

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Academic and Student Affairs

AGENDA ITEM: 9 – B
DATE: June 22-23, 2022

SUBJECT

**New BOR Policies 2:5, 2:5:1, 2:5:2, 2:5:3, and 2:5:4 – Seamless Transfer of Credit
(First Reading)**

CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY

[BOR Policy 2:5](#) – Transfer of Credit

[BOR Policy 2:7](#) – Baccalaureate General Education Curriculum

[BOR Policy 2:25](#) – Articulation of General Education Courses/No MOU

[BOR Policy 2:26](#) – Associate Degree General Education

[BOR Policy 2:27](#) – Program to Program Articulation Agreements

[BOR Policy 2:31](#) – Articulation of General Education Courses/MOU

[SDBOR Strategic Plan](#)

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

The Board of Regents (BOR) developed and approved a new [Strategic Plan](#) for 2022-2027 which focused on five strategic goals. The second goal was defined as:

Access and Affordability: The Regental system is the largest public post-secondary education system in South Dakota. This system offers both undergraduate and graduate education. **Access to affordable** education is the cornerstones to ensuring South Dakotans attend a public post-secondary institution.

Within this goal (Access and Affordability), there were several enrollment management strategies identified. One objective centered around seamless transfer. The objective and action items regarding transfer include:

Objective:

Increase transfer enrollment by 5% through improved access to bachelor's degree programs for students with earned credits from technical and community colleges.

(Continued)

DRAFT MOTION 20220622_9-B:

I move to approve the first reading of the proposed revisions to BOR Policies 2:5, 2:5:1, 2:5:2, 2:5:3, and 2:5:4, as presented.

Actions:

1. Revise transfer policies and guidelines to be more student-centered.
2. Evaluate outcomes each year and reassess the policies and guidelines. Make changes as necessary to facilitate objectives.
3. Identify strategic partnership opportunities with the Board of Technical Education to improve traditional transfer and reverse transfer in South Dakota.

To implement this objective and action items, the Academic Affairs Council (AAC) over the last several months has been evaluating the transfer policies. To assist in this effort, a subcommittee was created. That subcommittee attempted to represent team members from each of the campuses in the following functional departments: registrar, BOR enrollment services center, academic affairs, and assessment. The work of that subcommittee has also been forwarded while in development to AAC, the Council of Presidents and Superintendents (COPS), and to functional campus departments such as financial aid and academic records. The team wanted to increase awareness of the progress on these policies and overall, on identifying campus and department needs during the evaluation.

The outcome of this team review is as follows:

- Transfer policy is complex; it required the team to review processes/practices in the Student Information System (Banner), review the process of transcript collection/review at the university, review the process of course syllabi at the university, and a review external universities and systems to identify trends, best practices.
- It was found that the Regents would not need a policy reflecting the memorandum of understanding or the lack thereof in BOR Policy 2:31 and BOR Policy 2:25. It was also found that there was not a need to have a policy on articulation agreements as found in BOR Policy 2:27.
- It was noted that the policy should reflect accreditation standards allowing a more succinct policy given the national and regional accreditation guidelines, policies, and functional review needs.
- It was agreed that new seamless student-centered transfer policies would strive to meet the goal of the Board of Regents Strategic Plan at it relates to transfer.
- It was noted that common definitions would be critical to facilitate policy and practice.
- There was a need identified to draft guidelines and student information system reference tools to better align with new proposed policy.
- Stakeholders recommended an overarching parent BOR Policy with sub-policies incorporating details specific to stakeholder needs to mitigate confusion of the students or applicants looking to transfer to the Regental system.

With these outcomes, the Board of Regents will find the first proposed new draft policies.

1. BOR Policy 2:5 Seamless Transfer of Credit [Parent Policy]
 - Aligned the structure of the policy to include the current formatting.

- Addition of the definitional section.
 - Addition of the Policy Statements.
 - Section on Waivers
 - Appeal Procedure
2. BOR Policy 2:5:1 South Dakota Regental System Transfer of Credit [Sub-Policy]
 - Aligned the structure of the policy to include the current formatting.
 - This policy reflects *only Regental system* credit hours earned and transcribed.
 3. BOR Policy 2:5:2 External (Non-Regental System) Accredited University/College Transfer of Credit [Sub-Policy]
 - Aligned the structure of the policy to include the current formatting.
 - This policy only reflects external (outside the Regental system) courses by *accredited* colleges and universities.
 4. BOR Policy 2:5:3 External (Non-Regental System) Non-Accredited Institution and International Transfer of Credit [Sub-Policy]
 - Aligned the structure of the policy to include the current formatting.
 - This policy only reflects external (outside the Regental system) courses by *non-accredited* and *international* colleges and universities.
 5. BOR Policy 2:5:4 Prior Learning and Validated Transfer of Credit [Sub-Policy]
 - Aligned the structure of the policy to include the current formatting.
 - This policy only reflects courses or hours through a prior learning experience such as a Test, or Military experience.

IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATION

These policies have had many stakeholders review and consider changes both philosophically and operationally. Because these policies and the practices associated will require additional dialogue, Dr. Minder will continue to route them to additional stakeholders and will begin having more discussion on the operationalizing of these policies. The goal will be to incorporate AAC guidelines where needed and Student Information System reference guides for those stakeholders managing transfer. The second review will be in August of 2022 with the anticipated effective term of Fall 2022.

The timeline associated with this policy will be as follows:

- First Reading – June 2022 BOR Meeting
- Additional Stakeholder Meetings – July 2022
- AAC Guidelines/Student Information System Reference Guides – July 2022
- Second and Final Reading – August 2022 BOR Meeting

BOR academic staff supports the recommendation of approving BOR Policies 2:5, 2:5:1, 2:5:2, 2:5:3, and 2:5:4.

New BOR Policies 2:5, 2:5:1, 2:5:2, 2:5:3, and 2:5:4

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment I – Proposed New Draft of BOR Policy 2:5 (No Track Changes)

Attachment II – New Proposed BOR Policy 2:5:1

Attachment III – New Proposed BOR Policy 2:5:2

Attachment IV – New Proposed BOR Policy 2:5:3

Attachment V – New Proposed BOR Policy 2:5:4

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual

SUBJECT: Seamless Transfer of Credit

NUMBER: 2:5

A. PURPOSE

This policy outlines flexible pathways for students to transfer among institutions within and from outside the Regental system to enable their opportunities for success.

B. DEFINITIONS

1. **Accredited Institution:** Holding accreditation from one of the following institutional accrediting bodies, unless otherwise specified: Middle States Commission on Higher Education, New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Higher Learning Commission, Northwest Accreditation Commission, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC).
2. **Articulation Agreement:** An agreement between two or among multiple institutions allowing for transfer of credit, either as course-by-course and/or as a block of credits.
3. **Associate College:** Institution at which the highest degree awarded is an associates degree.
4. **Block Credit:** A block of credits derived from a cluster of courses referenced in an articulation agreement between participating institutions.
5. **Common Catalog:** The catalog of courses shared by all Regental institutions allowing students to use coursework completed to fulfill degree requirements regardless of the home institution.
6. **Common Course Numbering:** The system shared numbering of equivalent courses among Regental institutions that facilitates the common course catalog.
7. **Course Evaluation:** A review completed by the appropriate registrar or designated official to compare descriptions, content, and level of course completed from an accredited or non-accredited institution.
8. **General Education:** Curriculum defined to develop learners' general knowledge, literacy, skills, and competencies which equip students for success with advanced curriculum, program and major completion, and career competencies.
9. **In-State:** Any public or private college or university physically located in South Dakota.
10. **Out-of-State:** A college or university not physically located in South Dakota.
11. **Prior Learning Assessments (PLA):** A process to evaluate learner competencies acquired by a student through formal and non-formal learning experiences that occurred outside of

the college classroom. (e.g., External Exam [CLEP, AP, IB, etc.], American Council on Education [ACE], Council on Adult and Experiential Learning [CAEL], etc.).

- 12. Program-to-Program Transfer:** Process whereby an entire curriculum or program of study is accepted between colleges and universities.
- 13. Receiving Institution:** The Regental university to which the student is transferring.
- 14. Regental Internal Transfer:** Process where an undergraduate course is used to meet a plan of study requirement at any Regental universities or when graduate credit is used on a converted or actual credit basis to meet undergraduate degree requirements for a Regental accelerated program (refer to BOR Policy 2:8.).
- 15. Regental University:** Defined as one of the six (6) public universities: Black Hills State University, Dakota State University, Northern State University, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, South Dakota State University, and the University of South Dakota.
- 16. Reverse Transfer:** The post-transfer recognition of college credits by the sending institution from credit earned at the receiving institution.
- 17. SD Technical College:** Colleges affiliated with the South Dakota Board of Technical Education: Lake Area Technical College, Mitchell Technical College, Southeast Technical College, and Western Dakota Technical College.
- 18. Sending Institution:** The institution from which a student is transferring.
- 19. Transfer Student:** A designation given to a degree-seeking student who transfers credit from a sending institution to a receiving institution.
- 20. WICHE (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education):** A higher educational compact for which the Board of Regents is a member.
- 21. WICHE Interstate Passport:** A national program that enables seamless block transfer of lower-division general education attainment.

C. POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Governance:

- 1.1. Board of Regents Policy 1:0, 1:1 and SDCL § 13-49 through § 13-53 provides the authority to govern academic programming.
- 1.2. The Regental university must gain approval of any articulation agreement by the Board of Regents.
- 1.3. The Board of Regents governs the common course numbering and the common course catalog in their enterprise resource planning (ERP) system.
- 1.4. All courses are subject to all Board of Regents policies and any conditions for validation that are prescribed by the receiving institution.
- 1.5. The Regental general education shall be managed by the Academic Affairs Council with consultation with the general education faculty council.

2. Quality:

- 2.1. The legitimacy and quality of the sending institution shall be evaluated in part by its accreditation status.
- 2.2. Receiving institutional programmatic accreditation shall be evaluated when assessing transfer of credit.
- 2.3. Total transfer credit completed at an associate college shall not exceed one-half of the hours required for completion of the baccalaureate degree at the receiving institution.
- 2.4. Transfer grades are calculated into the GPA; grading schemes inconsistent with the Regental grading scheme will be converted to the Regental equivalent.
- 2.5. Credit is only applied once per course per degree; any course taken multiple times will be treated according to the repeat policy.

3. Applicability:

Credit is awarded when the academic program, level of study, and course content are similar in nature and applicable to the academic program of the receiving institution.

4. Student-Centered:

Students shall have the following options by which they can transfer within the Regental system or into the Regental system from an external institution.

- BOR Policy 2:5:1 Internal (within the Regental system) Transfer of Credit
- BOR Policy 2:5:2 External (Non-Regental) Accredited Institution Transfer of Credit
- BOR Policy 2:5:3 External (Non-Regental) Non-Accredited and International Transfer of Credit
- BOR Policy 2:5:4 Prior Learning Transfer of Credit

D. PROGRAM SPECIFIC TRANSFER OF CREDIT WAIVERS

1. The System Vice President for Academic Affairs may approve program-specific waivers of up to seventy-five (75) total transfer credit hours at the receiving institution.
2. Formal Board of Regents approval is required for a transfer of credit for:
 - 2.1. Baccalaureate program-specific waivers of seventy-six (76) total transfer credit hours up to a maximum of ninety (90) total transfer credit hours at the receiving institution.
 - 2.2. Graduate accelerated program-specific waivers of thirteen (13) total transfer credit hours up to a maximum of twenty-five (25) total transfer credit hours at the receiving institution.

E. APPEAL PROCESS

1. Transfer students who do not qualify for transfer of credit may appeal through the appropriate institutional appeal procedures. Institutions should publish appeal procedures in the catalog or another official institution publication.
2. The appeal procedures will be posted in the AAC Guidelines for transparency of the receiving institution process.

FORMS / APPENDICES:

None

SOURCE:

BOR August 2022.

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS**Policy Manual**

SUBJECT: South Dakota Regental System Transfer of Credit

NUMBER: 2:5:1

A. PURPOSE

The Board of Regents governing the six public universities have established a common course catalog and common transcript to ensure a Regental student can seamlessly transfer within the Regental system. Student coursework, credit hours and grades are recorded on the student's transcript.

B. DEFINITIONS

See BOR Policy 2:5.

C. GENERAL EDUCATION TRANSFER OF CREDITS

1. Students who complete the System General Education Requirements (BOR Policy 2:7) at any Regental institution will have fulfilled the System General Education Requirements for their degree program. The completion of the requirements will internally transfer with the courses, credit hours and grades assigned regardless of the course distributions or approved course lists.
2. A student who has not completed all System General Education requirements at the sending institution will be required to complete additional coursework consistent with the course requirements at the receiving South Dakota Regental institution.
3. All prerequisites for associate and baccalaureate programs must be completed as determined by the student's degree plan.

D. MAJOR SPECIFIC, VALIDATED, AND ELECTIVE TRANSFER OF CREDITS

1. Students completing an internal transfer within the Regental system can request that program related, validated credits, and elective credits be transferred toward the degree requirements.
2. Credits earned through Pass/Fail grading options, credit-by-examinations, portfolio reviews, and other validated credit awards that may be known by other names at institutions will transfer as equivalent courses when available at the receiving institution.
3. Institutions will complete a course evaluation and if approved, the course, credit hours and grade will be equated in the student information system.

