

## REGULATION TRANSMITTAL LETTER

Transmittal # 06

August 9, 2024

Regulation	Title	Action
<a href="#">400.1.5[R]</a>	Regulation Related to Fostering Undergraduate Student Success	Amended 8/7/24 <i><u>Redline Version Attached</u></i>
<a href="#">700.1.1.2[R]</a>	Regulation on Transfer Student Admission	Amended 8/7/24 <i><u>Redline Version Attached</u></i>
<a href="#">700.10.1[R]</a>	Regulation on Awarding Undergraduate Credit for Prior Learning	Amended 8/7/24 <i><u>Redline Version Attached</u></i>

The actions taken on the above regulations were reviewed and approved by the President for inclusion in the UNC Policy Manual.

The entire UNC Policy Manual is accessible at: <https://www.northcarolina.edu/apps/policy/index.php>

### **Regulation Related to Fostering Undergraduate Student Success**

I. Required Semester Credit Hours for Baccalaureate Degree Programs. Baccalaureate degree programs shall require no more than 120 semester credit hours. An institution with compelling reasons as to why a program's requirements must exceed 120 semester credit hours may petition to have an exception approved by its board of trustees. Compelling reasons include, but are not limited to: programmatic accreditation standards; licensure requirements; and other state, federal, or professional regulations.

An institution must report any exceptions granted by its board of trustees, and the reasons for those exceptions, to the Board of Governors and the president by the end of calendar year 2018 and annually thereafter.

Any program authorized by the Board of Governors to require 135 semester credit hours or more shall be officially designated as a five-year baccalaureate program.

A. Constituent institutions shall observe these regulations in all proposals for new degree programs.

B. This section applies to individual baccalaureate degree programs, not to credit hour requirements for students who earn more than one major.

C. Constituent institutions must publicize the required number of semester credit hours and projected length of full-time enrollment required to obtain each baccalaureate degree in both printed and online catalogs. During new student orientation sessions and in publications for students and parents, constituent institutions must provide a description of factors that may prolong the length of time to complete a degree.

D. The UNC System Office will maintain a catalog of all active baccalaureate degree programs and their required hours, and the Board of Governors will periodically review compliance with this 120-credit limitation, including approved exceptions to that limitation.

This section is effective as of the beginning of the fall 2019 semester, and shall not affect the credit hour requirements in place at the time of registration for students who registered at a constituent institution prior to the fall 2019 semester. Students who registered at a constituent institution prior to the fall 2019 semester will have the option to elect into the fall 2019 catalog.

II. Student Success Policies. Constituent institutions must have policies addressing student success, including Satisfactory Academic Progress and Good Academic Standing.

- A. Satisfactory Academic Progress and Good Academic Standing. Satisfactory Academic Progress and Good Academic Standing are determined by:
1. Cumulative Grade Point Average; and
  2. Ratio of attempted to completed semester credit hours.
- B. The implementation of these criteria shall include the following:
1. Upon initial admission to a UNC constituent institution, a student is in Good Academic Standing.
  2. All undergraduates in the University of North Carolina System must earn and maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 to be considered in Good Academic Standing. Constituent institutions may choose to utilize term GPA in determining Good Academic Standing.
  3. All constituent institutions must develop an academic progress policy that defines the ratio of attempted to earned semester credit hours required for continued enrollment. Federal Title IV regulations for Satisfactory Academic Progress shall be the minimum allowable standard.
  4. If a student meets the criteria in each of the standards above, then the student is considered to be making Satisfactory Academic Progress, remains in Good Academic Standing, and is eligible to continue enrollment at that UNC constituent institution.
  5. Constituent institutions may develop policies that allow students falling below one or more of the standards to be placed on academic warning and/or academic probation<sup>1</sup> as opposed to being academically dismissed or academically suspended. These policies must, at a minimum, be in accord with federal Title IV regulations and should include the use of academic success contracts where appropriate.
  6. Constituent institution policies related to this section must be published in all campus academic and financial aid materials, both printed and online. Students should be informed of these policies at new student orientation.
- C. The Course Adjustment Period (i.e., “Drop/Add”). The Course Adjustment Period will be established as the time during which students may drop or add courses without academic penalty (i.e., no impact on the Grade Point Average (GPA) or attempted hours). Constituent institutions may choose to make the period for adding courses and the period for dropping courses the same or different; however, both the drop and add periods must be concluded by the census date.<sup>2</sup> The implementation of this section shall include the following:
1. Constituent institutions may set policies that allow faculty to drop students administratively if they do not attend the course by the end of the Course Adjustment Period.<sup>3</sup> These policies must be publicized to students. Faculty using this option must have a limited window to take such action in order to complete the drop without causing the student to incur financial penalties other than those normally applied during the course adjustment period. Constituent institutions may allow faculty to add students into those seats in a timely fashion under guidelines set by the constituent institution.
  2. Constituent institution business practices<sup>4</sup> determine if adjustments made during Course Adjustment Period result in any refund or additional charges to the student. Any financial repercussions to students must be publicized in the constituent institution’s academic and financial aid policies describing the Course Adjustment Period.

