

# SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

## Policy Manual

**SUBJECT:** Transfer of Credit

**NUMBER:** 2:5

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### **A. PURPOSE**

To establish the framework for the consistent transfer of credit among Regental institutions, and by students earning credit external to the six institutions managed by the South Dakota Board of Regents. Additionally, guidance is provided for the accepting credit through approved validation methods.

### **B. DEFINITIONS**

- 1. Accredited Institution:** An institution holding accreditation from one of the following regional accrediting bodies, unless otherwise specified: Middle States Commission on Higher Education, New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Higher Learning Commission, Northwest Accreditation Commission, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges.
- 2. Technical or General Education Academic Course:** A course that is equivalent to a Regental general education requirement at the 100 or 200 level.
- 3. Course Evaluation:** An Assessment completed by the appropriate institutional official at the time of admission to compare descriptions, content, and level of course completed from an accredited or non-accredited institution.
- 4. CR Grade:** A grade used for a block of course credit hours.
- 5. External Block Transfer:** Granting of credit to meet the General Education requirements outlined in BOR Policy 2:7 and 2:26 for students from approved institutions that enter with an earned Associates Degree (AA and AS) or Bachelor's Degree (BA and BS).
- 6. Regental Internal Transfer:** Process where an undergraduate course is used on a converted credit basis to meet graduate plan of study requirements at Regental universities or when graduate credit is used on a converted or actual credit basis to meet undergraduate degree requirements for a Regental accelerated program (refer to BOR Policy 2:8.).
- 7. Repeated Course:** A course that an institution has determined to be repeated for credit from a receiving institution. All repeated course attempts will be entered on the transcript, but credit will not be given for the duplication of courses as only the last earned grade will be used in the calculation of the student's grade point average.
- 8. Technical Course:** A non-academic course that meets the technical program requirements for a diploma, certificate, or Associate of Applied Science degree.

## **C. POLICY**

### **1. Transfer of Courses to Meet Degree Requirements**

- 1.1. Academic courses will be transferred as meeting graduation requirements if the courses parallel the scope and depth requirements for the degree or if the courses meet electives required for the degree. Credit will not be given for duplication of courses.
- 1.2. Undergraduate courses considered for transfer are subject to all BOR policies and any conditions for validation that may be prescribed by the accepting institution. When a university evaluates and accepts the transfer of undergraduate credit under the provisions of this policy, these courses will be recorded and equivalencies granted using the following guidelines:
  - 1.2.1. If there are specific undergraduate courses at the university evaluating the credit, these specific courses should be used when granting equivalencies.
  - 1.2.2. If the academic discipline is available at the university evaluating the credit, but there is no discipline equivalent course, use the discipline prefix and the appropriate course level (100 for Freshman level, 200 for Sophomore level, 300 for Junior level, and 400 for Senior level).
  - 1.2.3. If the academic discipline is not available at the university evaluating the credit, use the ELEC prefix and the appropriate course level (100 for Freshman level, 200 for Sophomore level, 300 for Junior level, and 400 for Senior level).

### **1.3. Total Transfer of Credit Limit**

- 1.3.1. Total transfer credit for work at a two-year technical or community college may not exceed one-half of the hours required for completion of the baccalaureate degree at the accepting institution unless an approved program-specific waiver exists.
- 1.3.2. The System Vice President for Academic Affairs may approve program-specific waivers of up to seventy-five (75) total transfer credit hours at the accepting institution; Board of Regents approval is required for program-specific waivers of seventy-six (76) total transfer credit hours up to a maximum of ninety (90) total transfer credit hours at the accepting institution.
- 1.3.3. Students who have completed more than the acceptable semester hours of junior, community or technical college work may apply completed, transferable courses to specific course requirements and thereby may not be required to repeat the courses. The semester hours of credit for those additional courses may not be applied toward the minimum credit hours required for the degree.

### **1.4. Student Appeals for Transfer of Credit Decisions**

- 1.4.1. Each institution will develop and maintain a procedure for the appeal of transfer credit decisions.

