

Simultaneous Enrollment in Multiple B.C. Public Post-Secondary Institutions

How many students enroll in multiple institutions at the same time?

Each Fall, roughly 6,000 to 7,000 students enroll in two or more B.C. public post-secondary institutions at the same time. In Fall 2010, there were 6,580 students simultaneously enrolled in two or more institutions, representing 2.1% of all unique headcount registrants in the B.C. public post-secondary system. Similar proportions of students were dual enrolled in the Spring and Summer terms (2.2% and 2.1% respectively)¹.

Simultaneous enrollees in the Fall are primarily comprised of students enrolled in two institutions at the same time (6,438 “dual enrollees”), as well as 140 students enrolled in three or four institutions simultaneously.

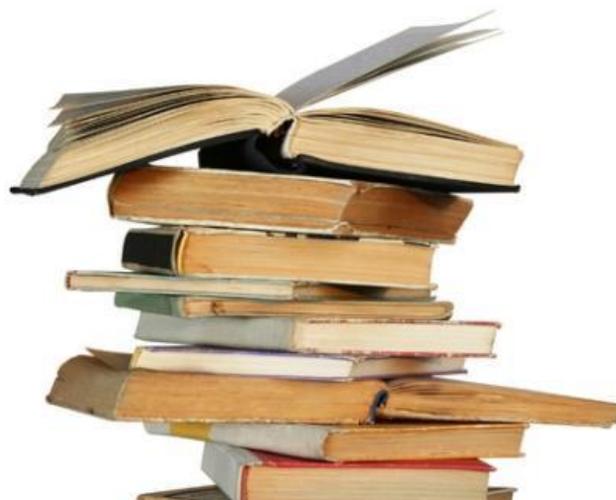
Why do students dual enrol?

Students who enrol in more than one institution simultaneously might be reacting to full courses, filling gaps in course offerings, optimizing their availability for course delivery, or choosing to take additional courses on-line. This leads to important questions:

- Are dual enrollments concentrated in particular institutions or programs?
- Does dual enrollment indicate a need for institutions to expand their course or program offerings?
- Can dual enrollment patterns help identify an opportunity for collaborations between institutions?
- Is there any educational gain or loss to students who attend two institutions simultaneously?
- Is dual enrollment a temporary transition event occurring at the time a student transfers between institutions, or is it a long-term sustained series of events?

This newsletter helps to answer some of these questions by providing the institutions, programs, timing and trends in dual enrollment behavior in the B.C. public post-secondary system.

Inside This Newsletter	Page
• How many students enroll in multiple institutions at the same time?	1
• Why do students dual enrol?	1
• Dual Enrolment Trends	2
• In which terms do students register over the academic year and when do they dual enrol?	3
• Is dual enrollment concentrated among students with specific registration patterns?	3
• Is dual enrollment a temporary transition event or a sustained series of events?	4
• How many institutions do students enroll in simultaneously?	4
• Dual Enrolments by Institution	4-5
• Dual Enrollments at TRU Open Learning	5-6
• What would dual enrollment look like in the absence of TRU-OL?	6
• Dual Enrollment by Program Area	6-7
• Dual Enrollments by Study Level and Credential Category	7
• Conclusion: What does it all mean?	8



1. Dual enrollment rate = (# of dual enrollees in the period) ÷ (total # of unique headcount registrants in the period).
 Fall: 6,438 / 308,936 = 2.1%; Spring: 7,005 / 316,410 = 2.2%; Summer: 4,301 / 204,975 = 2.1%.

Dual Enrolment Trends:

The Student Transitions Project (STP) has tracked dual enrollment from Fall 2003 to Fall 2010 and finds that the proportion of students enrolled in more than one institution simultaneously in a Fall term has steadily declined from a high of 2.7% in Fall 2003 to a low of 2.1% in Fall 2010.