3. Federal Title IV regulations shall be the minimum standard for all policies related to student refunds during the course adjustment period.

D. Course Withdrawal.<sup>5</sup> Students are expected to complete all the courses for which they are registered at the close of the Course Adjustment Period. These courses must be recorded on a student's official transcript and receive a grade that is used in the calculation of a GPA, count as attempted hours, and conform to all financial aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress rules *unless* withdrawal is permitted under conditions described below:

1. Course withdrawal with extenuating circumstances.

- a. Constituent institutions will develop policies that permit a student to withdraw from a course or courses at any time and without academic penalty for serious extenuating circumstances, including military deployment. These policies must describe a clear process that defines the documentation required, the nature of the review by a designated institutional body or official, and an opportunity for one level of appeal at the institution level. Students who must withdraw from a course or courses due to military service should also consult the UNC Policy Manual on Military Student Success, Section 700.7.1. Course withdrawals taken during the 2020 spring semester, 2020 fall semester, or 2021 spring semester due to the COVID-19 pandemic shall be considered taken due to serious extenuating circumstances.

- b. Any constituent institution policy developed for course withdrawal for extenuating circumstances must require that:

- (1) A W be recorded on the transcript;
- (2) The course(s) count as attempted hours;
- (3) The course(s) not count in GPA calculation; and
- (4) The course(s) are subject to all financial aid and SAP rules and calculations.

2. Course withdrawals without extenuating circumstances.

- a. After the initial Course Adjustment Period, constituent institutions may develop policies that allow students to withdraw from one or more courses without meeting the standards for withdrawals for extenuating circumstances. These policies must specify up to four courses or up to 16 semester credit hours as the maximum number of such withdrawals permitted over the course of a student's degree or degrees.

- b. Any policy developed for course withdrawal without extenuating circumstances must require that:

- (1) A W be recorded on the transcript;
- (2) The course(s) count as attempted hours;
- (3) The course(s) are subject to all financial aid and SAP rules and calculations.

- c. Constituent institution policies must include a deadline for such withdrawal at a date no later than the completion of 60 percent of the term.<sup>6</sup>

E. Course Repeats. Constituent institution policies on course repeats must conform, at the minimum, to federal Title IV Financial Aid standards with regard to course repeats. Students receiving federal financial aid cannot be treated differently from students not on such aid. In addition, all constituent institution policies on course repeats must, at the minimum:

1. Include on the student transcript all attempts to complete a course;
2. Count all attempts to complete a course in calculations of satisfactory academic progress;
3. Use all grades earned in a course in the calculation of the GPA, unless the grade can be excluded through an institution-based grade exclusion or replacement policy.

F. Forgiveness Policies. Constituent institutions may establish policies that permit a student who is academically dismissed or academically suspended to be readmitted after a specified period of time, have a modified or new GPA calculation, and to be under other specific steps for re-admittance to the campus.

G. Grade Exclusion or Grade Replacement

1. Constituent institutions must develop policies on grade exclusion and/or grade replacement.<sup>7</sup> These policies must specify up to four courses or up to 16 semester hours as a maximum number of allowable exclusions/replacements. Courses taken during the 2020 spring semester, 2020 fall semester, or 2021 spring semester shall not count against the maximum number of allowable exclusions/replacements due to the impacts of COVID-19.
2. Institutional policies that permit either grade exclusion and/or grade replacement must provide for:
  - a. The inclusion on the transcript of both the initial grade earned for the course and a notation of its exclusion from or replacement in the calculation of the GPA; and
  - b. The inclusion of the course(s) in the calculation of satisfactory academic progress.

H. Minimum, Maximum, and Average Semester Course Load. A minimum “full-time” undergraduate course load is defined as 12 credit hours per semester. In advising and other communications, constituent institutions shall encourage full-time students to consider an average semester load of 15 credit hours, when possible, to stay on track for a timely graduation. Constituent institutions may allow students in good academic standing to enroll in up to 18 semester hours in a fall or spring semester without any special permission. No student shall exceed 18 semester hours in a fall or spring semester without special permission as designated by institutional policy. Constituent institutions shall develop appropriate policies for a maximum load in summer terms.