### **2. Transfer of General Education Coursework**

- 2.1. Internal Transfer of General Education Coursework

- 2.1.1. A student who has completed the general education requirements outlined in Policy 2:7 and 2:26 at the sending Regental institution will have completed the equivalent degree level requirements at the receiving institution regardless of the course distributions or approved course lists. In any subsequent evaluation of any transfer or non-course work, equivalencies for system common courses and system general education courses will not be changed.
  - 2.1.2. A student who has not completed all general education requirements at the sending institution will be required to complete additional coursework consistent with the course requirements at the receiving South Dakota Regental institution.
- 2.2. External Block Transfer of General Education Coursework
- 2.2.1. A student who has completed General Education requirements that are consistent with the six (6) goals and credit hour requirements outlined in Policy 2:7 and 2:26 will enter the Regental system having fulfilled the General Education program requirements. Students will be expected to meet all degree program requirements including course prerequisites.
  - 2.2.2. When considering whether undergraduate transfer of academic courses received from non-Regental accredited institutions shall qualify to meet the System General Education credit hour requirements outlined in Policy 2:7 and 2:26, a Regental institution shall:
    - 2.2.2.1. Evaluate the general education goals and student learning outcomes rather than specific course equivalencies;
    - 2.2.2.2. Ensure that a minimum of three (3) credit hours of coursework is required for each of the six general education goals and that a total of at least twenty-four (24) credit hours of general education coursework are required by the sending institution for associate degree students and thirty (30) for bachelor's degree students.
    - 2.2.2.3. Request a general education transfer agreement be approved for students entering from the institution.
  - 2.2.3. When it is determined that the goals and credit hour requirements from a non-Regental accredited institution do not align with Policy 2:7 and 2:26, a Regental institution may request a partial general education transfer agreement be approved where goal consistency does exist.
- 3. Transfer of Credit from Accredited United States Colleges, Universities & Technical Institutes**
- 3.1. General Requirements**
- 3.1.1. All grades transferred will be calculated into grade point averages according to the Regental grade scheme, and recorded on the student's academic transcript.
  - 3.1.2. Transfer grades not existing in the Regental grading scheme will be equated to the Regental grading system. (Refer to BOR 2:10, Use of Grade Point Averages).

- 3.1.3. The university-specific degree or plan of study requirements determine if the courses transferred are applicable to the student's degree program at that university and if they meet the minimum grade criteria.
- 3.1.4. Except for the conditions outlined for graduate transfer, during any subsequent evaluation, equivalencies for system common courses and system general education courses will not be changed. Equivalencies for unique courses may be changed, re-evaluated, or inactivated. In subsequent evaluations, grades previously recorded cannot be changed.

### **3.2. Undergraduate Transfer**

- 3.2.1. All undergraduate transfer courses and all transfer grades (whether the grades are passing or not passing) must be recorded and an equivalency specified by the Regental university.
- 3.2.2. Remedial courses (as identified on the sending institution's transcript) received in transfer are recorded, transcribed, and assigned an equivalency at the receiving university but do not calculate into grade point averages.
- 3.2.3. Orientation, Life Experience, an approved high school equivalency examination, and high school level courses are not recorded in Colleague as transfer credit nor are they granted equivalent credit.
- 3.2.4. High school courses for which students received college credit will not be entered as transfer credit, or given equivalent credit, unless one of the following conditions are met:
  - 3.2.4.1. Validated by an Advanced Placement or CLEP score that meets Board of Regents guidelines for acceptance of credit;
  - 3.2.4.2. The college credit is granted by a university with which the Board has a dual credit agreement; or
  - 3.2.4.3. The college credit is granted by an institution meeting the accreditation standards of the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP).

### **3.3. Technical Course Transfer from Colleges and Universities**

- 3.3.1. University discretion is permitted in acceptance of courses. Courses considered for transfer are subject to all BOR policies and any conditions for validation that may be prescribed by the accepting institution.
- 3.3.2. When the courses are accepted for transfer, equivalent courses are recorded on the transcript but the grade earned at the technical institute is not recorded or calculated into the grade point averages.

### **3.4. Course Transfer from Technical Institutes**

#### **3.4.1. South Dakota Technical Institutes**

- 3.4.1.1. Transfer of academic courses from South Dakota postsecondary technical institutes is governed by BOR policies 2:25, 2:26, 2:27, and 2:31.

- 3.4.1.2. Transfer of technical course credit hours from South Dakota postsecondary technical institutes occurs as part of a program to program articulation agreement or specific program approved by the Board of Regents and South Dakota Board of Education Standards, unless an institution determines a course equivalency consistent with the process outlined in this policy.
- 3.4.1.3. The transfer of technical course credit hours occurs as a block of credit hours upon completion of requirements for the university articulated program for which a CR grade will be assigned.
- 3.4.1.4. Academic courses taken under articulation agreements in effect between July 1, 1999 and June 30, 2005 will be transferred according to those agreements.

#### **3.4.2. Other Technical Institutes**

- 3.4.2.1. University discretion is permitted in acceptance of academic courses. Academic courses considered for transfer are subject to all BOR policies and any conditions for validation that may be prescribed by the accepting institution.
- 3.4.2.2. Transfer of technical course credit hours from non-South Dakota postsecondary technical institutes occurs as part of a program to program articulation agreement or specific program approved by the Board of Regents.
- 3.4.2.3. The transfer of technical course credit hours occurs as a block of credit hours upon completion of requirements for the university articulated program.
- 3.4.2.4. When the academic courses are accepted for transfer, equivalent courses are recorded on the transcript.

