

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Committee on Academic and Student Affairs

AGENDA ITEM: III – C (2)

DATE: June 10-11, 2015

SUBJECT: Revisions to Board Policy 2:5 – Transfer of Credit

The Academic Affairs Council (AAC) discussed revisions to Policy 2:5 Transfer of Credit at the [May 2014](#), [September 2014](#), [February 2015](#), and [April 2015](#) AAC meetings. The proposed revisions (Attachment I) from AAC represent efforts to clarify the process for accepting and transcribing undergraduate and graduate credits at Regental institutions.

The proposed revisions to Policy 2:5 relate to one of the five themes as described below:

1. Regional or national accrediting bodies provide accreditation for most higher education institutions in the United States. South Dakota Regental institutions, for example, receive regional accreditation as part of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools by the Higher Learning Commission. The process for accepting transfer credits depends on whether the non-Regental institution has received such accreditation. AAC discussion noted that the practice of accepting transfer credits from institutions with regional versus national accreditation was identical in practice provided the accrediting body had received approval from the US Department of Education; however, the existing policy did not make this clear. The proposed revisions to *Section 3* of the attached policy add clarity to this process.

2. *Section 2* of the existing policy lists regional accrediting associations as approved by the US Department of Education. However, the names of approved accrediting associations change periodically and the list in current policy is not accurate. It is recommended to replace the list of specific accrediting agencies with a definition of an “accredited institution” as one accredited by any regional or national accrediting association recognized by the US Department of Education. By doing so, BOR staff can post a regularly updated list of approved accrediting associations to the BOR website under Academic Affairs for reference rather than continually update BOR policy when such changes occur.

3. Existing policy does not adequately inform Regental institutions of the appropriate course numbers and course prefixes to use when transferring in undergraduate and graduate

(Continued)

RECOMMENDED ACTION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Approve the revisions to BOR Policy 2:5.

credits from non-Regental institutions. The proposed revisions add clarity to this process as noted in *Sections 3, 6, 8, 10*. For example, proposed revisions to *Sections 6, 8, and 10* explain that graduate credits transfer in at 500/600 level for master's programs and at the 700/800 level for doctoral programs. The existing policy states all graduate courses transfer at the 700 or 800 level (not standard practice at Regental institutions).

4. Section 11 includes proposed language that specifies the length of time for which credits earned from nationally recognized examinations (CLEP, AP, DANTEs, etc.) remain valid. The proposed new language states a Regental institution must transcript the credit within five years of taking the exam. Although this is not stated in the current policy, the revision aligns with current practice within the Regental system.

5. Technical corrections and typographical edits occur throughout the proposed policy revisions to update additional sections in compliance with the new language in *Sections 2 and 3*.

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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.

~~2. United States Regional Accrediting Associations~~

~~North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.~~

- ~~2. For the purposes of this policy, an accredited institution is a United States institution holding accreditation from a regional or national institutional accrediting agency recognized by the US Department of Education.~~
- ~~3. 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:~~
 - ~~A. If there are specific undergraduate courses at the university evaluating the credit, these specific courses should be used when granting equivalencies.~~
 - ~~B. 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).~~
 - ~~C. If the academic discipline is not available at the university evaluating the credit, use the GEN prefix and the appropriate course level (100 for Freshman level, 200 for Sophomore level, 300 for Junior level, and 400 for Senior level).~~

3.4. Undergraduate transfer of academic courses received from accredited United States colleges and universities ~~accredited by United States regional accrediting associations.~~

- A. 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, calculated into grade point averages according to the Regental grade scheme, and recorded on the student's academic transcript.
- B. 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.
- C. 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).
- D. 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. In subsequent evaluations, grades previously recorded cannot be changed.
- E. 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.
- F. Orientation, Life Experience, General Educational Development Tests, and high school level courses are not recorded in Colleague as transfer credit nor are they granted equivalent credit.
 - 1) High school courses for which students received college credit will not be entered as transfer credit, or given equivalent credit, unless validated by an Advanced Placement or CLEP score that meets Board of Regents guidelines for acceptance of credit, the college credit is granted by a university with which the Board has a dual credit agreement, or the college credit is granted by an institution accredited by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP).

4.5. Undergraduate transfer of technical courses received from accredited United States colleges and universities ~~accredited by United States regional accrediting associations.~~

- A. 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.
- B. 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.

- C. 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.
- D. 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.

65. Graduate transfer courses received from accredited United States colleges and universities. ~~accredited by a United States regional accrediting association.~~

- A. 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.
- B. If transfer credits are judged acceptable; these courses will be recorded, and equivalencies granted, using the following guidelines:
 - 1) If there are specific equivalent graduate courses at the university evaluating the credit, these specific courses should be used when granting equivalencies.
 - 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:
 - a. 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 (~~500/600/700~~ for master's programs and 700/800 for doctoral programs).
 - b. If the academic discipline is not available at the university evaluating the credit, use the GEN prefix and the appropriate course level (~~500/600/700~~ for master's programs and 700/800 for doctoral programs).
- C. Transfer grades not existing in the Regental grading scheme will be equated to the Regental grading system.
- D. 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.
- E. The university-specific 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.

76. Transfer ~~c~~Courses ~~r~~Received from ~~accredited~~ ~~Ae~~ereditied ~~p~~Postsecondary ~~t~~Technical Institutes.