FORMS / APPENDICES:

None

SOURCE:

BOR August 2022.

DRAFT

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS**Policy Manual**

SUBJECT: External (Non-Regental System) Accredited University/College Transfer of Credit

NUMBER: 2:5:2

A. PURPOSE

The Board of Regents governing the six public universities shall establish a policy on the transfer of credits from externally accredited universities and colleges. This policy shall only include those sending institutions that are accredited institutions. Students will be required to complete all requirements as outlined in the academic catalog.

B. DEFINITIONS

See BOR Policy 2:5.

C. UNDERGRADUATE GENERAL EDUCATION

1. General Education Block Transfer of Credit

- 1.1. A student who has completed general education requirements that are consistent with the six (6) goals and credit hour requirements outlined in [BOR Policy 2:7](#) will enter the Regental system having fulfilled the General Education program requirements.
- 1.2. 1.2 A student who has completed the WICHE (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education) Interstate Passport, or other approved general education agreement requirements will have successfully fulfilled the General Education program requirements.
- 1.3. 1.3 Approved equivalent courses and grades are recorded on the transcript and credit will be identified in the student information system that general education has been satisfied.

2. General Education Transfer of Credit

- 2.1. All individual general education courses requests for transfer will have a course evaluation.
- 2.2. Approved equivalent courses and grades are recorded on the transcript.
- 2.3. In any subsequent evaluation, equivalencies for system common courses and system general education courses will not be changed.

D. UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM MAJOR SPECIFIC AND ELECTIVE TRANSFER OF CREDIT

1. Major or Elective Courses

- 1.1. The university-specific degree or plan of study requirements determine if the requested courses are applicable to the student's degree program at that university and if they meet the minimum grade criteria required by the program.
- 1.2. University discretion is permitted in acceptance of courses.
- 1.3. During any subsequent evaluation, equivalencies for system common courses and system general education courses may not be changed. Changes may occur in unique major or elective course requests. The institution must communicate to the student the changes and support for changes.
- 1.4. Remedial courses (as identified on the sending institution's transcript) received in transfer are recorded, transcribed, and assigned an equivalency. Credits earned from remedial courses will not be applied toward a student's graduation requirements.
- 1.5. Approved courses, grades and credit hours are recorded on the transcript.

2. Block Transfer of Credit by Articulation Agreements

- 2.1. Universities may enter into an articulation agreement including transfer of a cluster of courses for block credit toward the student's degree program with the approval of the Executive Director, or designee, and the Board of Regents.
- 2.2. Following a course evaluation ensuring the agreement was adhered, credits will be transferred as a block and a grade of CR applied.
- 2.3. All approved equivalent courses and credit hours are recorded on the transcript, but the grade earned at the sending institution is not recorded or calculated into the grade point averages.
- 2.4. Students and the receiving university may utilize a course-by-course equivalency upon request instead of the block credit (see Sections D.1 and D.3).

3. Program-to-Program Transfer

- 3.1. Universities may enter into a program-to-program articulation agreement with the approval of the Executive Director, or designee, and the Board of Regents.
- 3.2. A program-to-program agreement may provide for proactive/guaranteed admission to the receiving institution upon a student completing the requirements at the sending institution. (i.e., Associates to Bachelors [A2B] where the first two years are completed at a non-baccalaureate institution [AS degree] toward the receiving institution's baccalaureate degree).
- 3.3. A program-to-program agreement will define the requirements of the program, major emphasis, credit hours received and a pathway to degree attainment.
- 3.4. Approved equivalent courses, grades and credit hours are recorded on the transcript.

4. Reverse Transfer

- 4.1. Universities may enter into an articulation agreement with the approval of the Executive Director, or designee, and the Board of Regents.
- 4.2. This is utilized primarily for attainment of an associate degrees through credits earned at the receiving institution and degree awarded by the sending institution. This reverse transfer can be utilized for any academic credential as defined by the agreement.

E. GRADUATE PROGRAM MAJOR SPECIFIC AND ELECTIVE TRANSFER OF CREDIT

1. The receiving university-specific plan of study requirements determines if the course requests are applicable to the student's degree program.
2. Transfer credits will have a course evaluation completed by the receiving institution.
3. After the course evaluation is completed, courses will be recorded as either specific major course equivalencies or courses may be recorded as electives, and equivalencies granted.
4. Approved grades and credit hours will be recorded on the transcript.