#### **4. Graduate Transfer Courses Received from Accredited United States Colleges and Universities**

- 4.1. All graduate transfer courses and transfer grades judged to be acceptable by the evaluating university, are recorded and evaluated by the Regental university, calculated into grade point averages according to the Regental grade scheme, and recorded on the student's academic transcript.
- 4.2. If transfer credits are judged acceptable; these courses will be recorded, and equivalencies granted, using the following guidelines:
  - 4.2.1. If there are specific equivalent graduate courses at the university evaluating the credit, these specific courses should be used when granting equivalencies.
  - 4.2.2. If there are no equivalent graduate courses at the university evaluating the credit, these courses will be recorded, and equivalencies granted, using the following guidelines:

- 4.2.2.1. If the academic discipline is available at the university evaluating the credit, but there is no discipline equivalent course, use the discipline prefix and the appropriate course level (500/600 for master's programs and 700/800 for doctoral programs).
    - 4.2.2.2. If the academic discipline is not available at the university evaluating the credit, use the ELEC prefix and the appropriate course level (500/600 for master's programs and 700/800 for doctoral programs).
  - 4.3. Transfer grades not existing in the Regental grading scheme will be equated to the Regental grading system.
  - 4.4. In subsequent evaluation, all equivalencies may be re-evaluated, inactivated, or changed. Additional equivalencies may be added and evaluated. In subsequent evaluations, grades previously recorded cannot be changed.
  - 4.5. The university-specific plan of study requirements determines if the courses transferred are applicable to the student's degree program at that university and if they meet the minimum grade criteria.

## **5. Credits Received from United States Colleges or Universities Located Outside the United States or Not Accredited**

### **5.1. General Requirements**

- 5.1.1. University discretion is permitted in acceptance of courses. Courses considered for transfer are subject to all BOR policies and any conditions for validation that may be prescribed by the accepting institution.
- 5.1.2. In any subsequent evaluation, equivalencies for system common courses and system general education courses will not be changed. Equivalencies for unique courses may be changed, re-evaluated, or inactivated. Additional equivalencies may be added and evaluated.
- 5.1.3. The university-specific degree requirements determine if the courses transferred are applicable to the student's degree program at that university and if they meet the minimum grade criteria.
- 5.1.4. When the courses are accepted for transfer, equivalent courses are recorded on the transcript but the grade earned at the institution is not recorded or calculated into the grade point averages using the following guidelines:
  - 5.1.4.1. If there are specific equivalent courses at the university evaluating the credit, these specific courses should be used when granting equivalencies.
  - 5.1.4.2. If there are no equivalent courses at the university evaluating the credit, these courses will be recorded, and equivalencies granted, using the following guidelines:
    - 5.1.4.2.1. If the academic discipline is available at the university evaluating the credit, but there is no discipline equivalent course, use the discipline prefix and the appropriate course level (500/600 for master's programs and 700/800 for doctoral programs).

5.1.4.2.2. If the academic discipline is not available at the university evaluating the credit, use the ELEC prefix and the appropriate course level (500/600 for master's programs and 700/800 for doctoral programs).

## **5.2. Postsecondary Institutions Outside the United States**

5.2.1. At the discretion of the institution's chief academic officer, grades may be recorded and used to determine the transfer and cumulative GPAs.

## **5.3. Technical Institute**

5.3.1. Courses submitted in transfer from postsecondary technical institutes that are not accredited will not be accepted.

## **6. Credit Received Through Validation Methods & Prior Learning Assessment**

6.1. Credit earned through validation methods other than nationally recognized examinations is limited to a maximum of thirty (30) hours of credit for baccalaureate degrees and fifteen (15) hours of credit for associate degrees. Credits may be earned through established procedures for prior learning assessment, including but not limited to assessment of military training and education. Each campus may determine appropriate course equivalencies as warranted and consult equivalencies established by the American Council on Education (ACE) when making final decisions.

6.1.1. Validation of military credit is limited to an additional thirty (30) hours of credit for baccalaureate degrees and an additional fifteen (15) hours of credit for associate degrees.

6.1.2. University discretion is permitted in acceptance of validated military credit for graduate programs, limited to a maximum of twelve (12) credit hours.

6.2. Credit for college level courses granted through nationally recognized examinations such as CLEP, AP, DSST, etc., will be evaluated and accepted for transfer if equivalent to Regental courses and the scores are consistent with Regental policies. Such credits are only valid if transcribed by a university within five years of the student taking the examination. Regental institutions shall honor credits from nationally recognized examinations transcribed to meet degree requirements at a non-Regental institution.

6.2.1. If credit received through validation is applied as elective credit, it may only be applied at the 100 or 200 level.

6.2.2. Credit received through validation may apply to System General Education Requirements.

6.3. When validation credits are accepted, equivalent courses are recorded on the transcript but are not calculated into the grade point averages.

6.4. In any subsequent evaluation, equivalencies for system common courses and system general education courses will not be changed. Equivalencies for unique courses may be changed, re-evaluated, or inactivated. Additional equivalencies may be added and evaluated.

- 6.5. The university-specific degree requirements determine if the validation credits accepted also are applicable to the student's degree program at that university.

**FORMS / APPENDICES:**

None

**SOURCE:**

SDCL 13-49.1; BOR April 1989; BOR April 1992; BOR June 1997; BOR March 1998; BOR August 1999, BOR March 2001; BOR May 2001; BOR January 2002; BOR March 2002; BOR June 2002; BOR August 2002; BOR December 2002; BOR May 2003; BOR August 2003; BOR December 2003; BOR October 2004; BOR June 2005; BOR August 2005; BOR March 2008; BOR March-April 2010; BOR October 2010; BOR October 2011; BOR December 2011; BOR June 2015; BOR December 2016; BOR June 2018.