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Record Number of High Schoolers Enroll in College Classes

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- Cedarville University has experienced 15-consecutive years of record enrollment, and dual-credit high school students have become a growing part of the boom.

Last fall, Cedarville announced 4,715 students were now taking classes at the private, Baptist university about 30 minutes east of Dayton, Ohio. Of that number, 567 were dual enrollment students – high schoolers taking college courses for both high school and college credit.

That number represents a 28.5% increase from fall 2020 when 441 high school-age students were dual enrollment students.

A majority of Cedarville’s dual enrollment students complete their coursework online. For this academic year, 91.5% are online learners. The most popular classes are general electives, classes that all students must take to graduate.

The number of students earning early college credit through Ohio’s College Credit Plus program, which covers tuition, books and fees for public school students, also rose. There are now 334 College Credit Plus students taking classes at Cedarville, up by 69 students from 265 last fall.

According to Stephen Buettell, director of Cedarville’s dual enrollment program, the most popular classes include Politics and American Culture, Speech, U.S. History and General Psychology.

Buettell credits the growing number of students signing up for dual enrollment to several factors, including the impact of COVID on high school students learning remotely and the university’s heightened marketing and communications effort toward that population segment.

“We are one of the few colleges that require a one-on-one advising meeting to go over everything, including course choices, before a student can enroll,” he offered. “We don’t offer open enrollment, so students can be well taken care of. And we try to answer questions in a timely manner, responding to voice mails within 12-15 hours of getting them.

“We get comments from families like, ‘Oh, I talked to a real person’ or ‘Thanks for returning my call so quickly.’”

Because of the online class focus, dual enrollment students are coming to the university from around Ohio, across the United States and internationally. “We had a missionary student sign up for classes,” Buettell said. “That student told other missionary kids, who hadn’t even heard of Cedarville before, and they signed up. It’s been amazing to see what God has done with the program.”

For students and parents interested in classes taught from a biblical worldview, which Cedarville emphasizes in every academic discipline, the reputation of the university speaks for itself.

“I think we’ve done a much better job of making families aware that they can complete dual enrollment classes with Cedarville online,” Buettell shared. “They can get a jump-start on their 1000-day Cedarville journey and make high school coursework count toward their four-year degree at Cedarville. Because we believe that every day matters in a student’s life, we want to see them pursue dual enrollment courses with a Christian worldview.”

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,715 undergraduate, graduate and online students in more than 150 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is one of the largest private universities in Ohio, recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings and high student engagement ranking. For more information about the University, visit cedarville.edu.

By Clem Boyd