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Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment as Related to College Readiness and Retention at a Tennessee University

Diana Bowers
Happay Valley High School

Virginia P. Foley
East Tennessee State University, foleyv@etsu.edu

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Diana Bowers

Happy Valley High School

Virginia Foley

East Tennessee State University

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a significant relationship between students who entered a Tennessee university for the first time in the fall of 2014 who had earned either Advanced Placement (AP) or dual enrollment credit and their college readiness and 1-year college retention. College readiness was defined by students' American College Testing (ACT) sub scores in English, reading, and mathematics. The Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) regulates the minimum sub score for each sub section that a student must obtain to be college ready. College retention was defined by students who enrolled at the university in the fall of 2014 and reenrolled in the fall of 2015 at the same university.

The independent variables for this study were AP credits received in AP English Language and Composition, AP English Literature and Composition, AP Statistics, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, and dual enrollment credit received in any course. The dependent variables for this study were college readiness as defined by TBR and fall-to-fall retention. A series of chi-square tests of independence was performed to examine the differences in college readiness and fall-to-fall retention between students who had earned AP or dual enrollment credit and those students who had not.

The quantitative findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between students who enroll in their first college year with AP English or math credit or dual enrollment credit and first year retention rates when compared to students who do not reenroll with AP English or math credit or dual enrollment credit. The results indicated there was no difference in students who enrolled with AP English or math credit and students who enrolled with dual enrollment credit regarding their fall-to-fall retention rates. AP English credit increased the likelihood that a student was college ready in both English and reading based on TBR determinations of college readiness. Credit in an AP mathematics course also increased the likelihood that a student was college ready in math based on TBR determinations of college readiness.