

at a glance Early College

Early College accepts up to 45 students per year, and students must apply for admission to the program during their sophomore year of high school the spring prior to enrolling. Each participating school is allotted seats based on its total school headcount.

Participating schools

- Belding Area Schools
- Carson City – Crystal Area Schools
- Central Montcalm Public Schools
- Flat River Academy
- Greenville Public Schools
- Ionia Public Schools
- Lakeview Community Schools
- Montabella Community Schools
- Tri County Area Schools
- Vestaburg Community Schools

Benefits

- Earn a high school diploma and up to 60 college credits, tuition free.
- Reduce time in college by one year if an associate degree is earned.
- Successfully transition to a college environment.
- No tuition or fees paid by the students or their families.
- Potential savings of \$25,000 to \$50,000 (if a student planned to attend a university and live on campus).
- Student may still participate in activities at their home school such as athletics, performing arts and clubs.

Parent information meetings

Early College Director Shannon Tripp visits all participating high schools each spring and offers multiple informational meetings so students and their families can learn more about the program. Applications are available at the informational meetings, in guidance counselor offices at participating high schools and online at www.montcalm.edu/earlycollege, though attending an informational meeting is highly recommended.

Information nights include:

- Tues, Feb. 12 at 6 p.m. at Ionia High School
- Tues, Feb. 19 at 6 p.m. at Carson City High School
- Mon, Feb. 25 at 6 p.m. at Greenville High School
- Tues, Feb. 26 at 6 p.m. at Central Montcalm High School
- Thurs, Feb. 28 at 6 p.m. at Lakeview High School
- Wed, March 6 at 6 p.m. at Vestaburg High School
- Thurs, March 7 at 6 p.m. at Montabella High School

Eligibility

To be eligible to enroll in the 2019-2020 academic year, the following criteria must be met:

- Students who, as of Nov. 2018, are 10th grade high school students (home school, parochial, private or charter school students are also eligible.)
- Students must be residents of the State of Michigan.
- Students must be at least 14 years of age by Aug. 1, 2019.
- Students may not be in the United States under a J-1 Visa.

To apply

Applications are due April 12 for the 2019-2020 academic year. Applications are available at the parent information meetings, in guidance counselor offices at participating high schools and online at www.montcalm.edu/earlycollege, though attending an informational meeting is highly recommended.

If the number of applicants exceeds available seats, a lottery system is used to select participants.

For more information:

Visit www.montcalm.edu/earlycollege

Email earlycollege@montcalm.edu

Call Shannon Tripp at 616-225-5706



“We know that we have kids who have a lot of trauma in their childhood,” Tripp said. “This is an anonymous questionnaire that we’re using to try to find a way to help them. With trauma, we find there is a real lack of resiliency. Often, when something gets hard, students back off and run away from it. So, we’re trying to figure out how to help them push through their challenges.”

“What we keep finding is it all comes back to building relationships, so they have that relationship and support to be successful in the program,” Yonker added.

That’s another way in which mentoring fits into the equation. Each student is paired with a mentor – one of the three full-time instructors – at the beginning of the academic year, and they meet regularly to touch base.

“A lot of the conversations that are had are about academic difficulty or academic success, but they also learn a lot about the students outside of school,” Tripp said. “They learn a lot about what some of their struggles and difficulties are so we can help with things that maybe are road blocks to getting them here and being successful. We wouldn’t get that information if we didn’t have these mentor-mentee relationships.”

“I think another important role that our instructors play is providing that positive adult role model,” Tripp added. “It’s not that all of our students need that, but they know it’s available if they do.”

“I strive to see and understand the unique circumstances young people face today and hope to give them tools to be successful and engaged.”

Ben Stancil
— English Instructor



ben stancil

Instructor ‘sells’ English skills to area high schoolers through dual enrollment program

When Ben Stancil joined Montcalm Community College as a full-time English instructor and dual enrollment English coordinator, he became a “road warrior,” driving all over the county to teach dual enrollment classes to students in area high schools.

“In a way, I’m like a traveling salesman. What do I sell? Writing and composition skills, critical thinking, an introduction into dialectical discourse and humor,” Stancil said.

The 40-year-old from Rockford came to MCC in fall 2018 after a 13-year high school teaching career. He is uniquely challenged to “bridge the gap” between high school and college-level coursework through dual enrollment, which allows students to take college-level courses while still in high school and receive both high school and college credit. In the dual enrollment program, students may take up to 10 college classes, and their high school helps pay tuition and fees up to an approved dollar amount.

“As the dual enrollment English coordinator, I am working directly with area high schools to deliver MCC’s quality composition courses to high schoolers looking to achieve college credit,” Stancil said. “I’m also working to build and foster positive relationships with the leaders at these schools.”

Stancil, who earned a Bachelor of Arts from Aquinas College and a master’s degree in Educational Technology from Central Michigan University, teaches Freshman English I, an introductory college writing course, and Freshman English II, which incorporates research into written work and elaborates on analytical skills.

“I want MCC composition classes to provide students the tools to think, read, write and converse in the 21st Century,” Stancil said.

His coursework includes media literacy and the ability to sort through modern media and make sense of the messaging. It also includes learning the fundamentals of effective writing, as well as developing reasoned arguments for emerging viewpoints.

“I teach because I believe these skills are crucial in fostering a civil and thoughtful society, equipped to handling the complex challenges of the modern world,” Stancil said. “I strive to see and understand the unique circumstances young people face today and hope to give them tools to be successful and engaged.”