

# University of Scranton

## Transfer Credit Policy and Procedures

- I. **Purpose of Procedure.** The purpose of this procedure is to specify consistent practices for accepting credit for undergraduate and graduate level courses transferred into the University of Scranton (UofS).
- II. **Definitions**
  - a. *Joint Statement on the Transfer and Award of Credit.* The Joint Statement on Transfer and Award of Credit provides principles, criteria and guidelines for institutions to use in developing criteria, policies, procedures and practice in transferring and awarding credit. The statement was approved by the American Council on Education, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers and the Council on Higher Education Accreditation in 2017.
  - b. *Articulation agreement.* An “articulation agreement” is a formal agreement between two or more educational entities to accept credits in transfer toward a specific academic program.
  - c. *Developmental course.* A “developmental course” is a course designed to prepare a student for entry into college level courses. Developmental-level course credits shall not apply toward a certificate or degree program at UofS.
  - d. *Degree Audit.* The “Degree Audit” is an electronic system that provides for an evaluation of a student’s academic record indicating completion toward the student’s academic program requirements.
  - e. *Regionally Accredited Institution.* Colleges or universities that are accredited by a regional accrediting body recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation.
  - f. *Non-Regionally Accredited Institution.* Colleges or universities that are not accredited by a regional accrediting body recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation.
- III. **Determining Transfer Credits.** UofS shall determine if transfer credits apply to its academic programs and graduation requirements.
  - a. **Determining Course Comparability or Equivalency.** The course to be transferred to UofS must be comparable in nature, content, method of instruction, level and rigor to the equivalent course offered by UofS. In evaluating courses for transfer equivalency, course content should be substantially similar such that the student is believed to be positioned to succeed in subsequent coursework. Equivalency need not be a complete match. For courses in a sequence, students need to demonstrate sufficient preparation to succeed in the next course in the sequence.
  - b. **Transferring Credits According to Articulation Agreements.** UofS will accept any credits defined within formal articulation agreements it has with a sending institution. The University will accept transfer credits in accordance with program-specific articulation agreements it has approved.
  - c. **Transfer from Accredited Institutions**
    - i. **Transferring credit granted by a regionally accredited institution.** The University of Scranton will accept credits granted by a regionally accredited institution, including credits granted by another college or university through prior learning assessment or examination (credit for prior learning).
    - ii. **Transferring credit granted by a non-regionally accredited institution.** The University of Scranton will not accept credits granted by a non-regionally accredited institution.
    - iii. **Transferring Credit Granted by an Institution Outside the United States.** The UofS shall determine if it will accept credits granted by an institution outside the United States on a case by case basis. Institutions outside of the United States must be recognized as degree granting institutions by their home country. A standardized international credit evaluation, such as WES, is required in order to determine transfer credit equivalency(ies).
  - d. **Evaluating Developmental Courses.** Developmental courses shall not be granted undergraduate college-level credit and they shall not apply to certificate or degree program completion requirements. However, a developmental course appearing on a student’s transcript shall be evaluated to determine the student’s readiness for undergraduate college-level coursework at

UofS. Undergraduate students are advised to assess their skills in these areas if developmental education courses were taken two or more years prior to the term of the student's initial matriculation at the University.

- e. Coursework Ineligible for Transfer. UofS reserves the right to deny credit for courses that are not compatible with those offered in its degree programs. Examples of courses that receive no credit include:
  - i. Courses considered below college level (usually numbered below 100)
  - ii. Repeated courses or courses with duplicate subject content
  - iii. Coursework earned at an institution that is not regionally accredited
  - iv. Mathematics courses considered below college level
  - v. Courses offered for non-credit continuing education units
  - vi. Remedial English (e.g., reading, vocabulary development, grammar, speed reading, or any courses that are preparatory to an institution's first Freshman Composition course)
  - vii. Courses providing instruction in English as a Second Language (100-level or above)
  - viii. Remedial courses in any academic discipline (100-level and above)
  - ix. Non-academic/vocational-technical courses.

