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#### Comprehensive Standard 3.4.4

**The institution has a defined and published policy for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit for transfer, experiential learning, advanced placement, and professional certificates that is consistent with its mission and ensures that coursework and learning outcomes are at the collegiate level and comparable to the institution's own degree programs. The institution assumes responsibility for the academic quality of any coursework or credit recorded on the institution's transcript.**

**Judgment:** Compliant

#### Response:

The University of South Carolina (USC) has established policies pertaining to evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit for transfer. These policies are defined by the University's Faculty Senate and Graduate Council as the representative bodies of the faculty which, under an Academic Affairs policy ([ACAF 2.00](#)) has legislative authority over matters pertaining to the curriculum. These policies are published in the [Undergraduate Studies Bulletin](#) and [Graduate Studies Bulletin](#) respectively. The University does not award credit for experiential learning or life experience.

The University is a partner in an agreement with the Commission on Higher Education that identifies transferable courses for students who transfer from the associate in arts or science programs at South Carolina public two-year colleges. The School-to-Work Act (approved by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education and transmitted to the General Assembly on July 6, 1995) established a [Statewide Articulation Agreement](#) of 86 courses approved for transfer from two- to four-year public institutions. The Agreement states these courses are applicable to all public institutions, including two-year institutions and institutions within the same system. In instances where an institution does not have synonymous courses to the ones on this list, comparable courses or course categories for acceptance of general education courses on the statewide list are identified.

#### Awarding College Credits

Baccalaureate degree candidates may qualify for degree credit and/or advanced placement through successful completion of the College Entrance Examination Board Advanced Placement Examinations (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) Higher Level Examinations, and The College Level Examination Program (CLEP) subject examinations. New students are expected to take placement tests in foreign languages and mathematics, and these tests are specifically required of all freshmen. Transfer students may be required to take the same tests.

The [College Level Examination Program \(CLEP\)](#) is a system of credit by examination sponsored by the College Board. Any degree candidate at USC can earn college credit for knowledge gained outside the classroom. Students seeking to exempt ENGL 101 or 102 through CLEP must have less than 60 hours of college credit or approval from the English department.

1. The College Entrance Examination Board Advanced Placement Examinations are offered in American government and politics, American history, art history, art studio (drawing, 2-D and 3-D), biology, chemistry, comparative government and politics, computer science (A and AB), economics (macro and micro), English language and composition, English composition and literature, environmental science, European history, foreign languages (Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Latin, and Spanish), human geography, mathematics-calculus (AB and BC), music (theory and listening and literature), physics (B, C part 1, C part 2), psychology, statistics, and world history. Questions concerning credit awards should be referred to the Office of the Registrar, 803-777-5555.
2. International Baccalaureate (IB) Higher Level Examinations in biology, business and management, chemistry, computing studies, economics, English, French, geography, German, history, Latin, Mandarin, mathematics, music, physics, psychology, social anthropology, Spanish, theatre arts, and visual arts. Questions concerning credit awards should be referred to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, 803-777-7700.
3. The College Level Examination Program (CLEP) subject examinations are offered in accounting (introductory), American government, American literature, analyzing and interpreting literature, biology, business law (introductory), calculus, chemistry, college algebra, educational psychology, English literature, freshman college composition, history of the United States I and II, information systems and computer applications, management, marketing, microeconomics and macroeconomics, pre-calculus, psychology, sociology, and Western civilization I and II. CLEP examinations cannot be repeated. Information on score requirements as well as the schedule for testing may be obtained in the Office of Student Orientation and Testing Services located in Room 345, Russell House, by calling 803-777-2782, or online at <http://orientation.sc.edu/clep.htm>.
4. Departmental examinations for chemistry and music, among others, are offered to new students prior to fall and spring registration. Contact the appropriate department for test schedule and information.
5. New student tests in foreign languages and mathematics are required of all freshmen. Transfer students may be required to take the same tests. Further information is available electronically at <http://orientation.sc.edu>.

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**Evaluation of Transfer Credits**

An applicant who, having graduated from high school, has attended another regionally accredited postsecondary institution and attempted one or more courses is a transfer student, regardless of credit earned.

Transfer credits to USC must be from regionally accredited institutions for academic courses completed with grades of **C-** or better. Applicability of credits toward a particular degree is determined by the college or major in which the student enrolls. The number of credits acceptable to the University and the number which may apply toward a particular degree may differ.

Students **transferring** from non-accredited colleges may be allowed to validate credit after admission to the University. Details of the validation procedure vary and may be obtained from the dean's office of the college in which the student is enrolled.

