



# THE ADVOCATE



Volume I Issue 4

Employee Federation of NHMCCD

February 1998

## EMBEDDED DUAL CREDIT COURSES: Is there any common ground? The Story of Embedded Dual Credit Government Courses

Part Three of Three Parts

**W**hat happened next is particularly interesting. At Tomball College there were openings for two coordinators, one in History and another in Political Science. Professor Tom Lovell and another individual applied for either coordinator positions. But because Tom Lovell had 18 hours of Political Science and the other individual did not, and therefore could not be considered as an instructor in Political Science and could not approve an Embedded course, Tom Lovell was given the Political Science position. On that very same day, President Diane Troyer met with Professor Lovell and asked if it would be "appropriate for him to review" the Cy-Fair proposal. "He (Professor Lovell) expressed that that would compromise his position as coordinator." President Diane Troyer then called a meeting of the entire Tomball College faculty to discuss the Cy-Fair Embedded Dual Credit government course. Declaring, "The issue is particularly difficult because of the history of the Cy-Fair District and Houston Community College," President Troyer asked the Senate for direction. The Tomball Faculty Senate passed the following resolution, "Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate of Tomball College stands in support of the professional judgment of the Political Science Faculty concerning the curriculum of all departmental coursework, that we value the process of dialog and continuous evaluation of educational efforts conducted in partnerships with other educational providers, and that we recognize the authority of the President to make decisions for the college."

Unilaterally, President Diane Troyer approved the in-progress Cy-Fair High School EDC government course. But that was not the end of the story. Cy-Fair ISD then informed President Troyer that they also expected the approval to apply to their presently on-going government courses at another high school, Cy-Creek. They argued that since the college approved the class at one site, it should apply to all Cy-Fair schools in the NHMCCD service area. When President Troyer refused, Cy-Fair

threatened to cancel the proposed "liaison counselor" program and to seek approval for their EDC courses from HCC. This type of academic coercion once again illustrates the need for Districtwide discipline safeguards and guidelines that can protect everyone from this kind of unprofessional, bad faith negotiation. On October 2, 1997, President Troyer issued a memorandum stating that Dr. McCann (Teaching field is Chemistry) and Dr. Bill Simcik (Teaching field is Biology) had been given the authority to approve the course content and outcomes of EDC courses with Cy-Fair in the field of government. Once again, no Political Science faculty member will have ever approved an EDC course in government with Cy-Fair ISD.

In late August, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board waded into the EDC controversy by making the following proposed rules:

**9.126 Faculty Qualifications.** (a) The college shall provide for the selection, hiring, supervision and evaluation of faculty for dual credit courses. (b) Faculty members teaching dual credit courses must be regularly employed faculty members or must meet the same standards, review, and approval procedures used by the college to select faculty responsible for teaching the same courses at the main campus.

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**9.128 Eligible Courses.** (a) Courses offered for dual credit must be identified as freshman level (1000s) as listed in the current edition of the Community College General Academic Course Guide Manual.

**9.129 Funding.** (b) The college may claim funding for all students enrolled in dual credit courses, with the following exception. Contact hours generated in classes made up exclusively of high school

students, taught on the high school campus by a full-time high school teacher are NOT eligible for state funding.

Although planning to approve these revised rules at their October meeting with full adoption in January, the Coordinating Board was met with tremendous opposition from many Presidents and Chancellors of community colleges. Consequently, the Coordinating Board will be holding investigative hearings on this issue in the near future.

**CONCLUSION:** There are two directions that the district can now take concerning EDC courses. First, faculty and administration can continue to engage in the same kind of behavior that has marked the EDC government courses. This escalating course of action will eventually result in the transfer of this controversy to the outside of the college district. If both sides honestly feel there is no room for common ground, then there is no need for further discussion. If the faculty believe that no course should ever be taught as an Embedded Dual Credit under any circumstances or if the administrator refuses to review the conditions and courses offered under EDC, there truly is no common ground. If the faculty, for example, issue a "no confidence" vote in the administration on this issue, does this enhance the image of higher education or NHMCCD's reputation? If the controversy and issues of curriculum development noncompliance are addressed to SAC and the Self-Study, does this enhance the image of higher education or NHMCCD's reputation? In testimony and behind the scenes, if both sides engage in fierce lobbying with the Coordinating Board, does this enhance the image of higher education or NHMCCD's reputation? If the Texas Legislature is brought into the controversy, as it surely will be with corrective legislation, does this enhance the image of higher education or NHMCCD's reputation?

