

10.8 Evaluating and awarding academic credit

The institution publishes policies for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit not originating from the institution. The institution ensures (a) the academic quality of any credit or coursework recorded on its transcript, (b) an approval process with oversight by persons academically qualified to make the necessary judgments, and (c) the credit awarded is comparable to a designated credit experience and is consistent with the institution's mission.

Compliance Judgment: In Compliance

Rationale

The University of South Carolina Aiken defines policies for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit for transfer, military experience, and advanced placement that are consistent with its mission and ensure that course work and learning outcomes are at the collegiate level and comparable to the institution's own degree programs. Students wishing to receive credit for prior work or public service experiences must validate the knowledge they have gained by submitting the results of CLEP subject exams, taking USC Aiken challenge exams, or documenting experiences in the military. Policies are published in the [Academic Bulletin](#) ^[1] and on the [institution's transfer website](#). ^[2]

As stated in the [mission statement](#) ^[3], the University of South Carolina Aiken values accomplishments and "prepares students for success by challenging them to think critically and creatively, to communicate effectively, to learn independently, and to acquire breadth and depth of interdisciplinary knowledge." To that end, having solid transfer credit policies that recognize accomplishments of demonstrably capable students from a variety of backgrounds helps fulfill this aspect of the institution's mission. The institution takes great care when establishing articulation agreements or when considering the transferability of credit from other accredited institutions to ensure that the course content, learning outcomes, and academic quality are comparable to that of USC Aiken's degree programs. USC Aiken's policy states that a maximum of 30 semester hours of non-traditional credit may be applied to a baccalaureate degree.

College Board Advanced Placement (AP) Examinations. The University of South Carolina Aiken supports the College Board's Advanced Placement Program, which allows high school students the opportunity to pursue college level courses in their own schools and to be taught the material by their own teachers. After completion of the AP courses, students take the appropriate AP test to determine their level of achievement. In accordance with policies established by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, USC Aiken awards credit for AP scores of three or higher, unless evidence is presented for good cause not to do so.

International Baccalaureate (IB) Policy. The University of South Carolina Aiken recognizes the academic challenge inherent in the IB Program and encourages students who have completed the IB diploma to apply. IB graduates who score well (4-7) on their Higher Level exams are awarded college credit as determined by the academic departments. No credit is awarded for subjects passed at the Subsidiary level of IB, nor for scores below 4 on the higher level exams. IB credit is awarded for IB Higher-Level examination scores in the following areas: English A1, Biology, Business and Organization, Chemistry, Computing Studies, Economics, Foreign Languages, Geography, History, Mathematics, Music, Physics, Psychology, Social Anthropology.

College Level Examination Program (CLEP). The University awards credit by examination for CLEP subject examinations only. By attaining an acceptable score, a student may receive credit equal to that normally earned in the comparable University course. The department chair/dean makes the decision about whether to award credit based on the score.

CLEP credit is awarded in the following subject areas: Introductory Accounting, Introductory Business Law, Principles of Management, Principles of Marketing, College Composition, Analyzing and Interpreting Literature, American History I: Early Colonization to 1877, American History II: 1865 to the Present, Western Civilization I: Ancient Near East to 1648, Western Civilization II: 1648 to the Present, College Algebra, College Algebra and Trigonometry, Calculus with Elementary Functions,

Trigonometry, General Biology, General Chemistry, American Government, General Psychology, and Introductory Sociology.

Credit by Examination (Challenge Exam). In some instances, currently enrolled students may receive credit for a course by requesting a challenge exam and earning a “B” or better on the exam. Credit will appear only as hours earned and will not affect the grade point average. Departments and schools determine which of their courses may be challenged and the number of challenge exams that may be applied to major course requirements. Challenge exams are not permitted if the student is currently enrolled in the course; was previously enrolled in the course, either for credit or audit; or had previously challenged the course unsuccessfully. Challenge exams are not available for laboratory, activity, or skill courses.

