instructor and [FL] that encourages improved communication and collegiality. It provides an opportunity to have a two-way conversation about instructional needs and goals specific to individual schools and instructors. This is important to me because it allows me to better address my instructors' specific needs.”

Dr. Cacee Hoyer, University of  
Southern Indiana (Indiana)

## SECTION 6 CONCLUSION

As demonstrated here, onboarding new CEIs is a key component to the success of any CE course. At the cornerstone of the F2 Standard is the “course-specific” aspect of the training; that, along with a thorough and collaborative approach will ensure a successful ongoing partnership where the CEI feels prepared and supported and the FL is assured that the course is delivered with integrity.



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 CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT

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