III. Student Success Review and Reporting. Constituent institutions will establish a student success support structure of one or more committees comprised of the appropriate officials from areas such as admissions, registrar’s office, financial aid, advising, the counseling center, the cashier’s office, faculty governance, and student government to review and issue regular reports on:

A. Retention and Graduation

1. Each constituent institution shall, in consultation with the UNC System Office, establish goals for retention<sup>8</sup> and graduation<sup>9</sup> for first-time, full-time students. Constituent institutions shall also work with the UNC System to develop a tracking model for the retention and graduation rates of full-time students, transfer students, and part-time students.
2. The UNC System Office will report annually to the Board of Governors on the success of these various categories at both the institutional and system level.

B. Additional Student Success Measures. Constituent institutions shall work with the UNC System Office to develop common output measures of student success and achievement as a means to assess the academic progress goals set by each institution.

C. Review of Course Scheduling and Offerings. Constituent institutions shall develop mechanisms to monitor whether all courses necessary for graduation are offered on a timely basis and with an adequate number of sections for a student to graduate in four years. As a part of this review, institutions shall determine:

1. If general education requirements (e.g., themes, designators, etc.) allow appropriate student progress;
2. If excessive or unnecessary specification or augmentation of general education courses for certain majors places an undue burden on students changing majors; and
3. If excessive GPA or course grade requirements for admission to or completion of a major are delaying student progress toward graduation.

These evaluations will be prepared on a three-year cycle beginning in fall 2014 and will examine data from the previous three academic years. The UNC System Office will consult with institutions to develop the reporting format and required data.

D. Advising. Constituent institutions shall develop policies to monitor the availability of appropriate and timely academic advising, particularly for first-time undergraduates and first-semester transfer students to:

1. Assist students in making effective academic and career decisions;
2. Increase the potential for students selecting appropriate courses and schedules;
3. Provide students with assistance in selecting a major in a timely fashion;
4. Prevent excessive changes of major; and
5. Increase students' awareness of an appropriate course load and academic assistance available to them.

This review should take place on a three-year cycle beginning in fall 2014 and examine data from the previous three academic years. The UNC System Office will consult with institutions to develop the reporting format and required data.

E. Early Warning System Plan

1. Effective with the start of the fall 2014 semester, each constituent institution will have an early warning system (EWS) to alert relevant campus personnel to signs of poor academic performance by a student or of behavior likely to lead to a student not making Satisfactory Academic Progress. Each constituent institution will submit a comprehensive intervention plan to the UNC System Office that describes how students are identified by the EWS, what campus staff or faculty are notified when a student is identified by the EWS, and how the staff or faculty member is to respond. Interventions may include written communication with students, phone calls or text messages, face-to-face meetings with campus personnel, and/or formal programs involving extended student participation.
2. The EWS should specify what interventions will be used, who will be responsible for them, how warnings will be communicated to responsible personnel, and how interventions will be tracked and reported.
3. Each constituent institution will identify strategies to assess the effectiveness of its EWS and use the results for ongoing improvement.

#### IV. Regulations on Student Financial Aid and Title IV

A. All constituent institutions will develop financial aid disclosure practices that will, at the minimum, include entrance and exit counseling for students receiving financial aid.<sup>10</sup>

B. All institutional policies will be compliant with federal Title IV regulations, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Common definition of the federal Title IV regulation that defines a student as eligible for federal financial aid for up to 150 percent of normal time to graduation.
2. Four-year-degree requirements in the University of North Carolina System range from 120-128 semester credit hours. The system will use 120 hours as the common definition for defining federal financial aid eligibility, making 180 hours the limit for 150 percent of normal time to graduation.
3. Constituent institutions will define procedures whereby a student completing 180 or more attempted hours will undergo an automatic review to determine continued federal financial aid eligibility. If the student is enrolled in a program requiring more than 120 hours, the appropriate allowance will be calculated on campus based on the exact number of credits required for that degree.

These policies must be widely distributed in all institutional academic and financial aid materials.

C. Guidelines to monitor first undergraduate degree completion. Federal Title IV regulations require that institutions monitor first undergraduate degree completion and offer no additional federal grant aid (e.g., Pell, SEOG) after a student earns the initial undergraduate degree. Under federal rules, a student can take out federal loans for a second degree, if eligible. To ensure compliance, institutions must develop protocols for:

1. Monitoring student degree completion each term (fall, spring, summer); and

2. For advising students of their status and eligibility for federal financial aid.

These policies must be widely distributed in all institutional academic and financial aid materials.

V. Compliance with the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) with the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) and Transfer within the UNC System

A. Constituent institutions will be fully compliant with the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement with the NCCCS.

B. Any student completing the Associates in Arts (AA) or Associates in Science (AS) degrees according to the CAA will be considered to have completed general education requirements and the requirements of § 400.1.5(II)(A)(9), at all UNC institutions in which they matriculate. The CAA may also designate North Carolina Community College System courses which meet one or more of the requirements of § 400.1.5(II)(A)(9).

