

Opinion: College transition easier with dual enrollment

By Paola Soto, San Diego Union-Tribune

The idea of attending college is frightening for some high school students. But the possibility of being exposed to the college atmosphere while still in high school can be rewarding.

My junior year at Kearny High School, I was given the opportunity to enroll in a three-unit course per semester at Mesa College. I was able to take three college classes over three semesters. I finished my high school course work a semester early and during the second semester of my senior year, I was able to attend Mesa as a full-time college student enrolled in 12 units. I was a full-time college student before receiving my high school diploma.

I received one spot out of a total of 100 available to the Kearny High campus for the Fast Track partnership program with Mesa. The students are selected on a GPA basis and the counselors decide which students are ready for the rigorous coursework. As Erica Heinzman, AVID teacher from Kearny High School, stated, "Our first priority is always to have the students graduate from high school."

When I graduated from Kearny in June 2013, I received my high school diploma and had already completed 21 units at Mesa College.

Before even attending my first college class at Mesa College, I learned about applying to a community college, registration dates, registering for a course, the price of college textbooks and the effort necessary to be successful in a college classroom. I knew where and how to look for resources.

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