

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE AND BOARD ACTION

COMMITTEE: Academic Affairs

NO.: AAC 20-10

COMMITTEE DATE: January 28, 2020

BOARD DATE: February 4, 2020

**ADOPTION OF STATE UNIVERSITY AND UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS
TRANSFER PRINCIPLES**

MOVED: The Board of Higher Education hereby adopts the attached statewide State University and University of Massachusetts Transfer Principles and calls upon the Commissioner and the State University Presidents and University of Massachusetts Chancellors to work together to implement the Transfer Principles by January 2021.

VOTED: Motion adopted by AAC 1/28/2020; adopted by BHE 2/4/2020.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, § 9(u) and (v)

Contact: Elena Quiroz-Livanis, Chief of Staff and Assistant Commissioner for Academic Policy and Student Success

Background

At its June 2017, the Board of Higher Education adopted the Community College Transfer Principles and since then Department of Higher Education (DHE) staff have partnered with the state universities and University of Massachusetts campuses to develop transfer principles for their respective segments. The Community College Transfer Principles were crafted in order to ease and clarify the process of transferring earned credit from one college to another, whether among themselves or from other public or private institutions; to provide standards for the evaluation of alternative sources of credit; to reduce the time and cost of completing a college education; and to increase the opportunities for graduation of their students. The same objectives apply to these Principles, which respect the academic standards, quality and integrity of each of the Massachusetts state universities and University of Massachusetts campuses.

In accepting undergraduate transfer credit from other institutions, the Massachusetts state universities and University of Massachusetts campuses apply these Transfer Principles to ensure that credit accepted reflects appropriate levels of academic quality and is applicable to students' programs. Each state university and University of Massachusetts campus will make these Guiding Principles publicly available to students and prospective students on their websites and other communications. These Principles reduce unnecessary barriers to protect the institutions' academic quality and integrity.

These Transfer Principles address issues of academic credit earned through coursework completed at one institution and transferred to another. They also address the related issue of credit earned through alternative sources of credit, such as examinations, professional courses, military training and other prior learning experiences.

These Transfer Principles were developed by the transfer professionals at the state universities and University of Massachusetts campuses over a period of two years. The close collaboration of the transfer professionals was fundamental to reaching agreement on these Transfer Principles. The Principles establish standard expectations for transfer practices, while allowing appropriate flexibility for institutional variations.



**Massachusetts Department of Higher Education
State University Transfer Principles**

I. Preamble

The state universities of Massachusetts, in order to ease and clarify the process of transferring earned credit from one institution to another, whether among themselves or from other public/private institutions at the point of admission or reverse transfer; to provide standards for the evaluation of alternative sources of credit; to reduce the time and cost of completing a college education and to increase the opportunities for graduation of their students, establish these State University Transfer Principles. These Principles respect the academic standards, quality and integrity of each Massachusetts state university.

II. Introduction

In accepting undergraduate transfer credit from other institutions, the Massachusetts state universities apply these Transfer Principles to ensure that credit accepted reflects appropriate levels of academic quality and is applicable to students' programs. Each state university makes these Transfer Principles available to students and prospective students on their websites or through other communications. These principles reduce unnecessary barriers and protects the academic quality and integrity of each campus.

These Transfer Principles address issues of academic credit earned through coursework completed at one institution and transferred to another. They also address the related issue of credit earned through alternative sources of credit, such as examinations, professional courses, military training, and other prior learning experiences.

III. General Conditions

- A. Proof of high school graduation/GED/HiSet is required in many cases from those applying without an associate degree. Students should consult the state university of their choice regarding its policy. Those utilizing a State-approved transfer program, inclusive of MassTransfer A2B Pathway are not required to submit documentation of high school graduation/GED/HiSet.
- B. Submission of ACT/SAT scores for admission is required by many state universities. Some state universities qualify this requirement by applying it only when students have earned fewer than 24 college credits and have been out of high school fewer than three years. Students should consult the state university of their choice regarding its policy. Note: Students who complete a MassTransfer A2B Pathway are not required to submit ACT/SAT scores for admission.
- C. For credit to transfer, generally courses must have been taken at an institution accredited by one of the six (6) regional accreditation agencies in the United States or, when allowed by college/university practice by a national accreditation agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). An institution may consider courses taken at a non-regionally-accredited institution on an individual basis. Students should consult the state university of their choice about any special requirements for on-line courses as well as its policy and process used in evaluating credit.
- D. Credit earned at international institutions will be considered only after an official review from the Center for Educational Documentation (CED), World Education Services (WES), or other comparable credential evaluation service. Students should consult the specific state university regarding its policy.