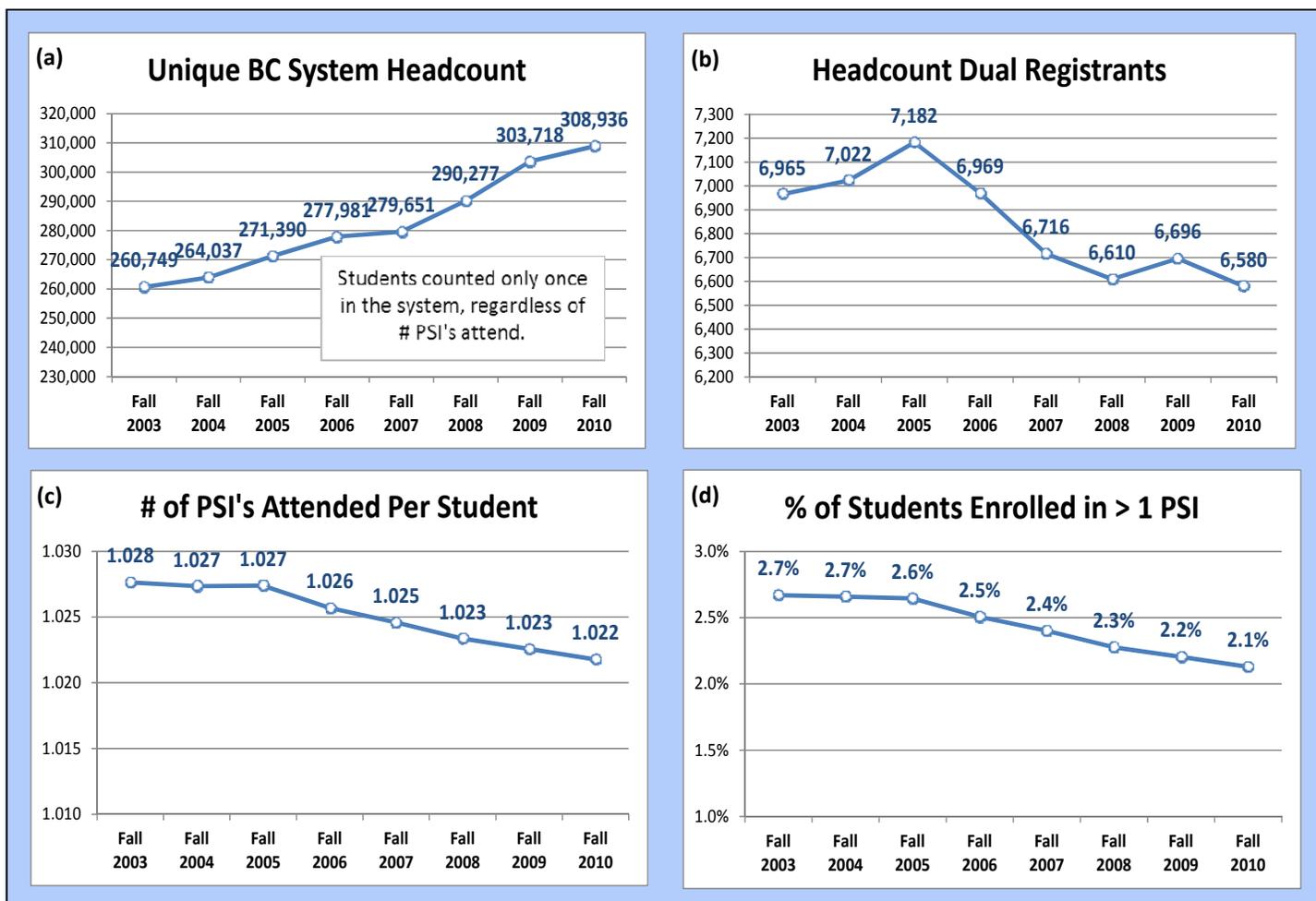
The ratio of the number of students enrolled in two institutions (**Figure 1b**) to the number of unique headcount² students registered in the system (**Figure 1a**) is the dual enrollment rate. Despite the unique headcount enrollments increasing over time, the number of students registered in more than one institution declined and this has resulted in a declining dual enrollment rate (see **Figure 1d**). Students typically enroll in just one institution in a Fall term, as indicated by the ratio of 1.022 institutions per student in Fall 2010, down from 1.028 in Fall 2003 (see **Figure 1c**).

Student Transitions Project (STP): The Student Transitions Project is British Columbia's collaborative research project that measures student success from the K-12 to post-secondary systems. This effective system-wide partnership, involving B.C.'s education and advanced education ministries and public post-secondary institutions, is tracking student success by reporting on student transition rates to post-secondary education, student mobility among post-secondary institutions, and post-secondary completion and retention rates. STP is managed by a steering committee with representation from the two education ministries, public institutions and the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT).