C. Any change by a constituent institution in its General Education requirements must be consistent with the CAA.

VI. Information Distribution

A. To ensure that students receive policy information that is both comprehensive and timely, institutions must develop broad-based communications plans that inform students about:

1. Recommended course loads, required numbers of earned hours, and the projected length of full-time enrollment needed to obtain the baccalaureate degrees;
2. Factors that may extend the length of time to complete a degree;
3. Requirements for Good Academic Standing and Satisfactory Academic Progress;
4. The course adjustment period; and
5. Other policies on course withdrawal, course repeat, and grade replacement or exclusion and their potential financial consequences.

B. All policies and procedures listed in this regulation will be effective no later than the fall 2014 semester.

VII. Relation to Federal and State Laws and Policies. The foregoing regulation is meant to supplement, and does not purport to supplant or modify, those statutory enactments, regulations, and policies which may govern or relate to the subject matter of this regulation.

VIII. Effective Date. The requirements of this regulation shall be effective on the date of adoption of this regulation by the president.



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<sup>1</sup>Constituent institutions are not obligated to enact policies for either academic probation or academic warning below the allowable standards.

<sup>2</sup>For regular term instruction, the census date is the conclusion of the 10<sup>th</sup> class day of the fall and spring semesters. For summer sessions, degree credit extension courses, and any other degree-credit courses taught on an irregular calendar, the census date is the end of the class day representing the passage of 10 percent of the instructional period. UNC Policy Manual, Section 400.1.8[R].

<sup>3</sup>If the course is offered online, the instructor may administratively drop the student from the course if the student has not signed in by the end of the course adjustment period.

<sup>4</sup>All constituent institution business practices must conform to UNC FIT Student Account Standards.

<sup>5</sup>All institutional policies on withdrawal must include policies about refunds and conform to UNC FIT Financial Aid and Student Account Standards.

<sup>6</sup>The calculation of this date should begin with the first day of classes and conclude on the last day of regular class meetings. It should exclude the reading day and exam period.

<sup>7</sup>The development of a policy does not imply that a constituent institution must allow grade replacement and/or exclusion. A policy may simply state that the institution does not allow such.

<sup>8</sup>For purposes of reporting on first-time, full-time students, retention rate shall be defined as “the percentage of first-time degree-seeking undergraduates from the previous fall who are again enrolled in the current fall.” (<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/glossary/>)

<sup>9</sup>For purposes of reporting, graduation rate data shall be collected as defined by “the number of students entering the institution as full-time, first-time undergraduate students in a particular year (cohort), completing their program within 150 percent of normal time to completion. It shall be calculated by race/ethnicity and gender.” (<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/glossary/>)

<sup>10</sup>All institutional policies on disclosure practices must conform to UNC FIT Financial Aid and Student Account standards.

### Regulation on Transfer Student Admission

The following regulation is designed to provide system-wide consistency and clarity regarding the definitions and treatment of undergraduate transfer students for admissions purposes, the transfer of credits, and services supporting transfer student success.

I. Definitions. These definitions are intended only for UNC system data reporting purposes. For purposes of determining admissions and student services eligibility, other UNC policy provisions and/or campus specific admissions and eligibility see UNC Policy Manual 700.1.1.1[R] and 700.1.1.2[R], Section II.

A. An undergraduate first-time student is one who has not attended another postsecondary institution after graduating from high school. It also includes students enrolled in the fall term who attended college for the first time in the prior summer.

B. An undergraduate transfer student is one who has attended another postsecondary institution after graduating from high school.

#### II. Admission of Transfer Students

A. For purposes of undergraduate admission, transfer applicants who have earned at least 24 transferrable undergraduate credits from one or more regionally accredited, post-secondary institutions shall not be required to meet Minimum Admissions Requirements (MAR) and Minimum Course Requirements (MCR).

1. Transferrable undergraduate credit counted as part of these 24 hours shall also include:

a. Credit earned at foreign institutions deemed to have the equivalence of regional accreditation; equivalence of regional accreditation generally refers to recognition by the foreign country's Ministry of Education and/or recognition by a credible organization offering credential evaluation services; and

b. Credit awarded for prior learning as part of military service, with the military branch designated as the transfer institution.

2. Undergraduate credits awarded for AP, IB, or other credit by exam shall not be included as part of these 24 hours.

3. The 24-hour credit threshold is a minimum threshold with which all UNC campuses must comply. Campuses may, however, choose to set thresholds above the system-wide minimum.

4. Applicants under the age of 21 with fewer than 24 hours of transferrable undergraduate credit earned in a post-secondary institution must meet MAR and MCR, unless campus specific exceptions are made (Section F., below).

B. Transfer applicants who are 21 years of age or older shall not be required to meet MAR and MCR for admissions purposes, though institutions shall only admit applicants who meet campus-specific admissions requirements.