Credit Granted for Educational Experiences in the Military. USC Aiken recognizes the educational experiences and training that members of the armed forces receive during their time of enlistment. Academic credit may be awarded for educational experiences in the military if they are in accordance with recommendations published by the American Council on Education (ACE) and are consistent with University policy on transfer of credit. The decision to award credit is made by the appropriate department chair/school dean.

Transfer Credit. Transfer students are given credit for their previous college work by means of a degree audit available to students and advisors via Degree Works. This is prepared by the Admissions Office after receipt of a student’s official transcripts from all colleges previously attended. The University applies the [Statewide Articulation Agreement](#) ^[4] for 86 courses already approved by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education that have been taken at other public colleges and universities in the state. Students enrolled at Aiken Technical College who plan to transfer and complete a degree in [Education](#) ^[5], [Business](#) ^[6], or [Nursing](#) ^[7] can use the course articulation agreements to plan course enrollments that are known to transfer. A similar articulation agreement exists between [USC Aiken and Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College](#).^[8] As a general rule, courses taken at a two-year or technical college that are strictly

occupational or technical in nature, remedial, considered upper division or upper level at USC Aiken, or are not listed as part of a two-year articulation agreement do not transfer. Courses not covered by an articulation agreement that have been taken at an accredited institution are evaluated by the appropriate department chair/school dean to determine whether credit will be awarded. After a course equivalency is established, it is noted in a transfer equivalency searchable database made available on [USC Aiken's transfer website](#).^[2]

The total number of hours transferred will appear on the USC Aiken transcript; however, students must refer to their degree audit report to determine how many of those hours have been applied to their major at USC Aiken. To illustrate, an [example of transfer credits](#) ^[9] is provided to illustrate how credits from another institution must be articulated with existing classes, how credits are entered in the Banner system, and how they are subsequently displayed on the degree audit and student's transcript. Some majors limit the amount of upper division credit that may be earned at another institution. Transfer credits from schools outside the USC system appear as hours earned only and do not compute into the USC Aiken grade point average.

Following admission to USC Aiken, if a student wishes to earn credits for coursework at another institution, he or she must complete a special enrollment request and obtain approval from the academic advisor and the appropriate department chair/school dean prior to enrollment. Only undergraduate courses taken at a regionally accredited institution of higher education which are comparable in content and credit hours to specific courses offered by USC Aiken and in which grades of "C" or better are earned are accepted for transfer.

For graduate students, a maximum of 12 hours of equivalent graduate coursework completed at other accredited institutions with a grade of B or better may be transferred. In all cases, the final determination of transferability of coursework is made by the program coordinator and dean of the school or chair of the department. Some credits such as thesis and practicum work from other institutions or portfolio-based experimental learning that occurs prior to a student's matriculation will not be accepted.

Further, all credit must be earned within the six-year period allowed for a graduate degree.

International Transfer Applicants. Students who have attended colleges and universities outside the United States are required to submit a professional credential evaluation of all work completed. Applicants who seek to enter from another college or university in the United States must meet transfer admission requirements. International applicants must be proficient in English. An English proficiency test will be administered to international students, except those from English-speaking countries, upon arrival at the University. All international students must demonstrate sufficient proficiency in written and oral English to progress at the University level. Students who are not proficient in English will be required to take noncredit, concentrated English language training until proficiency is demonstrated.

Supporting Documentation

1. [Academic Bulletin: Transfer Policy](#)
2. [USC Aiken's Transfer Website](#)
3. [USC Aiken Mission Statement](#)
4. [South Carolina Commission on Higher Education Statewide Articulation Agreement](#)
5. [Aiken Technical College and USC Aiken School of Education Articulation Agreement](#)
6. [Aiken Technical College and USC Aiken School of Business Administration Articulation Agreement](#)
7. [Aiken Technical College and USC Aiken School of Nursing Articulation Agreement](#)
8. [USC Aiken and Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College Articulation Agreement](#)
9. [Example of transferred credits](#)