STP Steering Committee Members:

- Robert Adamoski*, Chair, Associate Director, BCCAT.
- Bob Cowin*, Director, Institutional Research, Douglas College.
- Patty Beatty-Guenter*, Director, Research & Analysis, Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology.
- Charito Elderfield*, Manager, Business Intelligence, Ministry of Education.
- Walter Sudmant*, Director, Planning and Institutional Research, University of British Columbia.

Figure 1: Number and % of Students Simultaneously Enrolled in Two or More B.C. Public Post-Secondary Institutions in a Fall Term



2. "Unique headcount" eliminates double counting of students enrolled in more than one institution.

In which terms do students register over the academic year and when do they dual enrol?

In any given academic year, students may enrol in one, two or all three terms (Fall, Spring and Summer). In 2010/11, 27% of the 443,000 unique registrants in the year enrolled in all three terms, 34% registered in two terms and the largest group (40%) enrolled in just one term in the year (see **Figure 2a**).

Although two-thirds of students enrol in two or more terms per year, dual-enrollees are more likely to enrol in just one term of the year. Among nearly 14,000 dual enrollees over the academic year, 75% were single-term registrants in the year; 21% dual enrolled twice in the year (in each of two terms) and 4% dual enrolled in each of three terms of the year (see **Figure 2a**).

Academic Calendar by Year and Term:

FALL	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
SPRING	JAN	FEB	MARCH	APRIL
SUMMER	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST

Figure 2a:

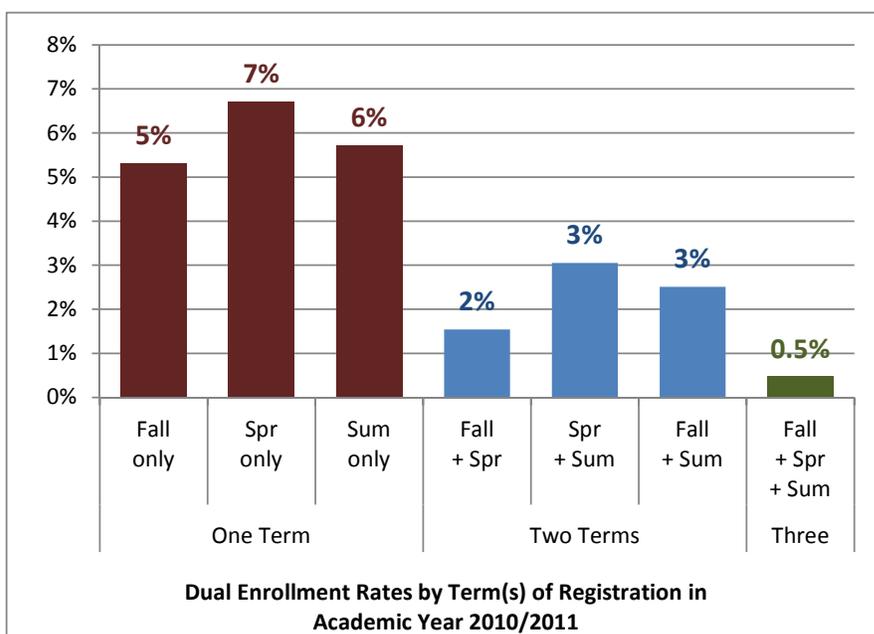
Distribution of Registrants and Dual Registrants in Academic Year 2010/11 by Term(s) of Registration

# of Terms	Reg. Term(s)	Total Registrants		Dual Registrants	
		#	% Distrib	#	% Distrib
One Term	Fall only	76,379	17%	4,056	30%
	Spr only	55,344	12%	3,716	27%
	Sum only	43,464	10%	2,481	18%
Two Terms	Fall + Spr	106,561	24%	1,645	12%
	Spr + Sum	35,515	8%	1,083	8%
	Fall + Sum	7,006	2%	176	1%
Three Terms	Fall + Spr + Sum	118,990	27%	561	4%
Acad Year Total (Unique Students)		443,259	100%	13,718	100%

Is dual enrollment concentrated among students with specific registration patterns?

Although the overall student population is more inclined to register in multiple terms of the year, dual enrollees are more inclined to be single-term registrants in the year (see **Figure 2a**). This leads to higher dual enrollment rates among those who registered in one term of the year (6% to 7%) and lower dual enrollment rates among those who registered in two terms in the year (2% to 3%) or three terms in the year (0.5%) (see **Figure 2b**). Because of these distinct differences in enrollment frequency and dual enrollment patterns, the dual enrollment rate is roughly 2% in any single term, but 3.1% for the academic year³.