- A. An academic course is defined as a course that is equivalent to a Regental general education requirement at the 100 or 200 level.
- B. A technical course is defined as a non-academic course that meets the technical program requirements for a diploma, certificate, or Associate of Applied Science degree.
- C. South Dakota Technical Institutes
 - 1) Transfer of academic courses from South Dakota postsecondary technical institutes is governed by BOR policies 2:25, 2:26, 2:27, 2:28, and 2:31.
 - a. Transfer grades not existing in the Regental grading scheme will be equated to the Regental grading system.
 - b. 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.
 - 2) Academic courses taken under articulation agreements in effect between July 1, 1999 and June 30, 2005 will be transferred according to those agreements.
 - 3) Effective Fall 2005, transfer of technical course credit hours from South Dakota postsecondary technical institutes only occurs as part of a program to program articulation agreement approved by the Board of Regents and South Dakota Board of Education.
 - a. The transfer of technical course credit hours occurs as a block of credit hours upon completion of requirements for the university articulated program.
 - b. The CR grade is used for the block of technical course credit hours.
- D. Other Technical Institutes
 - 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.
 - a. When the academic courses are accepted for transfer, equivalent courses are recorded on the transcript.
 - b. 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.

- c. The university-specific degree requirements determine if the academic courses transferred are applicable to the student's degree program at that university and if they meet the minimum grade criteria.
- 2) Transfer of technical course credit hours from non South Dakota postsecondary technical institutes only occurs as part of a program to program articulation agreement approved by the Board of Regents.
 - a. The transfer of technical course credit hours occurs as a block of credit hours upon completion of requirements for the university articulated program.
 - b. The CR grade is used for the block of technical course credit hours.

87. Undergraduate and graduate credits received from United States colleges or universities that are which are not accredited, by a United States regional accrediting association, and undergraduate and graduate credits received from United States colleges or universities which are not accredited by a United States regional accrediting association but are accredited by a national specialized accrediting agency recognized by the US Department of Education.

- A. 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.
- B. When the courses are accepted for transfer, equivalent courses are recorded on the transcript but the grade earned at the non-accredited institution is not recorded or calculated into the grade point averages using the following guidelines:
 - 1) If there are specific equivalent graduate courses at the university evaluating the credit, these specific courses should be used when granting equivalencies.
 - 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:
 - a. 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 (~~500/600/700~~ for master's² programs and 700/800 for doctoral programs).
 - b. If the academic discipline is not available at the university evaluating the credit, use the GEN prefix and the appropriate course level (~~500/600/700~~ for master's² programs and 700/800 for doctoral programs).
- C. 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.

D. 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.

~~98. Courses submitted in transfer from postsecondary technical institutes that are not accredited will not be accepted by a United States regional accrediting agency will not be accepted.~~

109. Undergraduate and Graduate Courses from Postsecondary Institutions outside the United States.

A. Courses considered for transfer are subject to all BOR policies and any conditions for validation that may be prescribed by the accepting institution.

B. When the courses are accepted for transfer, equivalent courses are recorded on the transcript. Most commonly, the grade earned at the sending institution is not recorded or calculated into the grade point averages. However, at the discretion of the institution's chief academic officer, grades may be recorded and used to determine the transfer and cumulative GPA's. The following guidelines will be used:

1) If there are specific equivalent undergraduate or graduate courses at the university evaluating the credit, these specific courses should be used when granting equivalencies.

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:

a. 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 (~~500/600/700~~ for master's² programs and 700/800 for doctoral programs).

b. If the academic discipline is not available at the university evaluating the credit, use the GEN prefix and the appropriate course level (~~500/600/700~~ for master's² programs and 700/800 for doctoral programs).

i. 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.

ii. 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.

110. Credit Received Through Validation Methods

A. Credit earned through validation methods other than nationally recognized examinations is limited to a maximum of 30 hours of credit for baccalaureate degrees and 15 hours of credit for associate degrees.

1) Validation of Military credit is limited to an additional 30 hours of credit for baccalaureate degrees and an additional 15 hours of credit for associate degrees.

B. Credit for college level courses granted through nationally recognized examinations such as CLEP, AP, DANTEs, 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.

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

2) Credit received through validation may apply to System General Education Requirements and Institutional Graduation Requirements.

3) Credit received through validation may not apply to writing intensive requirements.

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

D. 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.

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

~~121.~~ When a course has been repeated for credit, all attempts will be entered on the transcript but the last grade earned will be used in the calculation of the grade point averages.

~~132.~~ Total transfer credit for work at a junior, community college (2 year), and/or two-year technical college may not exceed one-half of the hours required for completion of the baccalaureate degree at the accepting institution. 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.

- | 143. System general education requirements successfully completed at the sending South Dakota Regental institution will be accepted towards meeting these requirements at the accepting South Dakota Regental institution. 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.
- | 154. Evaluations of courses will be made by the appropriate institutional officials at the time of admission by comparing descriptions, content, and level of courses completed with those at the accepting institution.
- | 165. Each institution will develop and maintain a procedure for the appeal of transfer credit decisions.
- | 176. A Regental internal transfer process occurs when 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 2:8.3.A and 2:8.3.B.

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.