

## EARLY COLLEGE & DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS

Through the Division of Access and Transition, which manages K-12 partnerships in the region, MWCC administers numerous College Access, Dual Enrollment and Early College programs. These programs provide middle and high school students with an opportunity to do some post-secondary planning from an early age, and to gain some college credit and experience in junior and senior years of high school. Staff provide an array of academic, college and career awareness services, including, but not limited to: college coursework, academic and career counseling, tutoring, mentoring, college tours, workshops and activities. Services are generally provided through targeted grant initiatives. Most programs are free of charge. For more information on any program, call 978-630-9248 or visit our website. (<https://mwcc.edu/academics/early-college/>)

### GETTING A HEAD START ON COLLEGE

Whether in high school or homeschool programs, juniors and seniors (age 16 or older) can enroll in MWCC classes prior to high school graduation and take courses that may transfer to most two and four-year public and private institutions while also completing their high school graduation requirements. Participants are considered MWCC students and enjoy all the same benefits and responsibilities. Students are encouraged to participate fully in college activities and programs, including the Honors Program, academic support services and other co-curricular activities. Students may enroll at MWCC on either a part- or full-time basis. Students are not officially matriculated but permitted to adhere to the catalog year in which they begin taking dual enrollment courses.

#### Early College Academy

Students enrolled at **Gardner High School, Leominster High School/CTEI/LCE, Fitchburg High School** and **Sizer School** may apply for the North Central Massachusetts Early College Academy. At FHS and LHS, classes primarily take place at each high school or virtually, during the school day, and are taught by MWCC or Fitchburg State University faculty. Students at Sizer School primarily take courses with Fitchburg State University, and students from Gardner High School take most courses at the MWCC campus during the school day.

Early College programs are also offered at **Narragansett Regional High School** and **Athol High School**. Coursework is integrated into the school day, and all courses are part of the Massachusetts Transfer Agreement, ensuring transfer to public institutions and many private colleges and universities as well. Juniors take courses at their respective high schools, while seniors attend courses on the MWCC campus.

Students will attain both high school and college credit for successfully completed courses and are eligible to earn 12 or more college credits prior to high school graduation in a defined academic pathway, such as Healthcare, Business, Education or Liberal Arts & Sciences. There is no cost to students for these courses or the program. This program is offered in partnership with these high schools and Fitchburg State University. For additional information, interested students should contact their respective guidance office at participating schools.

#### Gateway to College

*Gateway to College has new cohorts starting in both September and January of each year.*

This program is a designated early college program designed for students who have struggled in a traditional high school setting, either socially or academically, and need a fresh start in a new setting. Students ages 16-21 who have not attained a high school diploma (or equivalency), can enroll at MWCC to earn both high school and college credits toward a high school diploma and associate degree or certificate. This program is available to students enrolled in Gardner Public Schools. Students interested in Gateway to College must attend an information session in the spring or summer for entry in the fall, or, in the fall for entry in spring semester, complete an application, and interview with a Gateway to College Resource Specialist. Additional information is available at this website (<https://mwcc.edu/academics/early-college/early-college-dual-enrollment/gateway-to-college/>), or by calling the Division of Access & Transition at 978-630-9248.

#### Pathways Early College Experience

*Pathways Early College Experience program accepts a new cohort to start each Fall.*

The Pathways program is an Early College high school opportunity for motivated high school/home school students preparing to enter their junior year, who would like to get a jump start on college. The Pathways program provides an opportunity to earn a high school diploma and an Associate degree while completing their junior and senior years of high school at MWCC's Gardner Campus. Admission into the program is a competitive process. This program is offered through a partnership with the Gardner Public School District and Mount Wachusett Community College. Students interested in Pathways must attend an information session in the spring or summer for admission in the fall, complete an application, place into college-level coursework through either a high school transcript review or an Accuplacer assessment, and participate in an interview. Students typically have a GPA of a 3.0 or higher,

but lower GPA's will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Additional information is available at this website (<https://mwcc.edu/academics/early-college/early-college-dual-enrollment/pathways-early-college/>) or by calling the Division of Access & Transition at 978-630-9248.