C. UNC institutions shall comply with all requirements of the policy on Military Student Success (700.7.1), though institutions shall only admit applicants who meet campus-specific admissions requirements.

D. UNC institutions shall comply with all requirements of the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA), though institutions shall only admit applicants who meet campus-specific admissions requirements.

E. UNC institutions shall publish any further criteria used to determine admissibility of transfer applicants, including minimum required transfer credits, minimum GPA, and other factors.

F. Each campus shall establish policies describing the admission of transfer students for whom exceptions are made to MCR and/or MAR. Criteria pertaining to admissions exceptions shall be developed with faculty participation and approved by the campus board of trustees.

### III. Acceptance of Transfer Credits

A. UNC institutions shall determine and publish the procedures and criteria for accepting transfer credits.

1. The procedures shall identify the positions or offices that determine transferability and the process for appealing such determinations;

2. The criteria shall address minimum grades required in courses and other considerations for determining transferability of credits;

3. These criteria shall be consistent with the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement and the Military Student Success policy.

4. If, at matriculation, an institution awards 60 or more hours in transfer credit to a student, that student is exempt from § 400.1.5(II)(A)(9).

3.5. A UNC System institution's award of academic credit that it has determined meets the requirements of § 400.1.5(II)(A)(9)(i), § 400.1.5(II)(A)(9)(ii), or both, through any method including without limitation (i) the award of credit for prior learning or, (ii) the award of credit for completion of a course or courses as a non-degree seeking student, is binding on other UNC System institutions in determining whether the student has met the requirements of those sections.

B. Each campus shall apply the tuition surcharge to all transfer credits accepted by the institution based on the Tuition Surcharge policy and regulation (1000.1.5 and 1000.1.5[R]).

### IV. Transfer of Student Success

A. Consistent with its institutional mission, each UNC institution shall establish programs and resources to promote the success of all transfer students.

B. These programs and resources may include special orientation sessions, designated first-year seminars for transfer students, academic advisement resources specifically for transfer students, financial aid counseling, inclusion in early warning systems, and others.

C. UNC General Administration shall work with institutions to develop effective reporting protocols for transfer student persistence and graduation rates in order to promote the development and improvement of campus-based services and resources to support transfer student success.

D. UNC General Administration shall facilitate the sharing of information among institutions about successful strategies employed by UNC campuses for promoting the success of transfer students.

### **Regulation on Awarding Undergraduate Credit for Prior Learning**

I. Purpose. The following regulation (“this regulation”) is designed to provide system-wide consistency and clarity regarding implementation of the Policy on Awarding Undergraduate Credit for Prior Learning (“the policy”), Section 700.10.1 of the UNC Policy Manual.

Among the goals of the policy and this regulation are to enable improvements to student progression and completion according to student mastery of college-level material, while avoiding awarding credit for material that a student has not mastered or placing a student into a course for which they are not prepared.

Faculty representing relevant academic departments should be engaged in institutional decisions for the implementation of the policy and this regulation, to ensure that decisions are informed by the standards of applicable disciplines. Another benefit of faculty involvement in the implementation of the policy and this regulation will be to ensure that implementation is in alignment with the standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)<sup>1</sup> and of accrediting bodies for specific disciplines and professions.

II. Definitions. The following operational definitions apply to the policy and this regulation:

- A. “Certification.” An industry-recognized credential or designation that is obtained once the student has successfully passed a certification exam. Certification differs from licensure in that certification is a validation of specific industry-valued competencies and not a legal requirement for practicing a profession.
- B. “Challenge exam.” A departmental or institutional exam used to determine if a student’s subject matter proficiency is equal to or greater than the corresponding proficiency the student would have achieved had they completed the corresponding course.
- C. “College-level learning.” Knowledge, skills, and competencies equivalent to those expected of a student who successfully completes the corresponding institutional course.
- D. “Credit for prior learning (CPL).” Curriculum credit awarded for college-level learning obtained through prior learning experiences other than curriculum coursework.
- E. “Industry or corporate experience.” Evaluation of non-collegiate instructional programs, such as, but not limited to, those for apprenticeships and other workplace trainings that demonstrate competency required for completion of degree or certificate programs.
- F. “Military education and training.” Learning gained through military training and experience including, but not be limited to, recruit training, military occupational specialty (MOS) training and education, Defense Language Institute foreign language coursework and exams, Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) coursework, College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), and the DANTES Standardized Subject Test (DSST).

