

Competency Based Credit-Earning Options Procedure

These options provide opportunities to earn academic credit without participating in formal instruction via a regular classroom setting. Credits earned via any "competency based" option may not be transferable to another educational institution. Credits will be posted in the term in which the credits are granted. Credits earned through alternative credit-earning options are given S/U grades. Competency Based credits may apply toward graduation with a Bachelor's degree or an Associate degree up to the required number of residency credits. No Competency Based credits may be used toward the 30 total credits that must be earned at DSU for graduation for a bachelor's degree and 15 total credits for an associate degree. For additional information regarding Competency Based Credit-Earning Options, contact the Director of Academic Records.

- Standardized Exams: DSU accepts NDUS approved nationally recognized and standardized exams (AP/IB/CI/CLEP/DSST) for specific classes and their assigned credit values. Students must document achievement of the approved minimum score and must have matriculated to DSU and be in good standing before credit can be posted to their DSU transcript. See Credit by Exam for the list of approved exams per NDUS Procedure 460.4. AP (Advanced Placement) and IB (International Baccalaureate) exams are given in high schools. Note: IB exams must be at the higher (HL) level. (CI) Cambridge International is a program that provides internationally recognized curricula that are subject based qualifications usually taken in the final two years of high school to gain college credit. CLEP/DSST examinations are computerized and administered as needed. CLEP/DSST subject examinations may not be taken to establish credit for a course in which a student has earned credit in a higher level sequential course, or in a subject the student has previously failed. Some CLEP tests allow for optional essay questions. Essays will not be evaluated or graded unless the minimum passing score is obtained on the objective portion of the test. An examination fee is paid directly to CLEP/DSST, and there may be an administrative fee required for the computer-based testing. If there are questions, please contact the DSU Office of Academic Records. AP/IB/CLEP/DSST tests that are not NDUS approved may be taken for Independent Study/Undergraduate Research credit if approved by the appropriate dean. AP/IB/CLEP/DSST tests may not be used to satisfy residence-credit requirements for graduation.
- Foreign Language Requirement Exemption: A Competency Based Credit-Earning Option that is specific to the BA Foreign Language Requirement provides students who have prior learning in a language with alternatives to complete the requirement. Students must have matriculated to DSU and be in good standing to apply for any of these alternatives. International students whose languages are other than English receive an automatic waiver of the Bachelor of Arts foreign language requirements but are subject to TOEFL requirements. These students must still complete the minimum credit required in any relevant programs and the minimum credit required for graduation. International students whose language is English and domestic students who enter Dickinson State University as native or near-native speakers of languages other than English, or students with undocumented foreign language proficiency may pursue the following alternatives to secure an exemption from all or part of the requirement.
 - Provide the Office of Academic Records with a transcript for graduation from a non-English speaking High School or College from a country other than the U.S. This alternative results in a waiver of the requirement. Students who secure a waiver still must complete the minimum number of credits in relevant programs and the minimum number of credits required for graduation.
 - Arrange with the Testing Center to take one of the two approved proficiency exams: either NYU Language Proficiency Test, which can certify proficiency for up to 16 credit hours and completion of the 202 level; or a CLEP Foreign Language Exam, which can certify proficiency for up to 8 credits hours and completion of the 102 level. There are fees associated with both of these exams. (This alternative automatically transcripts the certified hours of language credit).

- Prior Learning Assessment: Credit may be awarded for past experience which can be directly related to a specific course, its learning outcomes, and its assigned credit value. Students must have matriculated to DSU and be in good standing to apply. Documentation, usually in the form of a portfolio, is provided to the appropriate dean. Credit is awarded through enrollment in the UNIV 200 course and use of the Request for Prior Learning Assessment Form. Prior Learning Assessment Credit cannot be designated and transcribed under catalog numbers 292/492 or 299/499. A per-credit recording fee will be charged.
- Evaluated Non-College Coursework Credit: Credit may be awarded through the use of published credit recommendations for formal instructional programs offered by non-collegiate agencies, especially the U.S. military. GERTA and/or the American Council on Education (Guide to Evaluation of Education Experiences in the Armed Services on the ACE website) provide equivalencies between U.S. military training and specific college courses. These courses are recorded to the transcript without charge. Additionally, up to 10 credits of "free elective credit" may be awarded for U.S. armed services training without direct relation to any specific course. The deans can assist in assigning an appropriate prefix. Catalog numbers 292/492 or 299/499 are usually appropriate. Also, HPER 100 will be waived for U.S. military personnel or veterans. Published and authorized equivalencies between military training in other countries or civilian instructional programs and specific college courses must be available for such instruction to be granted credit. Individuals who gain credit through military training in other countries or civilian instruction must pay a fee to record the class on the transcript. Documentation of completed training, whether military or civilian, is required.
- Articulated Credit: The award of degree credit for activities, typically non-college course or training content, that have been evaluated, deemed equivalent to specific courses, and detailed in a corresponding articulation agreement prior to the non-college course or training. Students must have matriculated to DSU and be in good standing to apply. Individuals who earn articulated credits must pay a fee to record the class on the official academic transcript.

Restrictions

1. For Prior Learning Assessment, the student must have matriculated to Dickinson State University, must meet with an advisor and, with the recommendation of the advisor, must register for UNV 200 – Portfolio Preparation. The student may apply for Prior Learning Credit during the class or for one year after completing the class.
2. For Evaluated Non-College Coursework Credit, the student must have matriculated to Dickinson State University.
3. The student may not apply for Competency Based Credit-Earning Options for any course that was previously attempted or taken (appearing on the DSU transcript as W, F, or other letter grade).
4. Competency Based Credit-Earning Options are graded S (Satisfactory). Credit sought but not approved does not appear on the student's transcript and a U (Unsatisfactory) is not applied. Competency Based Credit-Earning options do not count as courses that students elect to take with S/U grading, therefore they do not count toward the limit of 15 credits of those that may be applied toward graduation.
5. No more than 30 credits earned through Competency Based Degree Credit Earning Options may be applied toward graduation for a bachelor's degree, and only 15 total may apply for an associate's degree.
6. A recording fee of 50% of regular per semester hour residency tuition (non-refundable) will be charged to have Prior Learning Assessment Credit and Foreign Language placed on the transcript. No transcription fees will be charged for standardized exam credit or military credit.
7. Competency Based Degree Credit Earning Options do not apply to the 30 semester hours that are required to be earned at Dickinson State University for graduation.