#### IV. **College Transfer Policy and Procedures**

- a. The UofS ascribes to the guiding principles of the 2017 Joint Statement on the Transfer and Award of Credit in implementing its transfer policy and procedures.
- b. Procedures for Evaluating Credit Earned Prior to Matriculation at UofS.
  - i. Undergraduate applicants are required to submit official college transcripts for all post-secondary institutions attended to the Office of Admissions. Credit is reviewed on an individual basis after the student is accepted. Advanced standing will be granted for previously completed courses from regionally accredited institutions when: they are equivalent or comparable to courses at the University; the student receives a grade of C or better; and the courses satisfy requirements for the student's degree program. Applicants will receive a letter with course-by-course equivalency and course placement within the chosen program of study. Transfer credit is recorded as a grade of "TC" on the student's transcript. If the student changes the major at a later date, a new review of transfer credits will be made at that time, and the student will be given a written evaluation clearly indicating how transfer credits apply to the new major. The information recorded on the transfer credit evaluation becomes part of the student's permanent academic record.
  - ii. Graduate applicants are required to submit official post-baccalaureate transcripts to their Program Director. Credit is reviewed on an individual basis after the student has matriculated. Credit will be granted for previously completed courses from regionally accredited institutions when: they are equivalent or comparable to courses at the University; the student was enrolled as a graduate student and received a grade of B or better; the courses satisfy requirements for the student's degree program; and the course to be transferred was be a regularly scheduled course and not a workshop. A grade of Pass or Satisfactory is not acceptable for transfer credit. Transfer credit is recorded as a grade of "TC" on the student's transcript. If the student changes their program at a later date, a new review of transfer credits will be made at that time, and the student will be given a written evaluation clearly indicating how transfer credits apply to the program. The information recorded on the transfer credit evaluation becomes part of the student's permanent academic record.
- c. Procedures for Evaluating AP and IB Credits Earned Prior to Matriculation at UofS
  - i. Undergraduate students who have taken Advanced Placement (AP) testing must forward a College Board Report listing the specific test(s) taken and grade(s) achieved to the Office of Admissions. AP scores must meet the minimum score standards promulgated by the Office of Admissions in order to transfer to UofS. AP credit is recorded as a grade of "AP" on the student's transcript.

- ii. Undergraduate students who have completed courses in the Diploma Programme of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) must forward an official IB transcript to the Office of Admissions. The University grants academic credit for only higher level (HL) exams with a grade of five (5) or better.
    - iii. Although credit may be earned through approved/accredited articulation agreements, AP credit, International Baccalaureate (IB) or coursework from another college/university, credits for a specific course may be granted only once.
  - d. Procedures for Evaluating Credit Earned Post Undergraduate Matriculation at UofS
    - i. Matriculating undergraduate students in good academic and disciplinary standing at The University of Scranton may transfer in a maximum of 10% of the total credits in their program. Undergraduate transfer students from another institution will be limited to a maximum of 10% of the total credits remaining in their program from the initial point of University of Scranton matriculation. All students must complete at least 63 credits at The University of Scranton, including the last 30 credits of their program of study.
    - ii. University of Scranton undergraduate students who have completed their sophomore year (60 credits) are permitted to take courses at other four-year, regionally accredited institutions. Those who have not completed their sophomore year may be approved for courses at two-year or four-year regionally accredited institutions. Grades below C (2.00 in a 4.00 grading system) received elsewhere are not transferable to The University of Scranton; no grades from other institutions are computed into the student's grade point average, with the exception of those taken through the University of Scranton/Marywood University cross-registration agreement. Transfer credit will be awarded only upon receipt of an official transcript from the transfer institution. Transfer credit is recorded as a grade of "TC" on the student's transcript. Official transcripts must be sent to the Office of Registrar and Academic Services (ORAS) for review and processing.
    - iii. A maximum of nine graduate credits may be transferred for graduate degree programs requiring at least 39 credit hours for completion and six graduate credits may be transferred for graduate degree programs that require less than 39 credit hours for completion.
    - iv. Undergraduate students must secure advance permission of their dean to take courses at another institution. Graduate students must secure advance permission of their mentor and dean to take courses at another institution. Permission may not be retroactively approved. Students may not take a course at another institution if they have failed the same course at The University of Scranton. Exceptions to this policy may be made by the student's dean. Students may earn credit for a course only once, regardless of where the course was completed, with the exception of some special topics courses, if approved.
  - e. Validation of Business Transfer Courses
    - i. Undergraduate students may validate courses taken at a non-AACSB institution by successfully completing one or more advanced courses in the subject for which the course in transfer is a foundation course. Approval is granted by the Dean of the Kania School of Management. This applies only to lower-division transfer courses which the University offers at the upper-division level.
  - f. Credit for Prior Learning. An undergraduate student who seeks credit for a significant prior learning experience must develop a portfolio that documents that the prior learning is comparable in nature, content, level and rigor to the equivalent course offered by UofS. The student, upon completion of preparing the portfolio, will present the portfolio to the Chair of the course for evaluation. Credit for prior learning is earned and applied on a pass/fail basis.
  - g. Degree Audit. Each course from another institution determined to be equivalent to a University of Scranton course shall be entered into Banner and the Degree Audit system.
  - h. Credit Limit. Undergraduate transfer students need to complete a minimum of 63 credits at The University of Scranton in order to obtain a bachelor's degree. The maximum amount of transferable credits depends upon the total number of credits required to complete a particular