Or is it possible, just possible, to solve this issue in-house? Can NHMCCD collectively

decide what is the right thing to do concerning EDC?

Is there any common ground? In the near future, each District Curriculum Team needs to discuss and decide the following issues on a discipline-by-discipline basis:

**(1) What Courses Should or Should Not Be Offered Through Embedded Dual Credit?**

A. Should a high school have to first prove that a Dual concurrent course is unavailable or cannot be taught before an EDC course is considered? For example, why can't the students come to either a campus or center by bus—or walk, in some instance they are across the street?

Why can't a college professor go there and teach the college course? What is prohibiting this from occurring? This is the same standard for all other government courses, for example, in the district. Why should EDC courses be treated differently?

B. Should EDC be limited to technical courses only?

C. Should EDC be limited to freshman level courses only?

**(2) What Caliber of Students Should or Should Not be Allowed to Take Embedded Dual Credit?**

A. Should college-only students be allowed to take EDC courses? Students taking the course only for high school credit would not be allowed in the same course. This is the standard for all other government courses, for example, in the district. Why should EDC courses be treated differently? Should those students be required to audit the course?

B. Should only honors students be allowed to take EDC courses? What is honors? Should a student without a high school diploma or a GED have to have a GPA of 3.0 or better, be in the top 10% of their class? Should this be the same requirement for any Dual Concurrent Credit course? Every other government class in the district, for example, requires the student to have either a high school diploma or the equivalency. Why should these courses be any different?

**(3) What should Be the Qualifications for Faculty Teaching Embedded Dual Credit?**

A. Should NHMCCD in some disciplines require higher standards than the SAC minimum of eighteen graduate hours to teach in a field? For example, "To teach any government

course in the district, an instructor must have either an undergraduate degree in Political Science and 18 hours of graduate credit in Political Science or if they DO NOT have an undergraduate degree in Political Science, they must have at least a Masters Degree in Political Science. (This would prohibit a high school teacher with an undergraduate degree in Secondary Education from teaching an EDC course if they have only taken 6 graduate courses in Political Science, period.)

B. Should an EDC high school teacher first be required to teach the college course at one of the centers or colleges in the district?

C. Should an EDC course be "Team Taught" with one of the college faculty the first time it is offered by that high school teacher?

D. Should either the Coordinator or Associate Dean review all EDC courses every semester?

**(4) What Contract or Academic Freedom Protection Do Embedded Dual Credit Faculty Require?**

A. Should all Dual Credit faculty be required to be under sole contract to NHMCCD, to protect against any infringement of academic freedom or a "chilling effect" in the classroom? If it is a high school teacher, should he or she be required to use his or her 6<sup>th</sup> hour or "free time" to teach any EDC courses? High school teachers are separately compensated for other activities they do during their "free hour" such as band, sports, and monitoring. Why can't they be separately paid for these courses, as well? If the instructor is under sole contract with NHMCCD, is this not then a Dual Concurrent Credit course?

B. Should any parental complaints about the EDC courses, other than those to the instructor, go directly to the Coordinator or Associate Dean? Any time a principal or other high school personnel interfere with the instructor, the content of the course, should it be a requirement that this be immediately reported to the Associate Dean, with complete records kept? Should any course ever be offered at any high school that will not guarantee complete and open academic course on freedom? What is to keep a principal from attempting to curtail discussion in a government course on "Gay in the Military" or "Abortion" etc.?

**(5) What Quality Control Should Be Implemented Concerning Embedded Dual Credit?**

A. Should Embedded Dual Credit students be required to pass an exit exam? What if this is not required of all other courses in the discipline in the district?

B. Should there be a Standardized Syllabus that all EDC courses in a field are required to use, even if it is not required of all other courses in the discipline in the district?

C. Should the EDC courses be extended to a one-year format, even if this is not the requirement of other courses in the discipline in the district?

D. If the high school course includes material that is not part of the college course, should the college course be completed first (including all grades), and then the high school course continued?

E. If a high school district mandates that all exams must include a "Retake or Second Shot" exam, should this be allowed in an EDC course? What if this is not allowed in any other course in the discipline in the district?

According to Vice Chancellor Linda Stegall, in Spring of 1997 there were 593 students enrolled in EDC courses and only 144 students enrolled in Dual Concurrent Credit courses.