- G. "Licensure." A legal status granted by a government entity that provides permission to practice a profession. Licensure restricts practice of the profession to individuals who have met specific qualifications in education, professional experience, and/or have successfully passed an examination.
- H. "Portfolio assessment." The evaluation of a portfolio for life and work experiences by subject matter experts designated by the constituent institution in its local policy to determine whether a student is awarded credit for prior learning.
- I. "Standardized exams." Any form of examination that requires all test takers to answer the same questions, or a selection of questions from a common bank of questions following established protocol and that is scored in a standard or consistent manner.
- J. "The North Carolina Comprehensive Articulation Agreement." A statewide agreement governing the transfer of credits between NC Community Colleges and UNC System Universities, providing certain assurances to a transferring student.
- K. "UNC Common Numbering System (CNS)." A common classification system of designated undergraduate lower-division courses offered by UNC System institutions.
- L. Definitions for Awarding Credit on the Basis of Advanced Course Examination Scores
1. "Academic Outcomes." Results of a student's performance in the course aligned with the subject content of the Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate, or Cambridge Advanced International Certificate AS Level or A Level examination scores in question or in the Subsequent Course.
  2. "Appropriate Credit." A determined number of credit hours granted for a particular course or courses, aligned with the subject content and Academic Outcomes of the AP, IB, or Cambridge AS Level or A Level examination score in question.
    - a. After achieving a Qualified Advanced Course Examination Score, a student shall be awarded specified credit hours associated with an institution's course(s) that is/are aligned with the subject content of the relevant Advanced Course examination score.
    - b. In general, equivalents for Appropriate Credit for particular course(s) in a constituent institution's course catalog (and/or other sources of information for students and potential students) shall be listed for Qualified Advanced Course examination scores. The particular course(s) shall be listed as equivalent to a particular number of credit hours. These particular course(s) and credit hours shall contribute to a student's progress toward an undergraduate degree.
  3. "Compelling Reasons." Rationales of sufficient evidentiary quality, based on Academic Outcomes, as to why scores higher than the established Qualified Advanced Course Examination Score might be required of an institution's students (if those students are to receive Appropriate Credit), submitted to an institution's board of trustees in support of an institution's petition for an exception to the policy; or rationales of sufficient evidentiary quality as to why a constituent institution might discontinue awarding Appropriate Credit on the basis of a Qualified Advanced Course Examination Score.

4. "Qualified Advanced Course Examination Score." Unless a constituent institution has been granted an exception whereby a higher score may be required, the following shall constitute the minimum score required to receive college credit:

- a. A score of three or higher on an AP examination;
- b. A score of five or higher on a Standard Level IB examination;
- c. A score of four or higher on a Higher Level IB examination; and/or
- d. A score of E or higher on a Cambridge A Level or AS Level examination

5. "Quantitative Study." A rigorous analysis based on reliable, numerical data regarding Academic Outcomes.

6. "Subsequent Course." A course in which a student would be unable to enroll without first obtaining credit in a prerequisite course.

III. Assessment Standards. Constituent institutions may award CPL when the documentation of prior learning is at the college-level and meets or exceeds the learning outcomes and the institutions' standards for awarding credit for the corresponding course. Faculty representing relevant academic departments should be engaged in institutional decisions for the determination of awarding credit for prior learning. Each institution is responsible for determining how best to implement CPL and should do so within the context of its mission, student needs, and academic programs.

IV. Credit Hour Limits. Credit awarded for prior learning shall not be included in the 25 percent of total credit hours that must be completed at the college granting the degree.<sup>ii</sup>

V. Fees. Unless a student is enrolled in a course with the purpose of assessing prior learning for credit (i.e., a portfolio assessment course), tuition shall not be charged for credits awarded for prior learning. An optional assessment fee may be charged for credit assessed outside of course enrollment for the administrative cost of the assessment.

VI. Faculty Support (Incentives). Constituent institutions should consider providing support to faculty engaged in the evaluation of credit for prior learning and the establishment of institutional standards and policies for the evaluation of credit for prior learning.

VII. Student Records. Awarded credit will be recorded in institutional student records as "Credit for Prior Learning". The form of the CPL method will be included in the record. Credit will be recorded as the awarding institution's course including prefix & number, title, and credits awarded.

VIII. Transfer Credit

- A. Academic credit earned through the assessment of prior learning at another accredited institution may be considered for transfer credit as it applies to a student's degree program.
- B. Institutional procedures for evaluating credit for prior learning in transfer should respect credit awarded by other accredited institutions to the greatest extent possible.
- C. Credit for prior learning awarded by a North Carolina Community College for a course

included in the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) Course List shall be accepted as transfer credit on the same basis as if the credit had been earned through regular study at the awarding institution and in accordance with the procedures outlined in the CAA.

D. Military credit awarded by another University of North Carolina constituent institution shall be evaluated for transfer credit pursuant to the procedures outlined in the UNC Regulation on Awarding Credit for Military Training or Experience, Section 700.7.2[R].