- E. Official transcripts from each institution at which students attempted one or more credit-bearing courses are required by each state university for credit to transfer. This includes international institutions and colleges/universities at which the student completed Dual Enrollment courses while still enrolled in high school.
- F. At minimum, credit will be granted for courses that apply to students' overall degree requirements. Transfer credit may need to be reviewed if students change their major programs of study post-matriculation.
- G. Once credit is transferred, it becomes part of students' permanent records. However, for students who choose to enroll in a course for which they already received credit in transfer, the transfer course will be removed.
- H. Only credit for college-level courses will transfer.
- I. Credit for developmental coursework does not transfer. Satisfactory completion of developmental coursework may result in students being cleared to register for college-level courses. Students should consult the state university of their choice regarding their specific policy.
- J. Credit, not grades, transfer in most cases. Grades of transfer courses are not utilized in calculating grade or quality point averages at the majority of state universities.
- K. Transfer credit is designated on transcripts with an appropriate letter or symbol in the grade field.
- L. Credit will transfer as either the course equivalent at the receiving institution, as elective credit within a specific department or as a general/free elective. Some state universities may transfer credit with an appropriate subject prefix code/number when neither the course equivalent nor comparable department exist.
- M. Credits earned in a quarter-hour system may be converted to semester hours. Students should consult the specific state university regarding its policy.
- N. At state universities, most majors are available to new transfers though space may be limited. Students should consult the specific state university they are interested in regarding program availability.
- O. Audited coursework does not transfer.
- P. Credit will not be granted for duplicate coursework or for two courses that cover the same/similar content.
- Q. Commonwealth Honors Programs courses may transfer and satisfy Commonwealth Honors program requirements at the receiving institution. Students should consult the specific state university regarding its policy.
- R. Internship, co-op or field experience may not transfer or, if transferred, may not satisfy major requirements. Students should consult the specific state university regarding these experiences.

IV. Minimum Grades

- A. Most state universities require a minimum grade of a C- (1.70 on a 4.00 scale) for courses/credits to transfer. Students should consult the specific state university they are interested in regarding the minimum grade for transfer.
- B. Grades of D, D+, C- and CD (1.00 to 1.99 on a 4.00 scale) will transfer if they are for courses that are part of the General Education Foundation (formerly known as MassTransfer Block) and students have completed the Gen Ed Foundation with a cumulative grade point average of a 2.00 or higher. This does not apply to the Massachusetts Maritime Academy or Massachusetts College of Art and Design where a minimum grade of C (2.0) must be received for a course to transfer.
- C. Grades higher than C (2.00) may be required for admission to certain majors, for use as pre-requisite courses, and for application of credit to specific major requirements. If the minimum grade is not earned for such courses at the sending institution, students may have to repeat the course(s) at the receiving institution.
- D. Grades of Pass (P) will transfer to all state universities provided official transcripts/college catalogs stipulate that such grades are equivalent to a C/C-. Students should consult the state university of their choice regarding its policy.

V. Course Residency Requirement/Maximum Transfer Credit Allowed

All state universities require students to complete at least one-quarter (30 credits) of the credits of a bachelor's degree at that institution to be eligible to graduate. Some institutions require students to complete more than one quarter (30 credits), but not more than one-half (60 credits) of the credits be completed at that institution. Members of the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) Consortium must adhere to the Consortium's Academic Residency Requirements for service members at their institutions. Some institutions also have a course residency requirement for the major and a minor (if declared). If students change their major post-matriculation, credits in excess of the total number of credits required for a baccalaureate degree program may be required. Students should consult the specific state university regarding its policy. Some institutions may also have additional residency requirements for the receipt of degree or departmental honors. Students should consult the specific state university regarding its policy.

The maximum amount of credit students may transfer varies by institution and in some cases by major. Students should consult the state university of their choice regarding its policy.