program of study. Special consideration is given to students with double majors, minors or areas of concentration. It should be noted that most departments require that at least half of the credits in the student's major be taken at the University.

- i. Credit Life. In general, undergraduate coursework attempted more than five years ago will be reviewed for transfer on a case by case basis. Graduate coursework must have been taken within six years of the date of requested transfer to the UofS.

V. **Disseminating Information.** UofS shall publish information concerning transfer in its catalog and website. Published information shall include the following:

- a. Transfer policies, procedures and guidelines
- b. Articulation agreements
- c. Appeal process for transfer decisions at the college

VI. **Responsibility**

a. Student Responsibilities

- i. Transcripts and Supporting Documentation. The student is responsible for submitting an official transcript and any other required supporting documentation to meet University policy and procedures to the appropriate office. An official transcript must be sent directly from the institution/agency from which credit was earned; or, if hand-carried by a student, it must be delivered unopened with the official seal intact. Student copies and faxed transcripts are not considered official. Official transcripts received from previously attended postsecondary institutions will automatically be evaluated for the program in which the student is currently enrolled. If a student changes programs, the re-evaluation should be requested of the Office of the Registrar and Academic Services by the student.
- ii. Grade Requirements. A undergraduate student must earn a grade of C or better in each course for which the student seeks UofS credit. A graduate student must earn a grade of B or better in each course for which the student seeks UofS credit. Grades from another institution are not used in computing the student's UofS cumulative grade point average, graduation honors or academic progress grade point average.
- iii. Subsequent Transfer. While UofS may accept certain credits, other colleges to which the student may subsequently transfer may not accept them. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain communication with the receiving institution.

b. Office of Admissions Responsibilities

- i. The Office of Admissions works with applicants to obtain a complete application file, including but not limited to the official academic transcripts from every college/university attended.
- ii. Upon offer of admission and receipt of the official academic transcripts, the Office of Admissions will send the academic transcripts to the Office of the Registrar and Academic Services (ORAS) for formal review and evaluation.
- iii. Upon completion and return of the evaluation from ORAS, the Office of Admissions provides this documentation to the admitted student and notifies them accordingly.

c. Office of the Registrar and Academic Services Responsibilities (ORAS)

