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DUAL-ENROLLMENT PROGRAM KICKS OFF IN ILLINOIS



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October 2, 2014



Pictured in front row, from left to right, are Valerie Stackman, assistant professor of criminal justice and Renee Schott, assistant principal. Pictured from left to right in the back row are Dana Cecil, UW-Platteville undergrad online coordinator; Pat Solar, assistant professor of criminal justice; David Carson, director of College and Career Readiness; Eric Bruno, Rockford Police Department; and Mike Dalecki, interim chair of the criminal justice department.

PLATTEVILLE, Wis. — The University of Wisconsin-Platteville and Jefferson High School in Rockford, Ill., recently kicked off their dual-enrollment program with the offering of the Introduction to Crime Scene Investigation course for students at Jefferson High School.

The course is part of a newly created, collaborative program to offer a series of criminal justice and forensic investigation courses to students at the high school. In May, UW-Platteville and Jefferson High School signed an agreement to offer the courses beginning this fall.

“This is very exciting - it's not often we have the chance to make such a significant impact in the lives of young people,” said Dr. Michael Dalecki, interim chair of the department of criminal justice at UW-Platteville.

Forty-six Jefferson High School students are enrolled in the Introduction to Crime Scene Investigation course, which is the first in a series of three courses to be offered. Two additional courses will be offered next year, including Introduction to Criminal Justice and Evidence Collection. Students may take one or all of the courses.

The purpose of the program is to provide students at Jefferson High School an opportunity to complete college-level courses and earn college credit and also spark the students' interest in UW-Platteville's criminal justice and forensic investigation programs, and in college generally.

“The College of Liberal Arts and Education holds, as one of its deepest values, the importance of providing opportunities for learning to anyone who wishes to engage in the process,” said Dr. Elizabeth A. Throop, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Education at UW-Platteville.

“Partnering with Rockford schools allows us to fulfill our mission to advance education in the Tri-State area. I am confident that this arrangement will be an important one for the region.”

“The University of Wisconsin-Platteville is thrilled to partner with Jefferson High School,” said Dr. Jennifer deCoste, assistant chancellor for diversity and inclusion and chief diversity officer at UW-Platteville. “Through our collaboration, we have seen how committed Jefferson is to the future of its students, and we look forward to working with them to create an outstanding experience for their students.”

In the courses, students learn the basics of crime scenes, policing and the criminal justice system. They also learn about the variety of career options in the criminal justice and forensic investigation fields, ranging from policing to criminalistics to corrections, probation and parole, private security and more.

The curriculum is the same as that offered at UW-Platteville, modified for delivery to high school students in a different, face-to-face venue.

“These college-level courses will require a level of academic rigor that will give these students a glance at college work and hopefully ignite their interest in pursuing a degree,” said Dr. Patrick

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Solar, assistant professor of criminal justice at UW-Platteville.

The Introduction to Crime Scene Investigation course is taught by Sgt. Eric Bruno, a 20-year veteran of the Rockford Police Department who has years of experience on crime scenes and as an investigator. He holds a master's in law enforcement/justice administration from Western Illinois University in Macomb, Ill.

For each course that is passed with a C or better, students will receive advanced standing if they eventually enroll at UW-Platteville. The credits will not transfer elsewhere. In addition to earning advanced standing, the students will also earn high school credits.

Present at the kickoff were the high school students enrolled in the program; David Carson, director of college and career readiness at Jefferson High School; Renee Schott, assistant principal at Jefferson High School; Bruno; Dalecki; Solar; Dr. Valerie Stackman, assistant professor of criminal justice at UW-Platteville; and Dana Cecil, criminal justice lecturer at UW-Platteville.

Dalecki said that in the future, the university hopes to expand the program in other locations in Illinois, Wisconsin and Iowa as well as develop a distance learning model that enables students from various schools to enroll in the courses.

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