VI. Alternative Sources of Credit

- A. Based on an institution's policy, credit may be granted for satisfactory scores on the following:
 - Advanced Placement (AP) exams
 - College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
 - International Baccalaureate (IB) Higher level exams
 - Advanced Level (A-Level) exams
 - Joint Services Transcript (JST) as certified by the American Council on Education (ACE)
 - DSST/SANTES (Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support) exams.
- B. Official score reports are required in order to be considered for transfer credit, even when the official score reports have been provided to the sending institutions. Students should consult the specific state university regarding its policy.
- C. Credit will be granted for satisfactory scores on challenge or credit examinations based on an institution's policy.
- D. Credit may be granted for formal courses or examinations offered by various organizations, including government and military, based on the recommendation of the American Council on Education (ACE) as found in its National Guide to College Credit for Workforce Training, a resource of its College Credit Recommendation Service (CREDIT).
- E. Credit may also be granted for learning from experience at work, volunteering in the community, military service, job training, etc. by some institutions for certain majors.
- F. Academic credits earned through the evaluation of military occupation, training, experience, and coursework are transferable within the Massachusetts public higher education system in accordance with the MassTransfer Agreement.
- G. Credit granted by one institution from alternative sources may not transfer to another institution.
- H. Limitations or exclusions to granting of alternative or prior sources of credit may exist in some academic programs due to external accreditation or licensing rules and regulations. Students should consult the specific state university with regard to its credit-granting policies.

VII. Time Limits

- A. Credit will transfer to the majority of state universities without time limits.
- B. Some stipulations may apply to courses required for certain majors. Students should consult the specific state university regarding this policy.

VIII. Student Appeals

All state universities maintain and publish a process for students to appeal decisions made about transfer credit. Students should contact the state university of their choice regarding the institutional appeal process and policy.

IX. Review and Amendment

The Department of Higher Education(DHE) every five (5) years will convene a group of state university transfer professionals to review these Principles and recommend amendments to the Department.

X. Contact

Interested parties with comments or questions may contact Elena Quiroz-Livanis of the Department of Higher Education at 617.994.6909 or equiroz@dhe.mass.edu.

XI. Adoption

These Massachusetts State University Transfer Principles were reviewed and initially approved by the DHE Academic Affairs Committee on _____ and adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education on _____.

Amended Date_____



**Massachusetts Department of Higher Education
UMASS Transfer Principles**

I. Preamble

The University of Massachusetts campuses, in order to ease and clarify the process of transferring earned credit from one institution to another, whether among themselves or from other public/private institutions; to provide standards for the evaluation of alternative sources of credit; to reduce the time and cost of completing a college education and to increase the opportunities for graduation of their students, establish these UMASS Transfer Principles. These Principles respect the academic standards, quality and integrity of each UMASS campus.

II. Introduction

In accepting undergraduate transfer credit from other institutions, the UMASS campuses apply these Transfer Principles to ensure that credit accepted reflects appropriate levels of academic quality and is applicable to students' programs. Each UMASS campus makes these Transfer Principles available to students and prospective students on their websites or through other communications. These principles reduce unnecessary barriers and protect the academic quality and integrity of each campus.

These Transfer Principles address issues of academic credit earned through coursework completed at one institution and transferred to another. They also address the related issue of credit earned through alternative sources of credit, such as examinations, professional courses, military training, and other prior learning experiences.

III. General Conditions

- A. Proof of high school graduation/GED/HiSet is required by each UMASS campus from those applying without an associate degree. Some UMASS campuses qualify this requirement by applying it only when students, at the time of application, have earned fewer than 24 college credits and have graduated from high school less than three years prior. Students should consult the UMASS campus of their choice regarding its policy. Those utilizing a State-approved transfer program inclusive of MassTransfer A2B Pathway are not required to submit proof of high school graduation/GED/HiSet at time of application. This does not include Dual Enrollment.
- B. Submission of ACT/SAT scores for admission is required by some UMASS campuses. Some UMASS campuses qualify this requirement by applying it only when students have earned fewer than 24 college credits and have been out of high school fewer than three to five years. Students should consult the UMASS campus of their choice regarding its policy. Students who complete a MassTransfer A2B Pathway are not required to submit ACT/SAT scores for admission. This does not include Dual Enrollment.
- C. For credit to transfer, generally courses must have been taken at an institution accredited by one of the six (6) regional accreditation agencies in the United States or, when allowed by college/university practice by a national accreditation agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). An institution may consider courses taken at a non-regionally accredited institution within or outside the United State on an individual basis. Students should consult the

UMASS campus of their choice about any special requirements for on-line courses as well as its policy and process used in evaluating credit.