Figure 2b: Dual Enrollment Rates by Term(s) of Registration in Academic Year 2010/11



3. Academic Year 2010/11 Dual Enrollment Rate = (# of unique dual enrollees in the year) ÷ (total # of unique headcount registrants in the year) = Academic year 2010/11: 13,718 / 443,259 = 3.1%.

Is dual enrollment a temporary transition event or a sustained series of events?

Based on a random sample of students enrolled in multiple institutions simultaneously, approximately half of the dual enrollment activity is a temporary transition event occurring for a single term when a student transfers to a new institution⁴; roughly one quarter is sustained over multiple terms; and the remaining dual enrollments are haphazard with no clear evidence of being a transition-related or continuous event.

How many institutions do students enroll in simultaneously?

The vast majority of post-secondary registrants (98%) currently enroll in just one institution in the Fall term. Of those who enroll in more than one institution, the dominant pattern is to register in two institutions (2.1%) rather than three or more (0.5%).

The number of students who enroll in three or more institutions has averaged around 170 students each Fall, but this number has been declining with the dual enrolment rate, from 229 students in Fall 2003 to 142 in Fall 2010.

Special Thanks: The STP would like to thank the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology and the B.C. public post-secondary institutions for collaborating in this research effort. Without their co-operation and data contributions, this research could not have been accomplished.

The following B.C. public post-secondary institutions are included in this study and grouped by institution designation in 2011/12:

Community Colleges— Camosun College, College of New Caledonia, College of the Rockies, Douglas College, Langara College, North Island College, Northern Lights College, Northwest Community College, Okanagan College, Selkirk College, Vancouver Community College.

Institutes— British Columbia Institute of Technology, Justice Institute of British Columbia, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology

Teaching-Intensive Universities – Capilano University, Emily Carr University of Art + Design, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Royal Roads University, Thompson Rivers University, Vancouver Island University, University of the Fraser Valley.

Research-Intensive Universities – Simon Fraser University, University of British Columbia, University of Northern British Columbia, University of Victoria.

Dual Enrolments by Institution

At each B.C. public post-secondary institution in Fall 2010, the number and proportion of students who were simultaneously enrolled in another institution is shown in **Figure 3**.

- Three institutions account for 62% of all unique headcount dual enrollment activity, with 35% occurring at Thompson Rivers University Open Learning, 20% at BCIT and 13% at JIBC⁵. This suggests that a significant proportion of dual enrollment activity is occurring on-line, through correspondence course offerings, and at institutions with a wide selection of part-time programs and short courses.
- A moderate proportion of dual enrollment activity occurs at many of the larger institutions in B.C., including UBC, Douglas College, Langara College, UVic, VCC, TRU and SFU. These institutions with relatively large enrollments have a sizeable number of students simultaneously enrolled elsewhere, but in proportion to total enrollment, the institution's share of dual registrants is relatively small.
- A number of other institutions have a relatively large number of dual registrants for the size of the institution, such as Thompson Rivers Open Learning (TRU-OL), Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT) and Emily Carr University of Art + Design (ECU).
- Roughly half of the B.C. public post-secondary institutions play a relatively small roll in total dual enrollment activity in the province.