FORMS / APPENDICES:

None

SOURCE:

BOR August 2022.

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual

SUBJECT: External (Non-Regental System) Non-Accredited University/College and International Transfer of Credit

NUMBER: 2:5:3

A. PURPOSE

The Board of Regents governing the six public universities shall establish a policy on the transfer of credits from externally non-accredited universities and colleges. This policy shall only include those sending institutions that are non-accredited institutions or international institutions.

B. DEFINITIONS

See BOR Policy 2:5.

C. Undergraduate/Graduate Transfer of Credit

1. General Education Transfer of Credit

- 1.1. University discretion is permitted in acceptance of general education courses. Courses considered for transfer are subject to all BOR policies and any conditions for validation that may be prescribed by the receiving institution.
- 1.2. In any subsequent evaluation, equivalencies for system common courses and system general education courses will not be changed.
- 1.3. Approved equivalent courses, grades and credit hours are recorded on the transcripts.

2. Major Specific, Validated Credit and Elective Transfer of Credit

- 2.1. The receiving university discretion is permitted in acceptance of courses. All degree requirements determine course transfers.
- 2.2. Major specific and elective courses considered for transfer are subject to all Board of Regent policies and any conditions for course evaluation and validation that may be prescribed by the receiving institution.
- 2.3. Subsequent course evaluation completed shall not change equivalencies for system common courses and system general education courses.
- 2.4. Subsequent course evaluation may change and can be inactivated for major and elective courses and additional equivalencies may be added and evaluated.
- 2.5. Approved equivalent receiving institution courses, grades and credit hours are recorded on the transcript.

FORMS / APPENDICES:

None

SOURCE:

BOR August 2022.

DRAFT

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS**Policy Manual**

SUBJECT: Prior Learning and Validated Transfer of Credit

NUMBER: 2:5:4

A. PURPOSE

The Board of Regents governing the six public universities shall establish a policy on the transfer of credits related to Prior Learning or other Validated credits.

B. DEFINITIONS

See BOR Policy 2:5.

C. PRIOR LEARNING TRANSFER OF CREDIT

As with the assessment of classroom learning, the objective of prior learning assessment is to identify student competency related to a specific set of learning outcomes. This policy only applies to transfer students who earned and have evidence of the credit outlined in their transcript. The Regental universities should provide transfer students the same opportunities as continuing students to demonstrate their competence using internally and/or externally developed tests, ACE credit recommendations for military and non-military training, portfolio assessment procedures and/or other competency-based alternatives.

1. General Requirements

- 1.1. Credit earned through validation methods other than nationally recognized examinations is limited to a maximum of thirty (30) hours of credit for baccalaureate degrees and fifteen (15) hours of credit for associate degrees.
- 1.2. The Regental system will establish proficiency score levels, courses for which credit by examination is appropriate, policies on fees, and other related policies.
- 1.3. The Discipline Councils will provide consultation to the Academic Affairs Council as it relates to competencies, course equivalencies, and other requirements to the system academic staff.

2. Credit by Exam

- 2.1. Credit for college level courses granted through nationally recognized examinations such as CLEP, AP, DSST, etc., will be evaluated and accepted for transfer if equivalent to Regental courses and the scores are consistent with Regental policies.
- 2.2. Such credits are only valid if transcribed by a sending institution within five years of the student taking the examination.

- 2.3. Regental institutions shall honor credits from nationally recognized examinations transcribed to meet degree requirements at a non-Regental institution.
 - 2.3.1. If credit received through validation is applied as elective credit, it may only be applied at the 100 or 200 level.
 - 2.3.2. Credit received through validation may apply to System General Education Requirements.
- 2.4. After the course evaluation is completed, the approved equivalent receiving institution courses and credit hours are recorded with a grade of EX on the transcript, but the grade earned at the sending institution is not recorded or calculated into the grade point average.

3. Military Credit

- 3.1. Validation of military credit is limited to an additional thirty (30) hours of credit for baccalaureate degrees and an additional fifteen (15) hours of credit for associate degrees.
- 3.2. University discretion is permitted in acceptance of validated military credit for graduate programs, limited to a maximum of twelve (12) credit hours.
- 3.3. After the course evaluation is completed, the approved equivalent receiving institution courses and credit hours are recorded with a grade of CR on the transcript.
- 3.4. The grade earned at the sending institution is not recorded or calculated into the grade point average.

FORMS / APPENDICES:

None

SOURCE:

BOR August 2022.