E. Credit for advanced course examinations awarded by another University of North Carolina constituent institution pursuant to Section VI of this regulation shall be accepted as transfer credit on the same basis as if the credit had been earned through regular study at the awarding institution.

F. Credit for prior learning awarded by another University of North Carolina constituent institution for a course included in the UNC CNS Course List shall be accepted as transfer credit on the same basis as if the credit had been earned through regular study at the awarding institution and in accordance with the UNC Regulation on the University of North Carolina Common Numbering System, Section 400.1.5.1[R].

IX. Awarding Credit for Advanced Course Examination Scores.

A. Affected Students. The requirements of this policy and regulation regarding AP examination scores shall affect first-time (or “freshman”) undergraduate students entering constituent institutions for the fall semester of the 2019-20 academic year and thereafter. Other undergraduate students (including but not limited to transfer students, readmitted students, and upperclassmen) may benefit from the requirements of the policy and this regulation by electing into all standards documented in an institution’s catalog (and/or other sources of information for students and potential students) for the 2019-20 academic year or thereafter.

The requirements of this policy and regulation regarding IB and Cambridge AS Level and A Level examination scores shall affect first-time (or “freshman”) undergraduate students entering constituent institutions for the fall semester of the 2020-21 academic year and thereafter. Other undergraduate students (including but not limited to transfer students, readmitted students, and upperclassmen) may benefit from the requirements of the policy and this regulation by electing into all standards documented in an institution’s catalog (and/or other sources of information for student and potential students) for the 2020-21 academic year or thereafter.

B. Awarding Appropriate Credit. UNC System constituent institutions shall award Appropriate Credit to undergraduates who have earned a Qualified Advanced Course Examination Score. An institution with Compelling Reasons as to why a score higher than three must be required for a student to receive Appropriate Credit may petition to have an exception approved by its board of trustees. Compelling Reasons must be based on analyses of Academic Outcomes.

Constituent institutions should not deny Appropriate Credit to students on the basis of the age of Advanced Course Examination Scores that are ten years old or newer, although constituent institutions may request that a student submit a newer exam score in the event that an older score reflects course content or testing design for an exam that subsequently has been revised in a significant manner.

Constituent institutions are not required to offer Appropriate Credit for every AP, IB, Cambridge A Level, or Cambridge AS Level exam offered; but, if an institution does offer



credit for a particular AP Exam, it must offer Appropriate Credit in compliance with the policy and this regulation. If an institution elects to discontinue the awarding of credit for an AP Exam for which credit is awarded during the 2018- 19 academic year, however, approval must first be provided by the institution's board of trustees.

1. An institution may offer Appropriate Credit that varies by different scores for the same AP Exam. For example, an institution may offer a specified number of credit hours for a course or courses for students who earn an AP Exam score of three, and may offer credit hours for different courses for AP Exam scores higher than three.

2. Constituent institutions may award Appropriate Credit (on the basis of Qualified Advanced Course Examination Scores) for elective courses, credits toward General Education requirements, or the requirements of a potential major. Appropriate Credit awarded for any elective courses should contribute to students' progress toward an undergraduate degree.

3. Constituent Institutions are not required to modify existing standards that apply to scores lower than those defined as Qualified Advanced Course Examination Scores.

~~3-4.~~ Institutions may determine that Appropriate Credit includes credit for one or more of the institution's courses that the institution determined meet the requirements of §§ 400.1.5(II)(A)(9)(a)(i), 400.1.5(II)(A)(9)(a)(ii), or both. In such case, students awarded that Appropriate Credit have fulfilled the requirements of that section or sections.

#### C. Policy Exceptions

1. Evidence in support of an institution's Compelling Reasons for an exception to the policy shall be supported by the most recently available and practicable data on Academic Outcomes of that constituent institution's own students, from the undergraduate discipline most analogous or relevant to the content area of the Advanced Course Examination in question, except as outlined below.

2. In general, evidence for a Compelling Reason should address whether or not students who earn a Qualified Advanced Course Examination Score are prepared to succeed in the Subsequent Course within the relevant discipline. For example, constituent institutions may demonstrate that students who earn a Qualified Advanced Course Examination Score would perform significantly better, according to one or more Academic Outcomes, if those students were required to take the equivalent course for the Advanced Course Examination Score at the constituent institution, versus if those students were given credit for said course solely on the basis of the Qualified Advanced Course Examination Score.

To generate this sort of evidence, institutions should endeavor to compare the Academic Outcomes of their enrolled students through Quantitative Study at a conventional level of statistical significance.

Evidence in support of an institution's Compelling Reasons for an exception to the policy may be supported by data on the Academic Outcomes of another institution's (or other institutions') students if the following conditions are met:

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a. Data on Academic Outcomes available are as recent as possible and practicable, from the undergraduate discipline most analogous or relevant to the content area of the Advanced Course Examination in question; and

b. The other institution(s) for comparison is/are limited to those peer institutions approved by the Board of Governors.

