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February 14 2022

SUBJECT: Transfer Credit

Instruction: 1307

(OUR)

ABSTRACT

This Instruction assigns the responsibilities and prescribes the procedures to be followed in assessing and granting transfer credit to a student for educational experiences or courses undertaken at another institution towards degree requirements for students at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU).

A. Purpose. This Instruction cancels PPM-010-2017 “Federal Definition of ‘Credit Hour’ and Procedures of Awarding of Transfer Credit to Graduate Students,” (*Reference (a)*). This Instruction is to recognize relevant external learning that may be acceptable for transfer credit toward a USU degree or certificate program, including academic credit earned at other accredited institutions; experiential learning; prior non-academic, competency-based assessment; and other alternative approaches. Furthermore, this Instruction outlines the procedures for recording transfer credit evaluations on the student record and Student Information System (SIS) for all USU students earning University credit at the undergraduate and graduate level.

B. Background. The College of Allied Health Sciences (CAHS), Graduate Education programs within The School of Medicine (SOM), and The Graduate School of Nursing (GSN) accept transfer credit toward USU degrees and certificates. Transfer credit is described as any external work that meets the rigor of academic outcome requirements towards a USU degree that is not taught by USU faculty. Academic work that results in transfer credit towards a USU degree must be assessed by USU faculty and/or administrators with clear and transparent policies as required by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) Standard IV – Support of the Student Experience, Criteria 4.

C. References. *Enclosure 1.*

D. Applicability. This policy applies to all USU students receiving transfer credit that is transcribed as University credit.

E. Policy. It is USU’s policy to accept transfer credit, where appropriate, and uphold the appeal process in transfer-credit disputes.

1. Process.

a. To initiate a transfer credit evaluation, the Registrar or other appropriate official at the host post-secondary institution or other learning environment must send an official transcript directly to the USU Office of the University Registrar (OUR). International transcripts should follow the same procedure along with a translation in English of a course-by-course evaluation which includes the cumulative grade-point-average.

b. If courses carry non-semester hours of credit, they are converted to semester hours when recorded on the student's academic record with a grade of credit (CR). USU converts quarter hours to semester credits by multiplying the number of quarter hours by two-thirds (0.67). When the transcript does not clearly specify quarter or semester hours, the evaluator should reference the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) Guide, College Source, American Council on Education (ACE) or the Transfer Evaluation System (TES).

c. Transfer credit(s) completed prior to USU attendance will be posted to the student's official transcript by the end of the second full semester of attendance at USU. Transfer credit taken during enrollment will not be calculated as part of the USU coursework GPA. Reverse transfer credit is the act of submitting general education and/or general elective credit to USU after the student has completed their technical program requirements. Reverse transfer credit is only accepted for undergraduate programs degree conferral up to five years after the student leaves USU.

d. All USU students have the right to appeal their transfer credit evaluation through a formal appeal request to the OUR with additional information, including an extended course description and course syllabus. The appeal will be reviewed by the school/college with a final decision and report issued to both the student and OUR for the student file and/or updating of the original evaluation which should not exceed 90 days.

2. Evaluator Procedures.

a. General Considerations

1) Courses being submitted for transfer credit must have been completed at an academic institution or program that had full or provisional accreditation at the time the learner withdrew/graduated.

2) Reverse transfer credit is accepted at the undergraduate level for:

a) Up to five years after successful program completion; and

b) General education and/or general elective degree requirements.

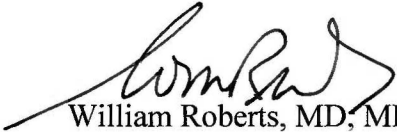
- 3) Courses being submitted for transfer credit must:
 - a) Have been completed within seven years prior to admission to USU for graduate level programs. Exceptions must be approved by the appropriate Dean.
 - b) Have been awarded a “passing” grade.
 - 1) Minimum acceptable grade undergraduate transfer credit is a C-.
 - 2) Minimum acceptable grade for graduate transfer credit is B-.
- 4) Transfer credit will only be awarded after direct source verification.
- 5) Transfer credit may be awarded for:
 - a) USU electives, major courses or general education credits.
 - b) Prior learning from military training.
 - c) Prior learning from nationally recognized examination programs such as the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), Advanced Placement (AP) and DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST) for undergraduate credit.
 - d) Up to 12 credit hours for USU graduate programs unless an exception is approved by the program Dean.
- 6) Transfer credit will not be awarded for:
 - a) Prior Learning Assessment (PLA), transfer credit, or credit by exam from another institution.
 - b) Developmental, vocational, English as a Second Language (ESL), or remedial coursework will not be accepted as transfer credit.
- 7) Some programs may require original USU coursework for some degrees which may limit course transferability.
- b. Review of courses submitted for transfer credit.
 - 1) Transfer credit will only be awarded for courses that meet USU degree requirements.
 - 2) Courses submitted for transfer credit:
 - a) Must share significant content with courses/outcomes required for USU degrees or be accepted to the program as elective credit.

- b) Will be evaluated for equivalence to USU offered courses including credit hours; department offering course; course level and content outline.
- c) Will be assigned a generic number by OUR using the subject matter prefix and title when there is no direct USU equate.
- d) Will follow the Department of Education regulation 43 CFR 668.8(k) Undergraduate Clock-to-Credit Hour Conversion: “[a] semester or trimester hour must include at least 30 in-class clock hours of instruction.”

F. Responsibilities.

1. The Academic Program shall:
 - a. Review external academic performance of their students;
 - b. Identify core curriculum outcomes and coordinate a course equate or degree requirement for transfer credit posting with OUR;
 - c. Coordinate evaluator training to provide an objective review of transfer credits within the department and make recommendations for future analysis;
 - d. Forward the final transfer credit evaluation results and conditions in writing to OUR for recording and updating the student record;
 - e. Preview transfer credit appeals and notify OUR of the outcome and equate updates as needed.
2. The OUR shall:
 - a. Manage official transcripts received from other institutions and agencies;
 - b. Coordinate communication on missing/outstanding transfer documents needed for degree completion to the academic program;
 - c. Assist advisors and students with registration for USU students participating in the D.C. Consortium Program for transfer credit as well as provide reconciliation reports for costs to the D.C. Consortium;
 - d. Post transfer credit and conduct quality control for course equate anomalies and course source accreditation and/or documentation;
 - e. Manage course equates within the SIS and post on the USU website for student transparency;
 - f. Manage the USU transfer credit website;

- g. Manage degree audit applicability for evaluated credit;
 - h. Coordinate the transfer credit appeal process and store all correspondence in the student file; and
 - i. Provide institutional academic data to the Office of Accreditation and Organizational Assessment (AOA) for annual University performance statistics required by the MSCHE.
- G. Effective date.** This Instruction is effective immediately.



William Roberts, MD, MBA
Acting President

Enclosure

1. References

REFERENCES

- (a) USU PPM-010-2017, "Federal Definition of 'Credit Hour' and Procedures of awarding of transfer credit to Graduate Students," February 10, 2017 (hereby canceled).
- (b) Middle States Commission on Higher Education; Standard IV, Criteria 4: Policies and procedures regarding the evaluation and acceptance of transfer credit,
https://www.msche.org/standards/#standard_4
- (c) Part 668 of title 32, Code of Federal Regulations, current edition