

## Industry Recognized Credentials/Test Credit Policy

### I. Policy Section

8.0 Students

### II. Policy Subsection

8.33 Industry Recognized Credentials/Test Credit Policy

### III. Policy Statement

Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) awards course credit for external nationally recognized industry or professional credentials and accredited or nationally recognized exams and tests. When equivalence between a credential or test and a GRCC course(s) has been established by the academic department (in which the course(s) resides) and the College, the GRCC Registrar's Office will award credit for the course(s), if the following guidelines are met:

- The course alignment with external credential has been formally documented in the Registrar's Office prior to student request for course credit.
- The credential is current/valid at the time the credit is awarded (has not expired).
- Students provide original verification to the GRCC Registrar's Office.
- All established requirements (for example, minimum acceptable test scores) are met.

### IV. Reason for the Policy

This policy identifies the guidelines for and circumstances under which the Registrar's Office may award course credit to students who have taken and passed external tests, exams, or industry credentials.

### V. Entities Affected by this Policy

Students  
Faculty  
Staff

### VI. Who Should Read this Policy

Students  
Faculty  
Staff

VII. Related Documents

- 7.15 Prior Learning Assessment
- 7.20 Graduation Requirements
- 8.5 Catalog Policy
- 8.29 Transfer Policy
- 8.31 Minimum Institutional Credit Policy

VIII. Contacts

Student Records/Registrar's Office  
Counseling and Career Center  
Admissions/Enrollment Center  
Deans

IX. Definitions

***Equivalence—***

Establishing equivalence for GRCC courses allows students to earn credit for prior experiences. Equivalence applies to the following: industry recognized credential to course(s), test to course, and course to course. The course, test, or industry recognized credential being evaluated for equivalence must result in students having the same knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes as the GRCC course for which the student is seeking credit. Equivalence is established through the review of the GRCC course description, outcomes, and outline in comparison with the documentation provided for the transfer course, industry recognized credential, or test. In order for course to course equivalence to be established similar rigor, such as common credit/contact hours and the expectation for similarity of prior knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes must be established. In order for course to course equivalence to be established for Industry recognized credentials, one or more industry recognized credentials must be aligned with the entire course. An industry recognized credential may also be aligned with a sequence of courses.

X. Procedures

***Test Credit***

1. *Establishing Test Credit Equivalence*

- a. Test credit is awarded for courses where test to course equivalence has been established (*see equivalence guidelines*)
- b. Test to course equivalence is based on faculty review of courses
- c. Test credit is awarded for AP, CLEP, DANTES
- d. Review of all test credit will occur in the Registrar's Office annually in line with the catalog cycle.

- i. Registrar's office will send out descriptions of test content to departments with a recommendation for course equivalence and a due date for sending back questions, concerns, etc.
- e. Test credit cut scores are based on benchmarking of 2-year and 4-year colleges in Michigan and will include review of new tests for which students may receive credit and common cut scores for test credit at transfer institutions.
- f. For courses where a direct equivalence has not identified, the Registrar's Office will make a recommendation to the department.
- g. As the registrar's office is made aware of new tests or cut scores (outside the regular review cycle), benchmarking will be completed and sent out to department to review.
- h. Transfer Evaluation System (TES) holds all test credit information
- i. Test credit for courses not offered at GRCC are given discipline specific general credit (998/999)

## 2. Awarding Test Credit

- a. Official test score documentation is sent to GRCC Enrollment Center by student.
- b. Enrollment Center records receipt of scores and sends to Student Records office.
- c. Degree seeking students are then awarded credit for tests with appropriate scores (credit is posted to transcripts).

## ***Industry Recognized Credentials***

### 1. Establishing Industry Recognized Credential Equivalence

- a. Industry Recognized Credential to course equivalence will be established and reviewed through the New Course Development and Course Review & Revision processes in Curriculog and all documentation will be attached to the proposal (*see equivalence guidelines*).
- b. Institutional contact for the Industry Recognized Credential will be listed both on the Curriculum Document and list maintained by Registrar's Office.
- c. Equivalence will be demonstrated through: 1) Original documentation of content (standards, objectives, outcomes) for the credential to which the course is being equated; 2) a curriculum crosswalk that demonstrates how the content of the credential is aligned to the Course Learning Outcomes (ILO competencies do not need to be included).
- d. Student verification documentation will include: 1) a copy of the documentation that students need to provide (if this is not

available, it should be noted why and what the alternative process is for sending this information to the Registrar's Office; 2) the expiration date for the documentation. This information will be attached to the Curriculog proposal.

- e. The name of the Industry Recognized Credential is listed in the course description in the GRCC catalog.
- f. List of Industry Recognized Credentials is maintained in the Registrar's Office and posted on the Transfer Credit webpage

## 2. Awarding Credit

- a. Student provides registrar's office with documentation of credential earned.
- b. Registrar's validates the student submission based on credential on file.
- c. In cases where credential cannot be placed on file the academic department will verify the credential and send approval to the Registrar's Office via email.
- d. Credit is posted to student transcripts and represented as "Industry Recognized Credential".

## XI. Forms

Degree Audit Application

## XII. Effective Date

Fall 2016

## XIII. Policy History

Definition and Procedures Update, 2018  
AGC Approved, April 2016

## XIV. Next Review/Revision Date

Review/Revision—Winter 2019