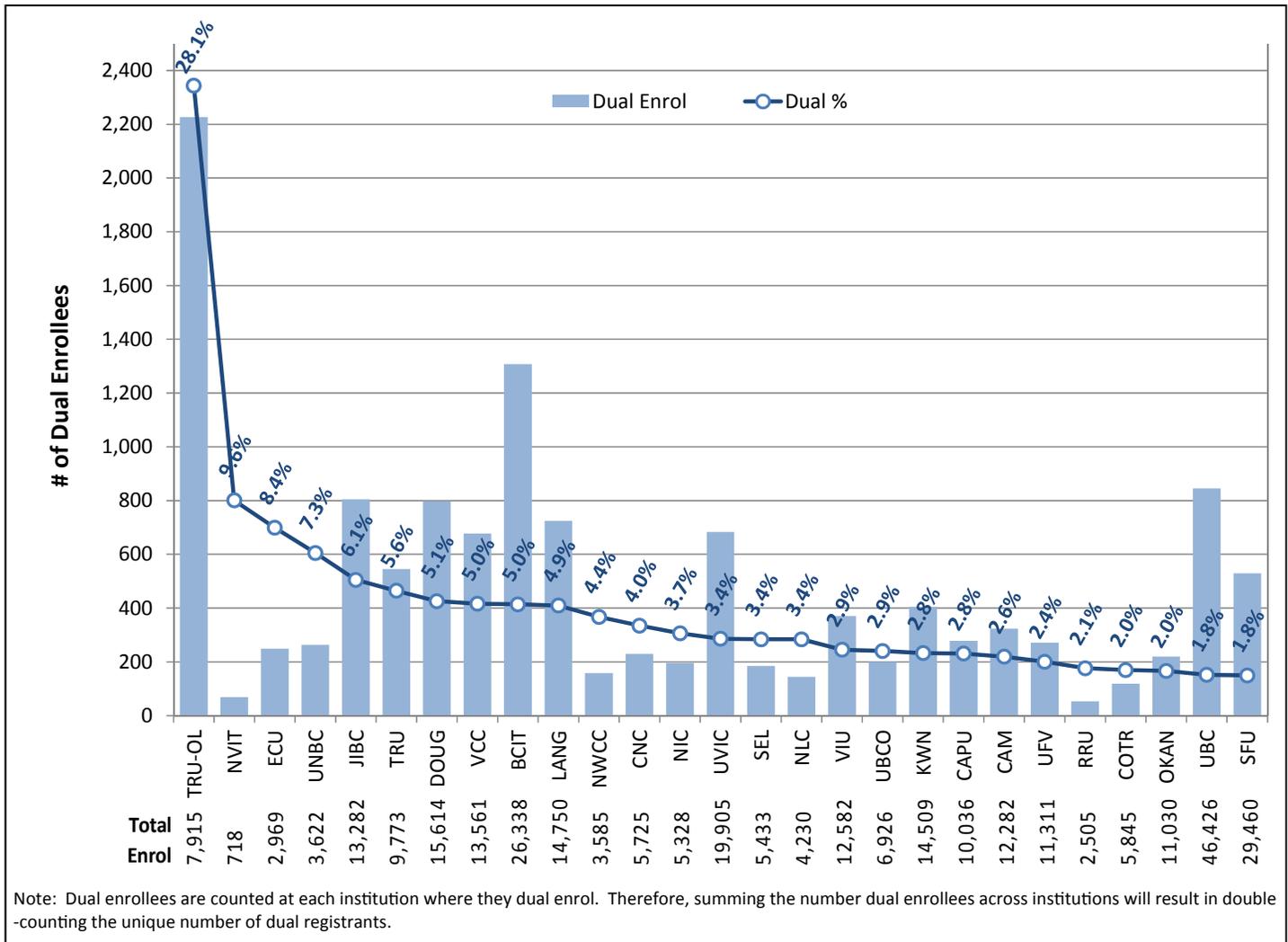
While there are some differences in the dual enrollment rate at each institution, the downward or relatively flat trend in dual enrollment rates is consistent across each institution, except for Northwest Community College, Thompson Rivers University and UBC, Okanagan where we see increases of two to three percentage points in the dual enrollment rate from Fall 2003 to Fall 2010. Growth in dual enrollments at these institutions is mainly attributed to more students enrolling simultaneously at:

- **Northwest Community College** with Justice Institute of B.C., British Columbia Institute of Technology, or Northern Lights College;
- **Thompson Rivers University** with Thompson Rivers Open Learning (TRU-OL) or Okanagan College;
- **UBC, Okanagan** with Thompson Rivers Open Learning (TRU-OL) or Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT).

4. Normally, when a student transfers from one institution to another they do not enrol at both institution simultaneously; however, in some cases, students temporarily enrol at both institutions for a single term before continuing their education at the destination institution.

5. Students are counted at each institution where they dual enroll, consequently the cumulative percentages at TRU-OL, JIBC and BCIT exceed 62%.

Figure 3: Number and % of Students Enrolled in Two Institutions Simultaneously (Fall 2010), by Institution



Dual Enrollments at TRU Open Learning

Compared to other institutions in Fall 2010, Thompson Rivers Open Learning (TRU-OL) had both the greatest number (2,226) and proportion (28%) of students simultaneously enrolled elsewhere. In fact, dual registrants at TRU-OL represent 35% of all dual registrants in the B.C. public post-secondary system in Fall 2010. TRU-OL offers open learning, distance education and correspondence courses which generally do not require students to be physically present on the Thompson Rivers University (TRU) campus in Kamloops, B.C. These students can enroll at TRU-OL while residing elsewhere or attending another institution in B.C.