### Fire Science Technology Dual Enrollment

Students in their junior or senior year from our service area are eligible to participate in our Fire Science Technology Dual Enrollment program, which is taught in a hybrid format - both online and with an in-person component. This free program holds classes virtually during the week, with an in-person component required one Saturday each month, conducted at the Fitchburg or Westminster fire station. Students attend Fire Science Technology classes as electives in conjunction with their high school classes. Learn more about the Fire Science Technology Program ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D\\_9JS-hOo2Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D_9JS-hOo2Y)) from Patrick Haverty, Fire Science Instructor and his students at Fitchburg High.

### Automotive Technology Dual Enrollment

Students enrolled in Gardner Public Schools are eligible as high school juniors and seniors to enroll in the Automotive Technology program, taking 1 class/semester during the academic day and earning credit toward the MWCC Automotive Technology Degree. Classes are funded through grant dollars, and free to students and families. For more information, please contact [earlycollege@mwcc.mass.edu](mailto:earlycollege@mwcc.mass.edu).

### Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Partnership

Massachusetts High school juniors and seniors from across the service area are able to participate in Commonwealth Dual Enrollment Partnership (CDEP) courses, typically offered in spring or summer semesters each year. The courses help students attain college credit for some of the general education and introductory courses found in most programs of study, and are part of the Massachusetts Transfer Agreement, meaning that they will be accepted at MA public colleges and universities; many private colleges and universities will also accept these credits. CDEP courses are FREE to participating students, and while open to all students, are designed to support students who are first-generation college attendees, served by other public service programs such as free/reduced lunch, diverse and underrepresented in higher education. For more information, contact your guidance office or email us at: [earlycollege@mwcc.mass.edu](mailto:earlycollege@mwcc.mass.edu).

### Dual Enrollment High School Partnerships

Students enrolled at area schools in the North Central region who have established a dual enrollment partnership, including **Montachusett Regional Technical Vocational School, Ayer-Shirley Regional High School** and **Clinton High School** also have the opportunity to participate in dual enrollment courses onsite at their respective high schools. Students can attain both high school and college credit for successfully completed courses. For additional information, interested students should contact their high school guidance office.

### Traditional Dual Enrollment

Students who wish to take classes at an MWCC campus from a high school that does not currently participate in an early college or dual enrollment partnership may still enjoy this benefit through traditional dual enrollment. High school students who intend to complete a portion of their junior or senior year at the college through MWCC's Traditional Dual Enrollment program must:

- Submit a completed Dual Enrollment Admission Application, with guidance counselor and parent/guardian signature. This application is available **at this website** or through the Admissions Office at 978-630-9447 or [admissions@mwcc.mass.edu](mailto:admissions@mwcc.mass.edu)
- Apply no later than mid-August for fall classes, early January for spring classes and early June for summer classes (*applications received after the posted application deadlines will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis*).
- Be 16 years of age or a current junior or senior and hold a minimum 2.8 GPA (official transcript required). The college will recalculate all GPAs on a 4.0 scale.
- Submit your transcript for multiple measure placement based on academic performance in high school, or, take the Accuplacer college placement assessment, and place into college-level English and Math. Students who do not test into college-level courses in both subjects *may* be permitted to take foundation-level courses with the approval of their high school and the Division Dean.

Dual enrollment applicants must complete a personal interview, sign a student contract, and meet established guidelines of MWCC and their participating high school. Students enrolled in traditional dual enrollment are not allowed to participate in classes beginning after 6:00 PM without permission from the student's high school and parent or guardian. Students enrolled in dual enrollment programs are not allowed to participate in web classes without permission from the student's high school and parent or guardian.

Students enrolled in this program are responsible for all college tuition/fees, and are ineligible for financial aid while they are enrolled in high school; payment plans may be arranged with Student Financial Services.