Finding out what EDC courses are being offered at what college or center is not easy. They are nearly impossible to discover in the schedule. Here is a list of the classes offered by the district in the Spring of 1996. Remember, if it is taught at one ISD it can be potentially taught at another ISD.

EDC courses taught Spring 1996: Arts 1316 Drawing I, Biol 406 Biology I, Biol 2401 Human Anatomy and Physiology 1, Crij 1307 Crime in America, Econ 2301 Macroeconomics, Econ 2301 Microeconomics, Engl 1301 Composition and Rhetoric 1, Engl 1302 Composition and Rhetoric II, Engl 2322 Survey of English Literature 1, Engl 2323 Survey of English Literature 11, Govt 2301 American Government 11, Govt 2301 American Government 11, Hist 1301 United States History 1, Hist 1302 United States History 11, Huma 1301 Introduction to the Humanities, math 1314 College Algebra, Ofad 1301 Business Writing 1, Phys 1401 General Physics 1, Psc 2301 General Psychology, Biol 1406.

- Enrollment in Embedded Dual Credit courses for spring 1997: 593 students.
- Enrollment for Concurrent Dual Credit courses for spring 1997: 144 students.

**Editor's note:**

This is the last report on the issues that should be considered in Embedded Dual Credit Courses. We would like to thank Prof. Carrie Davis for her research and for bringing this extensive information to us.



## What is the American Federation of Teachers and Who is Eligible to Join?

The AFT actively serves a number of needs in the college district. First and foremost, we support delivering quality education to NHMCCD students. We have hosted seminars on good teaching which included presentations by faculty who have been recognized as outstanding. We regularly feature educational issues in The Advocate. Most recently, we've highlighted concerns regarding Embedded Dual Credit courses, with a three-part series ending with this issue. Our members regularly receive state and national publications featuring educational issues. Union representatives regularly attend the Instructional Management Team meetings at NHC as well as meetings of the Board of Trustees.

Our role in delivering quality education branches out into related roles. We have worked to ensure that support and professional staff work in an environment, which nurtures productivity—an environment which is free from conflict, including sexual harassment. Support and professional staff play a vital role in serving students, and these employees deserve a professional environment which allows them to perform at their best. The union has also worked to insure that faculty work in that same professional environment, and we keep a vigilant eye on issues of academic freedom. Our activities on behalf of staff and faculty include representation in conflicts and grievances. We have also provided mediation to resolve conflicts before they reached the grievance stage. When necessary, we have provided legal representation. Contrary to what the stereotype of unions may lead some people to believe, we do not advocate for members who are not doing their jobs. Instead, we work with these employees to help improve their skills. We do make sure that they are provided the due process to which they are entitled during remediation.

Our members reflect a broad spectrum. Some of them find the legal protection and representation in conflicts comforting and see union dues as a cheap form of insurance. Most members joined because they believe in the causes in which we are engaged and use their membership as a statement of support.

I have recently visited with several employees at the District Office who were interested in membership. However, they felt some anxiety about joining when they work so closely with upper levels of administration. Their fear was that some sort of reprisal would ensue for joining. I shared their concern recently with Dr. Pickelman, who was troubled to hear that

anyone might fear to exercise freedom of association here at the college. He made clear his position: "We want an environment of open communication in this district. Employees' joining organizations which they believe represent their interests is not only accepted but encouraged."

Who is eligible for membership? If you're reading this article, chances are good that you are eligible. All support staff and faculty are eligible. Professional staff members up through some directors are eligible. If you are unsure of eligibility, a simple phone call can provide the answer. For questions, call 281-618-5544.

**ALAN HALL**  
President



### A LOOK AT THE MWF MORNING CLASS MANDATE

Is there any way to describe the MWF morning class mandate as other than stupid? I mean, here we are, being told time and time again that we have to adjust to the new student (but that doesn't mean lowering standards), that the student is our customer (but they're not always right) and that faculty should learn to accept non-traditional approaches to higher education as not only inevitable, but desirable.

So, we adjust. One way we adjust is to offer MW morning class sections, in addition to the more traditional MWF class sections. The MW sections end up becoming popular. Instead of walking away, as many students did, when they couldn't get their TTH morning sections, they took MW sections.

But there was a problem with MW sections: it wasn't THEIR (the administrators shoving the market paradigm down our throats) idea. We obviously tapped into a market with the MW morning class sections. Many companies like, say, Compaq, which just happens to be the largest employer in our district, have gone to a 3 and 4 day week, 10 and 12 hour shifts; so, naturally the non-traditional class schedule (such as TTH and MW morning sections) allows these folks to work a full time job on the weekends, and go to college Monday through Thursday. Theoretically, at least.