Although TRU-OL students need not be present at the TRU campus in Kamloops, the largest proportion of TRU-OL dual registrants (roughly 20%) was also registered at TRU in Fall 2010. The other 80% of the TRU-OL dual registrants were enrolled at every other B.C. public post-secondary institution,

including UBC (10%), UVic (7%), BCIT (5%), etc. The open learning model at TRU-OL appears to be effective in offering accessible post-secondary education to students from all over the province.

Consistent with the overall provincial trend, dual enrollments at TRU-OL have dropped slightly over the last few years, declining from a high of 2,731 in Fall 2003 to 2,226 in Fall 2010. The dual enrollment rate, or number of dual registrants at TRU-OL as a proportion of all registrants at TRU-OL, has remained relatively stable at 27% to 28% over this time period. TRU has also seen significant growth as a dual enrollment pair with TRU-OL, with increases in dual enrollments of more than 300 over the last seven years. Most other institutions show declining dual enrollments with TRU-OL, except for UBCO, NWCC and NVIT.

(continued on page 6)

Dual Enrollments at TRU Open Learning, *continued from page 5*

The prevalence of enrolling simultaneously at TRU and TRU-OL can also be observed from the TRU perspective where 545 Fall 2010 registrants attended another institution simultaneously. Among these TRU dual registrants, a significant proportion (80%) were also enrolled at TRU-OL and 20% were enrolled at other institutions.

Accounting for one third of all dual enrolled students in Fall 2010, it appears that TRU-OL is an attractive and convenient option for TRU students and students from other B.C. public post-secondary institutions as they navigate their way through their post-secondary education.

History and Mandate of Thomson Rivers University - Open Learning

In April 2005, the British Columbia Open University (BCOU) transformed into the Open Learning Division of the newly created Thomson Rivers University (formerly the University College of the Cariboo). Open Learning's legacy actually began in 1978 when the provincial government established the Open Learning Institute (OLI) as part of the public post-secondary system. With the closure of what was known as the Open Learning Agency, the distance education component, including BCOU was transferred to Thomson Rivers University and all programs and courses became part of TRU under the Open Learning Division.

TRU-OL has few barriers to entry, so in most cases, students planning to take courses to transfer the credits to another institution can register at any time of year and without submitting transcripts. This model has been successful in providing post-secondary students with an option when limitations of timetables and life restrict their abilities to attend classes. As such, we see that TRU-OL enrolls students from every other public post-secondary institution in a year.

The analysis provided in this paper is particularly important at this time as it takes advantage of the ability to separately report TRU-OL students from those of TRU as a result of maintenance of separate registration systems: upcoming STP data will have only one data set from TRU.



What would dual enrollment look like in the absence of TRU-OL?

When Thompson Rivers University Open Learning is removed from the analysis⁶, the provincial Fall dual enrollment rate is reduced from 2.1% to 1.5%. In the absence of TRU-OL, the top four institutions with the greatest number of dual enrollments are BCIT, JIBC, UBC and Douglas College with dual enrollment rates of 4.6%, 7.6%, 1.6% and 4.6% respectively. Due to wide variations in total enrollments among this group of institutions, JIBC ranked with the highest dual enrollment rate (7.6%), but ranked second in total number of dual enrollments.

This hypothetical scenario with TRU-OL excluded suggests that unique course offerings at BCIT and JIBC continue to play a significant role in dual enrollments in the B.C. public post-secondary education system.

Dual Enrollments by Program Area

Approximately 300,000 students⁷ were registered in B.C. public post-secondary institutions in Fall 2010, with roughly 75% enrolled in *post-secondary credential* programs and 25% in *unclassified/general*⁸ programs. Within this population were nearly 7,000 dual registrants distributed as follows:

- 57% in post-secondary credential programs, such as Arts and Sciences (24%), Business (9%), Health (7%) and other programs (17%), and
- 43% in unclassified/general programs, including "Other" programs (27%), Personal Improvement and Leisure (10%), and Developmental programs (5%), comprising 43%. Continuing education courses or programs were prominent in this group.

A better understanding of dual registrant behavior can be gained by examining the program pairings at each of the institutions where students were dual enrolled.