Original records are required for courses exempted at a previous college. Exemption credit or acceptance of transfer credit by another college has no bearing on the evaluation of transfer credit at the University of South Carolina.

Generally, credits deemed not acceptable in **transfer** to the University are courses that are occupational or technical in nature; courses that are essentially remedial in nature; courses from a two-year institution which are considered upper division or upper level at the University; courses from a two-year institution that are not listed as part of that institution's college parallel program.

A maximum of 76 semester hours may be transferred for degree credit from a junior college or two-year institution which is accredited by a regional association such as the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

A maximum of 30 semester hours of credit by correspondence and credit awarded for educational experiences in the military may be applied toward meeting the requirements for a baccalaureate degree (see **Standard 3.4.8**). The 30 semester hours of credit which may be awarded for educational experiences in the military should be in accordance with recommendations published by the American Council on Education and be consistent with University policy on the transfer of credit but will only be applied to a degree program upon the approval of the dean of the college from which the degree is to be awarded.

A maximum of 30 semester hours of credit earned while classified as a nondegree special student in the University may be applied toward meeting the requirements for a baccalaureate degree.

A student planning to pursue work at other institutions or through correspondence must complete this work before attaining senior classification (90 semester hours). Courses completed at any institution while the student is suspended by the University will not be accepted toward a degree at USC.

**Transfer: State Policy and Procedures****Background**

Section 10-C of the South Carolina **School-to-Work Transition Act** (1994), stipulated that the Council of College and University Presidents and the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education, operating through the Commission on Higher Education, develop better articulation of associate and baccalaureate degree programs. To comply with this requirement, the commission, working through a Transfer Articulation Policy Committee composed of four-year institutions' vice presidents for academic affairs and the Associate Director for Instruction of the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education developed:

- An expanded list of 86 courses which transfer to four-year public institutions of South Carolina from the two-year public institutions;
- A statewide policy document on good practices in transfer to be followed by all public institutions of higher education in the State of South Carolina, which was accepted in principle by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs and the commission;
- Six task forces on statewide transfer agreements, each based in a discipline or broad area of the baccalaureate curriculum.

In 1995 the General Assembly passed Act 137 which stipulated further that the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education "notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, shall have the following additional duties and functions with regard to the various public institutions of higher education." These duties and responsibilities include the commission's responsibility "to establish procedures for the transferability of courses at the undergraduate level between two-year and four-year institutions or schools." This same provision is repeated in the legislation developed from the Report of the Joint Legislative Study Committee. Act 137 directed the commission to adopt the following procedures for the transfer of courses from all two-year public to all four-year public institutions of higher education in South Carolina.

**Statewide Articulation of 86 Courses**

1. The Statewide Articulation Agreement of 86 courses already approved by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education for transfer from two- to four-year public institutions shall be applicable to all public institutions, including two-year institutions and institutions within the same system. In instances where an institution does not have synonymous courses to ones on this list, it shall identify comparable courses or course categories for acceptance of general education courses on the statewide list.
2. All four-year public institutions shall issue annually in August a transfer guide covering at least the following items:
  - A. The definition of a transfer student and requirements for admission both to the institution and, if more selective, requirements for admission to particular programs.

- B. Limitations placed by the institution or its programs for acceptance of standardized examinations (e.g., SAT, ACT) taken more than a given time ago, for academic course work taken elsewhere, for course work repeated due to failure, for course work taken at another institution while the student is academically suspended at his/her home institution, and so forth.
  - C. Institutional and, if more selective, programmatic maximums of course credits allowable in transfer.
  - D. Institutional procedures used to calculate student applicants' GPAs for transfer admission. Such procedures shall describe how nonstandard grades (withdrawal, withdrawal failing, repeated course, etc.) are evaluated; and they shall also describe whether all course work taken prior to transfer or just course work deemed appropriate to the student's intended four-year program of study is calculated for purposes of admission to the institution and/or programmatic major.
  - E. Lists of all courses accepted from each technical college (including the 72 courses in the Statewide Articulation Agreement) and the course equivalencies (including "free elective" category) found on the home institution for the courses accepted.
  - F. Lists of all articulation agreements with any public South Carolina two-year or other institution of higher education, together with information about how interested parties can access these agreements.
  - G. Lists of the institution's Transfer Officer(s) personnel together with telephone and fax numbers and office address.
  - H. Institutional policies related to "academic bankruptcy" (i.e., removing an entire transcript or parts thereof from a failed or underachieving record after a period of years has passed) so that re-entry into the four-year institution with course credit earned in the interim elsewhere is done without regard to the student's earlier record.
  - I. "Residency requirements" for the minimum number of hours required to be earned at the institution for the degree.
3. Course work (individual courses, transfer blocks, statewide agreements) covered within these procedures shall be transferable if the student has completed the course work with a "C" grade (2.00 on a 4.00 scale) or above, but transfer of grades does not relieve the student of the obligation to meet any GPA requirements or other admissions requirements of the institution or program to which application has been made.
- A. Any four-year institution which has institutional or programmatic admissions requirements for transfer students with cumulative grade point averages (GPAs) higher than 2.00 on a 4.00 scale shall apply such entrance requirements equally to transfer students from regionally accredited South Carolina public institutions regardless of whether students are transferring from a four-year or two-year institution.
  - B. Any multi-campus institution or system shall certify by letter to the commission that all course work at all of its campuses applicable to a particular degree program of study is fully acceptable in transfer to meet degree requirements in the same degree program at any other of its campuses.
4. Any course work (individual courses, transfer blocks, statewide agreements) covered within these procedures shall be transferable to any public institution without any additional fee and without any further encumbrance such as a "validation examination," "placement examination/instrument," "verification instrument," or any other stricture, notwithstanding any institutional or system policy, procedure, or regulation to the contrary.

