Recent Research on Dual Enrollment

http://www.ous.edu/dept/ir/reports/dualcredit/DualCredit2010FINAL.pdf

Researchers at the Oregon University System (OUS) specifically examined college courses taught in a high school, by a high school teacher that carry both high school and college credit – courses that NACEP defines as concurrent enrollment. The study examined the college participation and performance of 15,707 students attending an Oregon college or university whose college transcripts recorded their having taken a dual credit course while in high school. The researchers found that:

- “Dual credit students have a higher college participation rate than high school graduates overall.”
- “Dual credit students who go on to college continue to the second year at a higher rate than freshmen who enter college without having earned dual credit.”
- “Among freshmen who continue to the second year of college, dual credit participants earn a higher first year GPA.”
- “Students who continue to the second year of college accumulate more college credit if they take dual credit in high school.”

For the results on persistence to the secondary year of college, the authors controlled for academic strength (as measured by GPA, SAT scores, and receiving Advanced Placement credit) and student demographics, finding that “the odds that dual credit students would be predicted to persist to the second year of college are increased by 17% compared to students who did not take dual credit.”

The study also examined student performance in subsequent courses in an sequence in writing, mathematics, and Spanish:

- “When dual credit students who take the prerequisite in high school and the final course in college are compared to their college classmates who take the entire sequence in college, it turns out that they pass the final course in proportions that are substantially equivalent to those of their college-prepared classmates”

An Analysis of the Impact of High School Dual Enrollment Course Participation on Post-secondary Academic Success, Persistence and Degree Completion (2008. Dr. Joni Swanson, University of Iowa, College of Education)
http://nacep.org/research-and-policy/research-studies

Swanson examined high school and college transcripts of 4,514 students nationwide who were in 8th grade in 1988, comparing the 425 (9%) who participated in dual enrollment courses with non-participants. Controlling for student demographic characteristics and prior academic performance (a composite of class rank and GPA), Swanson produced statistically significant analysis showing that:

- “Dual enrollment students were 11% more likely to persist through the second year of college than non-participating students.”
- “Dual enrollment students were 12% more likely to enter college within seven months of high school graduation than non-participating students.”
- “Dual enrollment students who completed 20 or more credits in the first year of college were 28% more likely to persist through the second year in college than were students who did not complete dual enrollment courses.”

The report also suggests that dual enrollment “fosters more positive attitudes towards earning post-secondary degrees in students who did not previously hold these attitudes.”
In this comprehensive study, researchers from the Community College Research Center at Columbia University examined high school and college records for all students (299,685) who were seniors in Florida public high schools in the 2000-01 and 2001-02 school years, comparing the 36,217 (12%) who participated in dual enrollment courses with non-participants. Controlling for student demographic characteristics and prior GPA, the Columbia researchers found that students who took dual enrollment courses in high school were statistically significantly more likely to:

- Earn a high school diploma (4%);
- Initially enroll in a four-year university (8%);
- Persist in college to a second semester (5%) and second year (5%);
- Earn higher grade point averages (0.2 points) through the first three years in college; and
- Earn 15 more college credits by the end of their third year in college.

The report also examined students who took Career and Technical Education dual enrollment courses in New York City; there dual enrollment showed positive correlation to degree progress, but no significant relationship to student retention or college GPA.

The Toolbox Revisited: Paths to Degree Completion from High School through College (2006. U.S. Department of Education)

An examination of national longitudinal transcript data by Clifford Adelman to identify the aspects of the high school and college experience that led to students' success in completing a bachelor's degree by their mid-twenties. Adelman documented that earning college credit while in high school helps students create the academic momentum necessary to complete postsecondary degrees. The Toolbox Revisited shows that students who fail to earn 20 credits by the end of their first year in college are 34% less likely to complete a bachelor’s degree, and that earning at least six college credits while in high school is key to creating the academic momentum necessary to reach that first year benchmark. The study reaches the conclusion that: “The academic intensity of the student’s high school curriculum still counts more than anything else in precollegiate history in providing momentum toward completing a bachelor's degree” (p. xviii).