Well, not anymore. Despite the success of MW morning classes, or because of the success, MW sections are now verboten. And for what reasons? Well, here are some of the reasons that I have heard:

1. MWF sections allow students to take 4 classes back to back and still go to work in the afternoon.
2. Colleges have always had MWF morning classes, going back to my college days even.

3. The campus is too empty on Fridays. IF taxpayers were to see this, they'd be outraged that the facilities are not being used more efficiently!
4. They (MW sections) caused a scheduling problem with classroom availability being at such a premium.
5. They (MW sections) caused enrollment to go down.

What a load! Each of these so-called reasons is just to hide the fact that faculty has done a better job adjusting to the new market of students than THEY have. It's not that faculty don't "get" the market paradigm; the fact of the matter is the very people espousing it, don't really understand what it means. Of course faculty get it. They're on the front lines. We have observed the market changing for some time. When administrators come down from the mountain to tell us the market is changing, our response is generally akin to "been there, done that." MW classes were OUR idea. They were one way that we responded to a changing market, and they worked tremendously well. We were right in offering them. The removal of MW classes in the spring at NHC ONLY has contributed to the latest enrollment disaster to hit this campus. The assumption that administration made was that students would take MWF classes rather than walk away if they had to. The only problem, nobody HAS to go to this college. They obviously walked away. In a semester where we are trying to increase average class size, we removed a popular class format, replaced it with a less popular one, and then hung onto the railing for dear life as MWF classes across campus were cancelled for lack of enrollment.

Students do not like to come to class on Fridays, for whatever reason. Administration should simply accept this. When we offered MWF class only, it was usually the student's last choice, and then attendance on Fridays became abysmal. And we would have told the administration this, if they had bothered to solicit faculty input from the start.

If you want to know what is going on in the classrooms at NHMCCD, what works, and what does not, you ask the faculty. If you want to know the latest management paradigm making its way through the links, you ask . . . .

**TIM HOWARD**  
Professor  
NHC



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We invite you to send us your opinions, your news, your questions and so forth. The Advocate is a forum for information and free interchange of ideas. Send your articles to Nell Newsom, Editor, ACAD 217, NHC, (e-mail at Ira N. Newsom@NHMCCD.edu), or submit to any of the following officers: Alan Hall, President, ACAD 217, NHC, Rich Almstedt, KC; Tim Howard, NHC, Donald James, MC; Allen Vogt, NHC, Mel McFadden, NHC; Mark S. Dial, District Office, Mary Phelps, TC.

**Famous Union Leaders**

Lewis is pictured circa 1920 shortly after becoming UMWA president.

John L. Lewis was born the son of a Welsh coal miner who was a strong union man. Lewis became a miner at

age 14. After helping remove bodies from a mine explosion in Hannah, Wyoming which killed 236 men and boys, Lewis said "The descent into the into the mine that had become a charnel house was a descent in hell.. .It was at Hannah that I was baptized in my own tears." Lewis was self-educated; he read widely from novels, historical works, the Bible, and Shakespeare." He was a wonderful speaker who also had a strong physical presence. Becoming involved in the United Mine Workers union early in his career, he filled various posts in his rapid rise to the top as the nation's labor czar. He was UMW statistician and Managing editor of the United Mine Workers Journal.

Finally, in 1920 John L. Lewis became United Mine Workers international president, and was active in the labor movement until his retirement as UMW head in 1960.

John L. Lewis was a passionate man, passionate about safety for the mine workers, passionate about workmen's compensation. He is remembered with affection as one who made a difference.

**Nell Newsom**  
Editor

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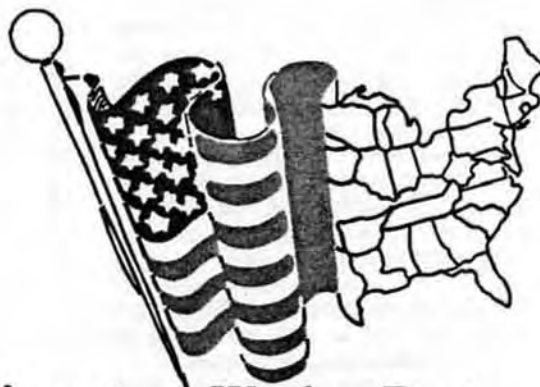
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