Chapter 6

Transcript Credit

INTEGRATING TRANSCRIPT CREDIT INTO YOUR EMPIRE STATE COLLEGE DEGREE PROGRAM

In considering whether transcript credit is appropriate to your degree program, ask yourself whether the credits are relevant to your degree program and goals. Keep in mind that your first priority is to develop a strong and coherent concentration and array of studies in general learning. Transcript credit that is not related to your concentration may still play a valuable role by adding breadth or diversity to your degree program. On the other hand, including large blocks of transcript credit that are unrelated to your concentration might prevent you from including other learning that might contribute significantly to the quality of your degree program. For example, if you earned an A.A.S. degree in electronic technology and your educational goal now is to complete a degree in Historical Studies, the need for substantial academic work in history and supporting studies may mean that some of the courses on AC/DC circuits may not fit into your Empire State College degree program.

Transcript credit that you choose not to use for your degree program is still available to you on the transcript of the institution from which it was earned. Your decision not to include that credit in a degree program means only that it does not appropriately fit in the context of your degree program at Empire State College.

The Office of Collegewide Academic Review evaluates transcripts and identifies sources of transferable credit. In determining how to use any transcript credit in an Empire State College degree program, you and your mentor consider the following points:

- The credits are appropriate and make sense within the context of your Empire State College degree program.
- Courses taken at two-year colleges or at a freshman or sophomore level at a four-year institution are almost always designated as introductory.
- Professional or vocational courses generally are not considered liberal arts and sciences.
- Credit cannot be used twice for the same learning.
- D grades are not accepted unless included in an earned associate degree (A.A., A.S., A.A.S.). You must use the entire associate degree in your Empire State College degree in order to use the D grades.

TRANSFER CREDIT FROM REGIONALLY ACCREDITED COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Empire State College recognizes transfer credit acquired at other regionally accredited colleges and universities. The college will consider these credits for transfer provided they are relevant to your degree program and educational goals and you have earned a C minus or better. Regionally accredited means that the institution has been reviewed and found acceptable by one of the following accrediting associations:

- Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Higher Education (MSA/CHE);
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (NEASC/CIHE);
- North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (NCA/CIHE);
- Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Colleges (NWASC/CC);
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (SACS/CC);
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC):
  - Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities; and
  - Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (WASC/ACCJC).

A good resource for determining whether a given college is regionally accredited is the American Council on Education (ACE) guide titled Accredited Institutions of Postsecondary Education, which is available at your Center Office of Academic Review.

Please note that the college or university must have been regionally accredited or a candidate for accreditation at the time of your attendance. For those institutions that are regionally accredited, an official transcript serves as acceptable evidence of college-level learning. Credits that you choose to include in your degree program are listed under transcript credit on the degree program you are designing (see Supporting Materials, Section B, Sample Degree Programs).

Only credit that was earned at a regionally accredited institution can be listed under transcript credit on your degree program. Approved credit from other types of institutions can be listed under credit by evaluation on your degree program.
TRANSCRIPT CREDIT FROM NONREGIONALLY ACCREDITED INSTITUTIONS

Under credit by evaluation on your degree program it also is possible to transfer credits from institutions that have not been accredited by regional associations but are acceptable to Empire State College:

- institutions within New York state that have been approved by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) to award college-level degrees. This includes independent and proprietary sector institutions, such as some business schools that were authorized at the time of your attendance by NYSED;
- nursing schools with National League of Nursing (NLN) accreditation;
- art schools with National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) approval;
- international colleges and universities that are institutional partners with Empire State College;
- international colleges and universities that have been evaluated by World Education Services (WES). Information specifically for Empire State College students is available at www.wes.org/esc.asp;
- Canadian institutions that are members of the Association of Universities and College of Canada (AUCC);
- Canadian Colleges of Applied Arts and Sciences (CAATS);
- Canadian 13th year;
- British A-Level exams; and,
- AARTS/SMART/Coast Guard Institute transcripts.

Transcript credits earned at institutions that are not regionally accredited and not included in the above listing require further review through the individualized prior learning assessment process (Chapter 8) before a decision can be made to include them in a degree program.

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS

Empire State College requires official documents to support requests for advanced standing credit. Official transcripts must be on file at Admissions, Empire State College in Saratoga Springs.