- i. ORAS consults with constituencies to facilitate the transfer credit equivalency process. ORAS staff coordinate the process of official transfer credit evaluation in conjunction with Department Chairs, Program Directors and Dean's Offices, certify transfer credits, provide notice of the official evaluation to the student, manage student transfer credit appeals and maintain a record of approved transfer equivalencies in the Banner and Degree Audit system.
- ii. ORAS aspires to complete transfer credit evaluations within ten business days after receipt of official documentation from the Office of Admissions. Evaluations may require longer processing times during peak periods.
- iii. ORAS may ask a student for supporting documentation, such as an official course description or course syllabus, when transfer credit is in question.

d. Department Chair and Program Director Responsibilities

- i. The appropriate academic department chair/program director determines the acceptance and application of all transfer courses that have not been evaluated previously for UofS equivalency credit, including transfer coursework that is formalized in an articulation agreement.
  - ii. In order to minimize barriers to enrollment, the Department Chair/Program Director is encouraged to utilize the course description provided to her/him when assessing transfer credit equivalency, especially when evaluating introductory (100) level, general education and or free elective credits. If a Department Chair/Program Director cannot determine if a course is substantially similar to a UofS course based upon the course description alone, the Department Chair/Program Director may request the submission of a course syllabus.
  - iii. It is expected that a Department Chair/Program Director, when asked to evaluate a course for a specific student's transfer credit evaluation, will complete the evaluation and communicate his/her decision to ORAS within seven calendar days of receipt of the request. If a course is not approved for transfer credit, the Chair/Program Director shall briefly detail the reason the request was denied.
  - iv. It is expected that a Department Chair/Program Director, when asked to evaluate a course for inclusion in an articulation agreement, will complete the evaluation and communicate his/her decision to the requestor within thirty calendar days of receipt of the request.
  - v. A Department Chair/Program Director shall name a designee to make a decision in response to student transfer credit evaluation and articulation agreement inquiries in his/her absence. The Chair/Program Director's designee will be contacted by ORAS if the Chair/Program Director does not communicate his/her decision regarding a student evaluation request within seven calendar days. The Chair/Program Director's designee will be contacted if the Chair/Program Director does not communicate his/her decision regarding an articulation agreement evaluation request within thirty calendar days.
  - vi. Should the Chair /Program Director and his/her designee fail to communicate the decision regarding student transfer credit evaluation inquiries within ten calendar days from the first evaluation request, the Dean of the course will be asked to render the transfer credit equivalency decision.
  - vii. Should the Chair/Program Director and his/her designee fail to communicate the decision regarding articulation agreement inquiries within thirty-five calendar days from the first request, the Dean of the course will be asked to render the transfer credit equivalency decision.
  - viii. In some cases, a course may be recognized as equivalent but have fewer credits than the corresponding UofS requirement. Chairs/Program Directors, in discussion with members of their academic departments, will identify appropriate and reasonable measures for addressing such discrepancies, which may include additional course or credit requirements or waivers.
- e. Dean Responsibilities
- i. The Dean must grant advance permission to students seeking permission to take a course at another institution.
  - ii. The Dean is responsible for deciding UofS transfer credit and articulation agreement equivalencies in the absence of a timely determination from a Chair/Program Director or his/her designee.
  - iii. The Dean shall review a student's appeal to transfer credit decisions and render a final written decision.

VII. **Student Appeal.** It is possible that errors in the articulation of coursework, or omission of prior coursework can occur. In the event a student believes that this has happened, the appeal procedure follows.

- a. Student appeals must be submitted no later than two months after the completion of the initial evaluation.

- b. A student should first contact the Office of Registrar and Academic Services to discuss the evaluation results with a Transfer Credit Analyst. The student may be asked to provide any additional documentation needed to assist with the review (e.g., an updated transcript or college catalog, or other documentation from the sending institution). The ORAS Transfer Credit Analyst will discuss the student's appeal with the Department Chair/Program Director who rendered the original transfer credit decision.
- c. If the issue is not resolved in step A, the student may request reconsideration of the transfer credit via a written appeal addressed to the Dean of the College in which the course is housed. The letter must articulate the reason(s) the student believes the course should transfer. The Dean, after consultation with the respective Department Chair/Program Director, will render a final written decision to the student within ten working days.

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