- D. Credit may transfer as either the course equivalent at the receiving institution, as elective credit within a specific department or as a general/free elective. Some UMASS campuses may transfer credit with an appropriate transfer code/number when neither the course equivalent nor comparable department exist.
- E. Credits earned in a quarter-hour system will be converted to semester hours.
- F. Official transcripts from each institution at which students attempted one or more credit-bearing courses are required by each UMASS campus for credit to transfer. This includes international institutions attended as well as colleges/universities at which students completed Dual Enrollment courses while enrolled in high school.
- G. Students must be accepted by a UMASS campus and have declared their programs of study for credit to actually transfer.
- H. At minimum, credit may be granted for courses that apply to students' current programs of study.
- I. Once credit is transferred, it becomes part of students' permanent records maintained by the Registrar.
- J. Only credit for college-level courses may transfer.
- K. Credit for developmental coursework does not transfer. Satisfactory completion of developmental coursework may be used for placement purposes, resulting in students being cleared to register for college-level courses. Students should consult the UMASS of their choice regarding their specific policy.
- L. Credit, not grades, transfer. Grades of transfer courses are not utilized in calculating grade or quality point averages.
- M. Transfer credit is designated on transcripts with an appropriate letter or symbol in the grade field.
- N. Most majors are available to transfers on UMASS campuses though space may be limited. Students should consult the UMASS campus they are interested in regarding program availability.
- O. Audited coursework does not transfer.
- P. Credit will not be granted for duplicate coursework or for two courses that cover the same/similar content.

IV. Minimum Grades

- A. Each UMASS campus requires a minimum grade for courses to transfer. Students should consult the UMASS campus of their choice regarding their policy.
- B. Grades of D, D+, C- and CD (1.00 to 1.99 on a 4.00 scale) may transfer if they are courses that are part of the General Education Foundation (formerly known as MassTransfer Block) and students have completed the Gen Ed Foundation with a cumulative grade point average of a 2.00 or higher. Students should consult the UMass campus of their choice regarding its policy.
- C. Grades higher than C (2.00) may be required for admission to certain majors, for use as pre-requisite courses and for application of credit to specific major requirements.
- D. Grades of Pass (P) may transfer to UMASS campuses provided official transcripts/college catalogs stipulate that such grades are equivalent to a C- or higher. Students should consult the UMASS campus of their choice regarding its policy.

V. Residency Requirement/Maximum Credit Allowed

All UMASS campuses require students to complete between one-quarter (30 credits) and three-eighths (45 credits) of the credits of a bachelor's degree at that institution to be eligible to graduate. The maximum amount of credit students may transfer varies by institution and in some cases by major. Students should consult the UMASS campus of their choice regarding its policy.

VI. Alternative Sources of Credit

- A. Based upon an individual institution's policy, credit may be granted for satisfactory scores on the following:
 - Advanced Placement (AP)
 - College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
 - International Baccalaureate (IB) Higher level exam
 - Advanced Level (A-Level) exams
 - Joint Services Transcripts (JST) as certified by the American Council of Education (ACE)
 - DSST/SANTES (Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support) exams.
- B. Official score reports are required in order to be considered for transfer credit. Students should consult the specific UMASS campus regarding its policy, even when the official score reports have been provided to the sending institutions.
- C. Credit may be granted for satisfactory scores on challenge or credit examinations based on an institution's policy.
- D. Credit may be granted for formal courses or examinations offered by various organizations including government and military based on the recommendations of the American Council on Education (ACE) as found in its National Guide to College Credit for Workforce Training, a resource of its College Credit Recommendation Service (CREDIT).
- E. Credit may also be granted for learning from experience at work, volunteering in the community, military service, job training, etc. by some institutions for certain majors.
- F. Members of the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) Consortium adhere to the Consortium's Academic Residency Requirements for servicemembers at their institutions.
- G. Academic credits earned through the evaluation of military occupation, training, experience, and coursework are transferable within the Massachusetts public higher education system in accordance with the MassTransfer agreement.
- H. Credit granted by one institution from alternative or prior sources other than that included by item G may not transfer to another institution.

VII. Time Limits

- A. Credit will transfer to some UMASS campuses without time limits.
- B. Some stipulations may apply to courses required for certain majors. Students should consult the specific UMASS campus regarding this policy.

VIII. Student Appeals

Transfer students should consult the UMASS campus of their choice regarding courses/credit that did not transfer to ascertain what review process may be available.

IX. Review and Amendment

The Department of Higher Education (DHE) from time to time will convene a group of UMASS transfer professionals to review these Principles and recommend amendments to the Department.

X. Contact

Interested parties with comments or questions may contact Elena Quiroz-Livanis of the Department of Higher Education at 617.994.6909 or equiroz@bhe.mass.edu.

XI. Adoption

These University of Massachusetts Transfer Principles were reviewed and approved by the Academic Affairs Committee on _____ and adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education on _____.