

## **Edinburg Vision Academy of Excellence Strategies for Success in College Courses**

At Edinburg, Texas's Vision Academy of Excellence, all students take the South Texas College "College Success" class, through which they learn strategies for succeeding in postsecondary education. Students who pass this course do not have to retake it once they matriculate at South Texas College. In addition, while enrolled in Vision Academy, students have the opportunity to take dual enrollment "mini-mesters" (compressed courses) while they complete their high school coursework. Vision Academy has found a way to maximize the impact of the College Success Course and to support students in their first STC-based dual enrollment mini-mester. By pairing the College Success course with the mini-mester, students learn time management, note-taking, study skills, and organizational skills in College Success and simultaneously apply these skills in their dual enrollment course.

***Before the course:*** Staff start students in the College Success course a week before they begin their STC mini-mesters. Staff also re-sequence the units in the College Success course, putting time management first. This unit requires the students to map out how they spend their time---and to schedule college class, homework, and study time before they begin their first real college class.

**Next,** Vision Academy teaches note taking, using the textbook for the mini-mester course as the material from which the students take notes. Even before they start their mini-mester, the students are familiar with the course material.

***During the course:*** With the permission of the STC instructor, the Vision Academy English Language Arts teacher attends the mini-mester course with the students, sitting in the back and taking notes. Thus equipped, she continues using mini-mester content as the practice material for the College Success Course, ensuring that her students experience success in their first on-campus college course.