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“THREE-QUARTERS COLLEGE STUDENT”: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY OF DUAL CREDIT AT A HIGH SCHOOL AND ON A COLLEGE CAMPUS (440 pp.)

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Dual credit programs afford high school students the opportunity to earn college credit prior to graduation while exposing them to the rigor and culture of college, which may help make college more accessible to first-generation college students and underserved populations. The purpose of this study was to understand students’ dual credit experiences in two cases: College Composition classrooms at a high school and on a college campus in spring 2018. The study also examined students’ adoption of the role of college student and the ways in which Ohio’s version of dual credit, College Credit Plus, provided college experiences at each site from a programmatic standpoint.

Employing a qualitative case study design, I collected data through observations; interviews with seven focal students, their instructors, and two administrators; and writing samples. Analysis resulted in four cross-case findings: the instructors’ approach shaped the students’ experiences; students’ ability to adopt the college student role was influenced more by their motivation for participating in dual credit than by the location where they took the course; choices by secondary administrators and instructors can result in multifaceted college experiences at a high school; and finally, dual credit experiences can have far-reaching outcomes, including decisions to opt out of college education. The findings point to the need for thorough education about the risks and

rewards of dual credit for students and families as well as for thoughtful and deliberate planning by the secondary and postsecondary partners in dual credit relationships.

Key words: dual enrollment, freshman composition, role theory, high school-college transition