D. Student Choice Regarding Undergraduate Credit on the Basis of Advanced Course Examination Scores. Although an institution is required by the policy to offer Appropriate Credit, a student may decline to accept the offered credit, audit the course aligned with the Advanced Course Examination in question, or enroll in the course aligned with the Advanced Course Examination in question, depending on institutional practice.

1. Whenever possible, institutional academic advisors should inform eligible undergraduates of the above-described options available to them under the policy and this regulation, along with the potential benefits and disadvantages of those options.

2. Institutions may choose to complement advice from academic advisors with a standardized communication to incoming students regarding Advanced Course Examination standards and the potential benefits and disadvantages of the above-mentioned options.

E. Prohibition Against Additional Requirements for Awarding Undergraduate Credit on the Basis of Scores for an Advanced Course Examination. A constituent institution shall not require a student to fulfill additional requirements in order to receive credit on the basis of Qualified Advanced Course Examination Scores. A placement test or other assessment may be required, however, to determine Subsequent Courses for which a student is prepared.

F. Prohibition Against Discontinuance of Awarding Undergraduate Credit on the Basis of Scores for an AP Exam. Any institutional policy or practice of awarding credit on the basis of scores for any Advanced Course Examination in place prior to the implementation of the policy (during the 2018-19 academic year) shall not be discontinued thereafter without approval of the institution's board of trustees.

G. Documenting and Communicating Institutional Advanced Course Examination Standards to Undergraduate Students and Potential Undergraduate Students. Institutional Advanced Course Examination standards, devised to comply with this policy and regulation, shall be documented and updated annually in institutional course catalogs, undergraduate student handbooks, and/or online resources for undergraduate students. Institutional Advanced Course Examination standards shall likewise be documented and updated annually in online and/or printed resources for potential undergraduate students. Constituent institutions should likewise publicize their own policies or practices regarding Advanced Course Examination scores that may or may not be accepted on the basis of the age of those scores.

H. Assessment of the Policy and this Regulation's Effectiveness. The effects of the policy and this regulation as they relate to awarding credit for advanced course examination scores, at the level of the UNC System and across its constituent institutions, shall be assessed by the UNC System Office within three years of implementation, and then on a period basis. Recommendations for altering the policy and this regulation shall be made accordingly to the president (for this regulation) or Board of Governors (for the policy), on the basis of appropriate evidence.

X. Responsibilities of Constituent Institutions.

- A. Constituent institutions shall establish their own policies and procedures for awarding credit for prior learning if they chose to award CPL.
- B. All institution CPL policies and procedures shall be published on institution websites, course catalogs, and/or other appropriate publications or advising materials. The policies and procedures should be easily accessible by prospective students and currently enrolled students.
- C. Institutions that charge tuition for courses with the purpose of assessing prior learning for credit or fees for other assessments of prior learning shall clearly publish and communicate all CPL assessment tuition and/or fees to students.
- D. The process for assessment shall be transparent and documentation of denial of credits should be explained to students with a clearly stated rationale.

XI. Reporting Requirements. Constituent institutions shall annually report to the President each form of prior learning assessment through which they provide credit, the total amount of CPL credit the institution awarded students, the number of students who have been awarded credit for prior learning, and updates to institutional policies and procedures.

- A. Specific Reporting Requirements for Advanced Course Examination Scores. Initial reports regarding exceptions to the policy and/or discontinuances of awarding Appropriate Credit on the basis of Qualified Advanced Course Examination Scores, granted by institutional boards of trustees, shall be reported to the president by July 1, 2019. Subsequent reports of exceptions, discontinuances, and/or other alterations relative to this policy shall be reported to the president annually by July 1. Reports to the president shall include full documentation of Compelling Reasons considered by boards of trustees, along with documentation of the board's approval, for each exception granted.

XII. Other Matters

- A. Effective Date. The requirements of the policy and this regulation with regards to AP examinations shall be effective as of the fall semester of the 2019-20 academic year and thereafter; the requirements of the policy and this regulation with regards to IB and Cambridge AS-Level and A-Level examinations shall be effective as of the 2020-21 academic year and thereafter. All other requirements of this regulation shall be effective on the date of adoption of this regulation by the president.
- B. Relation to Federal and State Laws. The foregoing regulation as adopted by the president is meant to supplement, and does not purport to supplant or modify, those statutory enactments, regulations, and policies which may govern or related to the subject matter of this regulation.

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<sup>i</sup> SACSCOC Standards 10.1 and 10.7. SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation:

<https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/2018PrinciplesOfAccreditation.pdf>

SACSCOC Resource Manual: <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/2018-POA-Resource-Manual.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> SACSCOC Standard 9.4.