#### **Transfer Blocks, Statewide Agreements, Completion of the A.A./A.S. Degree**

5. The following Transfer Blocks/Statewide Agreements taken at any two-year public institution in South Carolina shall be accepted in their totality toward meeting baccalaureate degree requirements at all four-year public institutions in relevant four-year degree programs, as follows:
- 1. Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences: Established curriculum block of 46-48 semester hours
  - 2. Business Administration: Established curriculum block of 46-51 semester hours
  - 3. Engineering: Established curriculum block of 33 semester hours
  - 4. Arts and Sciences, curriculum II: Established curriculum block of 48-51 semester hours
  - 5. Teacher Education: Established curriculum block of 38-39 semester hours for early childhood, elementary, and special education students only. Secondary education majors and students seeking certification who are not majoring in teacher education should consult the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences or the Math and Science transfer blocks, as relevant, to assure transferability of course work
  - 6. Nursing: By statewide agreement, at least 60 semester hours shall be accepted by any public four-year institution toward the baccalaureate completion program (BSN) from graduates of any associate degree program in nursing (ADN), provided that the program is accredited by the National League of Nursing and that the graduate has successfully passed the National Licensure Examination (NCLEX) and is a currently licensed registered nurse.
6. Any "unique" academic program not specifically or by extension covered by one of the statewide transfer blocks/agreements listed in #4 above shall either create its own transfer block of 35 or more credit hours with the approval of CHE staff or shall adopt either the Arts/Social Science/Humanities or the Science/Mathematics block by September 1996. The institution at which such program is located shall inform the staff of the CHE and every institutional president and vice president for academic affairs about this decision.
7. Any student who has completed either an Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree program at any public two-year South Carolina institution which contains within it the total course work found in either the Arts/Social Sciences/Humanities Transfer Block or the Math/Science Transfer Block shall automatically be entitled to junior-level status or its equivalent at whatever public senior institution to which the student might have been admitted. (Note: As agreed by the Committee on Academic Affairs, junior status applies only to campus activities such as priority

order for registration for courses, residence hall assignments, parking, athletic event tickets, etc., and not in calculating academic degree credits.)

#### Related Reports and Statewide Documents

8. All applicable recommendations found in the commission's report to the General Assembly on the School-to-Work Act (approved by the commission and transmitted to the General Assembly on July 6, 1995) are hereby incorporated into the procedures for transfer of course work among two- and four-year institutions.
9. The policy paper entitled State Policy on Transfer and Articulation, as amended to reflect changes in the numbers of transfer blocks and other Commission action since July 6, 1995, is hereby adopted as the statewide policy for institutional good practice in the sending and receiving of all course credits to be transferred.

#### Assurance of Quality

10. All claims from any public two- or four-year institution challenging the effective preparation of any other public institution's course work for transfer purposes shall be evaluated and appropriate measures shall be taken to reassure that the quality of the course work has been reviewed and approved on a timely basis by sending and receiving institutions alike. This process of formal review shall occur every four years through the staff of the Commission on Higher Education, beginning with the approval of these procedures.

#### Graduate School Admissions

##### Transfer of Course Credit

Course work not part of a completed certificate program or graduate degree from USC or another institution may be transferred for credit toward a Master's or doctoral degree. Course work transferred from another institution must be relevant to the program and have course content and a level of instruction equivalent to that offered by the University's own graduate programs. Approval for acceptance of transfer credit to a student's program of study must be approved and justified by the student's academic program and submitted to the dean of The Graduate School for final approval.