- 58% of dual registrants were enrolled in an post-secondary credential program at one institution and an unclassified/general program at the other institution, with Arts and Sciences most frequently combined with "other" at the second institution (16% of dual enrollees);

(continues on page 7)

6. A total of 2,226 TRU-OL enrollments were removed, leaving 4,212 dual enrollments in the remaining institutions. This resulted in a dual enrollment rate of 1.5% on a total unique headcount enrollment base of 288,245.

7. In Fall 2010, there were 308,936 unique headcount students enrolled in B.C. public post-secondary institutions, including graduate, undergraduate, developmental and continuing education (CE) students; however CE students at B.C.'s research-intensive universities are not submitted to the STP and are thus excluded from this total.

8. *Unclassified/general* programs include students with a Classification of Instructional Program Code (CIP Code) falling in one of three different program clusters: Personal Improvement and Leisure, Developmental or Other programs. Continuing Education is prominent in this group of programs. All other students are classified in *post-secondary credential* programs, such as Bachelor's Degree, Certificate, Apprenticeship, etc.

Dual Enrollments by Program Area, *continued from page 6*

- 28% were enrolled in an post-secondary credential program at both institutions, with Arts and Sciences at both institutions being the most frequent pairing (16% of dual enrollees); and
- 14% were dual enrolled in unclassified/general programs at both institutions, most frequently “other” at both institutions (5% of dual enrollees).

Due to its sheer size, Arts and Sciences is prominent among dual enrollment pairings, but virtually all program areas are represented in dual enrollments to some extent, including Business, Engineering, Education, Trades, etc.

These findings at the program level suggest that dual enrollment is largely dominated by students who maintain a post-secondary credential program at one institution while they pick up additional unclassified/general course work elsewhere. In the majority of these dual enrollment pairings, the post-secondary credential activity at one institution is primarily paired with unclassified/general activity at TRU-OL and secondarily at BCIT or JIBC.

In Fall 2010, there were 308,936 unique headcount students enrolled in B.C. public post-secondary institutions, including graduate, undergraduate, developmental and continuing education (CE) students; however CE students at B.C.’s research-intensive universities are not submitted to the STP and are thus excluded from this total.

Unclassified/general programs include students with a Classification of Instructional Program Code (CIP Code) falling in one of three different program clusters: Personal Improvement and Leisure, Developmental or Other programs. Continuing Education is prominent in this group of programs. All other students are classified in post-secondary credential programs, such as Bachelor’s Degree, Certificate, Apprenticeship, etc.

How can authorized users learn more about dual enrollments in specific institutions and programs?

To help institutions identify potential partnerships and establish collaborative agreements with each other for the ultimate benefit of students, additional information is available for the institutions and education ministries on a secure site. This allows users to focus on specific institutions, programs and credential categories to identify the types of institutions and program pairings of dual registrants.

Dual Enrollments by Study Level and Credential Category

The majority of dual enrollments in Fall 2010 occur among students in undergraduate programs (92%), followed by developmental programs (5%), and graduate studies (3%). The most prominent pairing of study levels was undergraduate at each institution (85%), with undergraduate/developmental pairings evident in just 4% of cases, undergraduate/graduate in 2% of pairings and developmental/developmental in 1% of cases.

Dual registrants are further identified by their credential category. Roughly one-third of dual enrollees were classified in the same credential at both institutions where they dual enrolled, while the remaining two-thirds were categorized in different credentials at each institution. The most common credential pairings were:

- Bachelor’s degree at one institution with credential “none” at the other (24%).
- Diploma at one institution, with credential “none” at the other (9%),
- Credential “none” at both institutions (15%).

The first two credential pairings above suggest that dual registrants are likely supplementing their education by taking additional courses taken at another institution. They do not appear to be simultaneously enrolling in a completely different program elsewhere that leads to an additional credential. The third credential pairing above indicates that students who take courses without a credential goal, might be doing so at multiple institutions simultaneously. An example of a dual enrollment with credential “none” might occur when students pursuing a professional designation, such as Chartered Accountant, take their required courses from numerous institutions. Since the credential is externally granted, none of the institutions would record that student as seeking one of their credentials.

Other interesting credential pairings were also noted:

- 4% of all dual enrollees were categorized in a bachelor’s degree at both institutions simultaneously.
- The most common credential pairing for one-quarter of dual enrolled developmental students was another developmental credential at another institution (2% of all dual enrollees).
- Graduate-level dual enrollees were most frequently dual enrolled with credential “none” at another institution (2% of all dual enrollees).