You should request that all official transcripts be sent to:

Admissions
SUNY Empire State College
2 Union Ave.
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866-4390

After Admissions has received an official transcript, it is “authenticated” by the college with an official stamp. A copy is forwarded to your center or program to be included in your file. You should make sure that any official transcripts you have requested are on file and up-to-date in the Admissions office located in Saratoga Springs. If you have given the college your email address, you will receive email confirmation when Admissions receives a transcript. You also may check with your mentor or Center Office of Academic Review about the status of your transcripts.

CREDIT HOURS: SEMESTER-BASED OR QUARTER-BASED CREDIT

College credit represents the number of hours you have spent studying a particular topic. These hours are converted into credits based on the length of the course (semester, term) and the number of hours the course met during the designated time. Typically, credits are measured in semester or quarter-semester credits. One Empire State College credit is equal to one semester hour at most colleges and universities. If you attended an institution that awards credits based on semester hours, you would list the same number of credits awarded by that institution on your Empire State College degree program. If, however, you attended an institution that awards credit based on quarter hours, the total transcript credit for that institution should be multiplied by .67 and then rounded off (round up to the next credit if the fraction is .5 or more or round down if less than .5). DP Planner does these calculations for you automatically. For institutions that do not use either the semester or quarter-semester system, you need to ask your mentor or your Center Office of Academic Review for assistance.

LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES CREDITS

It is rare for other institutions to designate whether the credits earned are considered liberal arts and sciences credits. Therefore, designations for each course must be made in consultation with your mentor. One general rule is that any course in the humanities, social and behavioral sciences, natural sciences and mathematics, is considered a liberal arts and sciences course. In general, courses from professional departments, such as nursing, engineering, education and business, and practical work, such as internships, are not considered liberal arts and sciences courses. However, there are exceptions, and your mentor helps you determine whether the exceptions apply in your case. Liberal arts and sciences credits are designated on an Empire State College degree program with an asterisk (*). (See Liberal Arts and Sciences, Chapter 2.)

ADVANCED-LEVEL STUDY

On transcripts from regionally accredited institutions, courses taken at community or junior colleges, as well as most courses taken during the first two years at four-year institutions, are considered introductory level. Junior or senior-level courses taken during the last two years at four-year institutions are usually considered advanced. At these institutions, and at Empire State College, the evaluation of course level typically is made on the basis of prerequisites, the difficulty or complexity of the study, and the degree of academic ability required to successfully master course requirements. You should consult
with your mentor or Center Office of Academic Review if you have questions about the level of learning that a course represents. Advanced-level credits are designated on an Empire State College degree program with a plus sign (+). (See Advanced-level Study, Chapter 2).

**AGE OF CREDITS**

Empire State College accepts credits no matter how long ago you earned them, except when the learning is in an area that has changed significantly over time, such as computer technology. In such cases, credits should be reviewed for currency. Talk to your mentor about the appropriateness of your credits. Credits for learning that lacks currency should not be in your degree program.

**REDUNDANCY**

Empire State College awards credit for specific learning only once. Learning from all sources is scrutinized to be certain that your degree program contains no duplicate credit. Similar courses in the same subject at the same level taken at different institutions are considered potentially redundant unless the Empire State College faculty has determined that significant overlap does not exist. For example, College Biology 101 at Rochester Institute of Technology is essentially the same as General Biology 110 at SUNY Geneseo. Or, management principles learned in a training program or on the job may involve the same learning as that in a Principles of Management course taken in college. Consult your mentor if you think there is potential redundancy in studies you are considering for your degree program.

In addition, your degree program cannot include more than 8 credits in expository writing at the introductory level and/or 8 credits in algebra and trigonometry, because any more credits in these areas would be considered redundant with each other as many of the topics would overlap.

When you have transcript credit in an area in which credit also is granted by individualized prior learning assessment, the evaluation report must clearly explain the subject matter, level of learning (introductory or advanced), and address any possible overlap of topics in order for the center assessment committee to determine whether redundancy exists.

**D GRADES**

Grades of D generally indicate less than satisfactory performance. Credits for courses with D grades do not transfer to Empire State College, unless they are part of a completed associate degree (A.A., A.S., A.A.S.) and you are bringing the entire degree into your Empire State College degree. Courses with D grades in an Associate in Occupational Studies (A.O.S.) degree will not transfer, and the degree will be evaluated on a course-by-course basis. Courses with D grades listed on a SUNY General Education Transfer Addendum may be used to meet general education requirements, even if they are not included in your degree program.