

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual

SUBJECT: Seamless Transfer of Credit

NUMBER: 2.2.2.1

A. PURPOSE

This policy outlines flexible pathways for students to transfer among institutions within and from outside the Regental system to enable their opportunities for success.

B. DEFINITIONS

- 1. Accredited Institution:** Holding accreditation from one of the following institutional accrediting bodies, unless otherwise specified: Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), Higher Learning Commission (HLC), Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC).
- 2. Articulation Agreement:** An agreement between two or among multiple institutions allowing for transfer of credit, either as course-by-course and/or as a block of credits.
- 3. Associate College:** Institution at which the highest degree awarded is an associates degree.
- 4. Block Credit:** A block of credits derived from a cluster of courses referenced in an articulation agreement between participating institutions.
- 5. Common Catalog:** The catalog of courses is a shared catalog by all Regental institutions allowing students to use coursework completed to fulfill their program degree requirements.
- 6. Common Course Numbering:** The system-shared numbering of equivalent courses among Regental institutions that facilitates the common course catalog.
- 7. Course Evaluation:** A review completed by the appropriate registrar or designated official to compare descriptions, content, and level of course completed from an accredited or non-accredited institution.
- 8. Credit for Prior Learning (CPL):** College level knowledge or skills that have been attained outside of a traditional academic environment and that have not been previously evaluated for, or awarded, college credit.
- 9. General Education:** Curriculum defined to develop learners' general knowledge, literacy, skills, and competencies which equip students for success with advanced curriculum, program and major completion, and career competencies.
- 10. In-State:** Any public or private college or university physically located in South Dakota.

- 11. Out-of-State:** A college or university not physically located in South Dakota.
- 12. Prior Learning Assessments (PLA):** A process to evaluate learner competencies acquired by a student through formal and non-formal learning experiences that occurred outside of the college classroom. (e.g., External Exam [CLEP, AP, IB, etc.], American Council on Education [ACE], Council on Adult and Experiential Learning [CAEL], etc.).
- 13. Program-to-Program Transfer:** Process whereby an entire curriculum or program of study is accepted between colleges and universities.
- 14. Receiving Institution:** The Regental University to which the student is transferring.
- 15. Regental Internal Transfer:** Process where an undergraduate course is used to meet a plan of study requirement at any 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 2.4.2.).
- 16. Regental University:** Defined as one of the six (6) public universities: Black Hills State University, Dakota State University, Northern State University, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, South Dakota State University, and the University of South Dakota.
- 17. Reverse Transfer:** Transfer credit exchange between a receiving institution to the sending institution to retroactively complete the academic credentials for a degree.
- 18. SD Technical College:** Colleges affiliated with the South Dakota Board of Technical Education: Lake Area Technical College, Mitchell Technical College, Southeast Technical College, and Western Dakota Technical College.
- 19. Sending Institution:** The institution from which a student is transferring.
- 20. Transfer Student:** A designation given to a degree-seeking student who transfers credit from a sending institution to a receiving institution.
- 21. WICHE (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education):** A higher educational compact for which the Board of Regents is a member.
- 22. WICHE Interstate Passport:** A program that enables seamless block transfer of lower-division general education credits to fulfill general education requirements at a participating member institution in the WICHE compact.

C. POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Governance:

- 1.1. Board of Regents Policy 1.1.1, 1.1.2 and SDCL § 13-49 through § 13-53 provides the authority to govern academic programming.
- 1.2. The Regental university must gain approval for any articulation agreement from the Board of Regents.
- 1.3. The Board of Regents governs the common course numbering and the common course catalog in their enterprise resource planning (ERP) system.

- 1.4. All courses are subject to all Board of Regents policies and any conditions for validation that are prescribed by the receiving institution.
- 1.5. The Regental system general education requirements shall be managed by the Academic Affairs Council with consultation from the System General Education Committee.

2. Quality:

- 2.1. The goal of transfer credit decisions, regardless of whether the credits were completed at an accredited institution, is to ensure that all degree-seeking students have met the same (or appropriately similar) curricular requirements upon graduation.
- 2.2. When evaluating transfer requests, reviewers should consider whether the accreditation of a sending institution is from a recognized accrediting organization.

3. Applicability:

- 3.1. Regental institutions shall award credit when the academic program, level of study, and course content are similar in nature and applicable to the academic program of the receiving institution.
- 3.2. Grading schemes inconsistent with the Regental system grading scheme will be converted to the Regental equivalent.
- 3.3. Credit is only applied once per course per degree on a semester credit system; any course taken multiple times will be treated according to the Regental system repeat policy.

4. Student-Centered:

Credit prior coursework is evaluated for transfer based on the following policies. The policies are established to meet specific student needs.

- BOR Policy 2.2.2.2 – Internal (within the Regental system) Transfer
- BOR Policy 2.2.2.3 – External (Non-Regental) Accredited Institution Transfer
- BOR Policy 2.2.2.4 – External (Non-Regental) Non-Accredited and International Transfer
- BOR Policy 2.2.2.5 – Credit for Prior Learning

D. INSTITUTIONAL CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

Minimum institutional credit requirements to earn an academic credential (certificate or degree) are identified in BOR Policy 2.6.1. All other credits beyond the required threshold as provided in BOR Policy 2.6.1 are eligible to be satisfied through transfer credit.

E. TRANSFER OF CREDIT WAIVERS

There may be a need to request waivers for programming and student needs. Student institutional credit requirements shall be covered by BOR Policy 2.6.1. Should the need arise, the Chief Academic Officer at the Regental institution may request a waiver of the transfer credit limitations imposed by BOR Policy 2.6.1 through the BOR System Academic Affairs designated staff member.

F. APPEAL PROCESS

1. Transfer students who do not qualify for transfer of credit may appeal through the appropriate institutional appeal procedures. Institutions shall publish appeal procedures in the catalog or another official institution publication.
2. The appeal procedures will be posted in the AAC Guidelines for transparency of the receiving institution process.

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; BOR April 2019; April 2020 (Clerical); June 2020 (Clerical); BOR December 2021; BOR August 2022; August 2022 (Clerical); December 2022 (Clerical); October 2023 (Clerical); BOR December 2023.