

Policy: 03-51-00

Recording Non-Traditional Credit

OFFICE OF RECORD: Office of Vice President for Academic Affairs

ISSUED BY: Vice President for Academic Affairs

APPROVED BY: Douglas D. Knowlton, 03-51-00

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Policy

Dakota State University allows students to earn academic credit for nontraditional learning experiences when those experiences are equivalent to coursework provided at Dakota State University. DSU will evaluate and record credit for the non-traditional learning experience of degree-seeking students currently enrolled at Dakota State University or former students of Dakota State University seeking enhanced certification, licensure or employment opportunities. Baccalaureate-degree students may earn a maximum of 30 semester hours and associate-degree students may earn a maximum of 15 semester hours via nontraditional learning experiences. These maximum credit limits apply, regardless of the number of majors in which the student is enrolled. If credit by examination is accepted, their permanent record will show the equivalent course name and a grade of EX for the specified number of credits. If credit is accepted by another form of validation, the grade will be S for the specified number of credits. No entry will be made on the record if the examination is failed. The examination results will not be included in calculation of either the semester or the cumulative grade point average. Credit earned for nontraditional learning experience will not meet degree residency requirements. If a student has not successfully completed a course (a grade of D or F) credit for prior learning/work experience cannot be used to gain credit for the failed course.

Dakota State University cannot guarantee that credit earned for non-traditional learning experience at DSU will transfer to other institutions, since institutional practices/policies vary.

Procedure

Advanced Placement (AP)

Credit for work accomplished in high school through the Advanced Placement program of the College Examination Board will be awarded, based on the approved exams and scores noted in the university catalog under "Advanced Placement". Advanced placement examinations do not meet the writing intensive requirements for general education.

1. Students complete the Advanced Placement test administered by their high schools and request that the scores be reported to Dakota State University.
2. AP sends scores to the students and to DSU's Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President's Office notifies the Registrar of the exam results and, if the scores meet or exceed DSU's standards, the Registrar enters the credit for the examinations on the students' transcripts.

(Nothing is entered on transcripts if the AP scores do not meet DSU credit standards.)

College Level Examination Program (CLEP)

Students may take CLEP (College Level Examination Program) exams to earn credit for specific courses. A listing of specific course equivalencies and minimum scores are noted in the university catalog under "CLEP".

The CLEP program has a long-standing policy that an exam may not be retaken within a six month period. This waiting period provides the student with an opportunity to spend additional time preparing for the exam or the option of taking a classroom course. CLEP examinations do not meet the writing intensive requirements for general education.

1. Students contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment (Heston Hall, 256-5101) for CLEP information and to schedule an appointment.
2. Students pay the appropriate test fee and complete the computer-based Exam. Military personnel are eligible civilian employees and spouses can complete the CLEP exams at DSU without paying the exam fee. Please contact the OIEA at 256-5101 for more information on CLEP testing for military.
3. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment provides an unofficial score report to the student and electronically submits the test results to Educational Testing Services. ETS sends the official results to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President's Office notifies the Registrar and the student of the official exam results and, if the score meets or exceeds DSU's standards, the Registrar enters the credit for the exam on the student's transcript. (Nothing is entered on the transcript if the CLEP score does not meet DSU credit standards.)

Departmental Credit-by-Examination

In subjects for which there is no equivalent CLEP examination, students may petition to challenge college coursework via a departmental credit-by-examination. A grade of "C" or better is required on the exam to earn course credit.

DSU credit will be granted only for passing scores earned the first time each subject department credit-by-exam is taken. If a student earned a grade of D or F in a course, a departmental credit-by-exam cannot be used to gain DSU credit for that course. Students cannot earn credit-by-exam credit for courses if they have already completed higher-level courses in that content area.

1. Student discusses the proposal with the dean of the college that offers the course. With dean's approval, student completes the "Application for Credit by Examination" form available through the Enrollment Services or on the DSU Portal. Current costs for challenge exams are noted in the university catalog under Tuition, Fees, Housing and Board costs.
2. The dean approves the student request, works with a faculty member to set very specific standards for earning the credits (test, essay, project or demonstrating abilities) and makes arrangements for administering the exam. This request must be approved by the dean by the

deadline for withdrawal from a full semester course, which is published in the Academic Calendar.

3. The faculty person identified on the form administers and grades the exam and the exam results are reported to the dean, prior to the end of the academic term in which the grade will be recorded.

4. The dean notifies the student and the Registrar of the outcome. Only successful exams are noted on the student's academic record.

Dual-credits for High School Courses

The South Dakota Board of Regents has established agreements with colleges and universities whereby the South Dakota regental universities will accept high school, dual-credit courses for transfer. All other 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). For a list of the universities and colleges that the university system has agreements with go to <http://www.sdbor.edu/services/academics/DualCredit/default.htm>. High school dual credit courses taken at any of the six regental universities within the state of South Dakota (either on campus, online or at university centers) are recorded on the official college transcript of the student. Therefore, the courses transfer as any college coursework would, without the need for additional testing such as CLEP or Advanced Placement.

Credit for Prior Learning/Work Experience

Requests for credit via prior learning/work experience must directly correspond to academic coursework offered by Dakota State University. The experiential learning must be fully described and documented by the student in writing to indicate the direct correspondence or equivalence to specific university course(s). Requests should be evaluated by external supervisors, if appropriate, and by University officials in light of the student's educational objectives.

1. Students prepare a cover memo to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, stating the course(s) for which he/she would like to receive prior learning credit. In addition to the memo, the student's application for prior learning should include:

- a. Transcript for the course(s) (either an original or a copy) that includes the course prefix, number, title and date of enrollment;
- b. Course syllabus;
- c. Name of instructor;
- d. Any course projects that seem appropriate;
- e. Statement/memo from the student's DSU advisor, indicating the student and the advisor have discussed the student's application and the advisor agrees that prior learning credit is appropriate for this student in this major; and
- f. \$50 per transcript processing fee

In cases where the prior learning application is based on experiential learning, rather than completed coursework, the documentation should include:

- g. Statements from work supervisors (or the company's human resources director) indicating job requirements and skills needed for the position held,
 - h. Examples of work projects,
 - i. Other appropriate proof of work experience
 - j. \$50 per course processing fee
2. Student memo plus documentation is submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs;
 3. A faculty committee is appointed to review the application and reports its recommendation to the college dean, who forwards the recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs;
 4. Enrollment Services, the student, and advisor are notified by the Vice President for Academic Affairs of the committee's recommendation.

Military Credit

Military credits are evaluated according to guidelines set forth by the American Council on Education and published in the Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services. Dakota State University has been approved as a Service Members Opportunity College and is listed in the SOC Guide for use by military personnel.

Students requesting evaluation of military work should provide a copy of the course evaluation done by the American Council of Education (ACE) or an official copy of DANTES transcript to the Registrar.

International Baccalaureate

The South Dakota Board of Regents has established guidelines for accepting International Baccalaureate credits. These guidelines are found in the University catalog.