No more than 12 semester hours of graduate credit may be transferred into a master's program that requires 30-36 hours; no more than 15 semester hours of graduate credit may be transferred into a master's program that requires 37-45 hours; and no more than 18 semester hours of graduate credit may be transferred into a master's program that requires 46 or more semester hours. Only credits with grades of B or better may be transferred from another institution into a Master's or doctoral degree program. Course work transferred for credit toward a Master's degree must be from an accredited institution and must be no more than six years old at the time of graduation and coursework transferred into a doctoral degree program must be no more than eight years old at the time of graduation. Transfer credit is not posted to the student's official academic transcript until the term of graduation.

##### International Transfer Applicants

Students who have attended colleges or universities outside of the United States are required to submit a professional credential evaluation of all work completed. Applicants who seek to enter from another college or university in the United States must meet transfer admission requirements.

International applicants must be proficient in the English language. An English proficiency test will be administered to international students, except those from English-speaking countries, upon arrival at the University. All international students must demonstrate sufficient proficiency in written and oral English to progress at the University level. Students who are not proficient in English will be required to take noncredit, concentrated English language training until proficiency is demonstrated.

#### Supporting Documentation:

Description	Source
<b>Awarding College Credits</b>	
Advanced Placement (AP)	<a href="http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=1&amp;navoid=7#Placement_Examinations_">http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=1&amp;navoid=7#Placement_Examinations_</a>
International Baccalaureate (IB)	<a href="http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=1&amp;navoid=7#Placement_Examinations_">http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=1&amp;navoid=7#Placement_Examinations_</a>
College Level Examination Program	<a href="http://orientation.sc.edu/clep.htm">http://orientation.sc.edu/clep.htm</a>
Placement Testing	<a href="http://orientation.sc.edu/pt.htm">http://orientation.sc.edu/pt.htm</a>
Graduate School	<a href="http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=9&amp;navoid=1880#Credit_by_Examination">http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=9&amp;navoid=1880#Credit_by_Examination</a>
<b>Evaluation of Transfer Credits</b>	
Undergraduate Admissions	<a href="http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=10&amp;navoid=1868#Transfer_Admission_">http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=10&amp;navoid=1868#Transfer_Admission_</a>
Bridge Program with SC Technical Colleges	<a href="http://www.sc.edu/bridge/creditguides.html">http://www.sc.edu/bridge/creditguides.html</a>
Evaluating Transfer Credit	<a href="http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=7&amp;navoid=1688#Transfer_Credit">http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=7&amp;navoid=1688#Transfer_Credit</a>
Graduate Admissions	<a href="http://bulletin.sc.edu/index.php?catoid=9">http://bulletin.sc.edu/index.php?catoid=9</a>
<b>State Policies and Procedures</b>	
Statewide Agreement on	<a href="http://www.che.sc.gov/AcademicAffairs/TRANSFER/regs.htm">http://www.che.sc.gov/AcademicAffairs/TRANSFER/regs.htm</a>

Transfer and Articulation	
School-to-Work Transition Act	<a href="http://www.che.sc.gov/AcademicAffairs/TRANSFER/regs.htm">http://www.che.sc.gov/AcademicAffairs/TRANSFER/regs.htm</a>
Universally Transferable Courses	<a href="http://www.che.sc.gov/AcademicAffairs/TRANSFER/transferable_courses.pdf">http://www.che.sc.gov/AcademicAffairs/TRANSFER/transferable_courses.pdf</a>
International Transfer Applicants	<a href="http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=1&amp;navoid=7#Admission_of_International_Students">http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=1&amp;navoid=7#Admission_of_International_Students</a>
<b><i>Other Policies, Bulletins, and Forms</i></b>	
ACAF 2.00	<a href="http://www.sc.edu/policies/acaf200.pdf">http://www.sc.edu/policies/acaf200.pdf</a>
Undergraduate Studies Bulletin	<a href="http://bulletin.sc.edu/">http://bulletin.sc.edu/</a>
Graduate Studies Bulletin	<a href="http://bulletin.sc.edu/index.php">http://bulletin.sc.edu/index.php</a>
Special Enrollment Request Form	<a href="http://registrar.sc.edu/pdf/AS-30e.pdf">http://registrar.sc.edu/pdf/AS-30e.pdf</a>
Standard 3.4.8	<a href="#">CS_3.4.8.html</a>

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