

Revision Responsibility: Vice President for Academic Affairs

Responsible Executive Officer: Vice President for Academic Affairs

Source/Reference: [TBR Policy 2:00:01:06](#)

[TBR Policy 2:01:00:04](#)

[TBR Policy 2:01:00:05](#)

[TBR Policy 2:03:00:00](#)

[PLA Policy and Practice for TN Public Colleges and Universities](#)

Columbia State Catalog & Student Handbook

PURPOSE

To establish criteria and procedures for awarding of external credit.

POLICY

- I. At least 25% of the credit hours for a degree as identified in this policy or technical certificate program must be earned at Columbia State. A maximum of 75% of total semester credit hours of a credential may be earned through any combination of external and transfer credit. Sources of external credit are: (1) credit by examination, (2) military service/armed services schools, (3) specific high school courses, (4) credit for occupational and workplace training, and (5) other prior learning.
- II. Requirements to Receive External Credit
 - A. The following conditions must all be met by the student:
 1. Be currently admitted to Columbia State.
 2. Consult with an advisor about the possibility and feasibility of seeking external credit.
 3. Declared an academic degree program or technical certificate or enrolled as a dual enrollment student.
 4. Must not have received any grade, with the exception of a “W”, in similar courses for which credit is awarded.
 5. Submitted documentation or completed an assessment to verify that all college course requirements have been successfully met.

B. Credits will be awarded under the following conditions:

1. Credit will only be awarded toward current degree programs or technical certificates. Awarded credit must be applied toward the requirements of the student's declared degree program or technical certificate.
2. Credit is awarded only for those learning experiences in which all outcomes for specific courses in an approved degree program have been met and documented.
3. See Section II of this policy for procedures for receiving dual credit for high school courses and certificates.

C. A change in major necessitates a reassessment of applicability of the external credit awarded.

External credit toward graduation is awarded on the basis of the conditions outlined in this policy, but grades and quality points are not awarded. Awarded external credit will not affect the academic grade point average.

III. Credit by Examination

A. External Credit By Exam

1. Students may earn college credit by examination for acceptable scores on College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) Examinations, the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) Advanced Placement Examinations (AP), American College Testing Program (ACT), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP), Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), International Baccalaureate (IB), comprehensive subject examinations, or industry standard examinations. For more information, consult the Columbia State Community College *Catalog and Student Handbook*.
2. To receive credit by examination, official documentation must be received directly from the testing agency. If a Tennessee public institution has previously transcribed credit for CLEP, ACT, SAT or AP for a transfer student that credit will be awarded without additional documentation. Credit will be posted to the student's record after they have been admitted to the College. Information about required scores for each of the following can be found in the Columbia State Community College *Catalog and Student Handbook*.
 - a. CLEP: Acceptable test scores reported after 2001 will be reviewed for applicability to comparable Columbia State courses. See College-Level Examination program (CLEP) Examinations Table.

- b. Advanced Placement (AP): Columbia State will award credit for selected courses to eligible students who present an official record of a score of 3 or above on certain AP examinations. Information about AP scores and corresponding course credit can be found in the Columbia State Community College *Catalog and Student Handbook*.
- c. ACT: Students who earn an approved total score or above as outlined in the Columbia State Community College *Catalog and Student Handbook* on the ACT English test may receive credit for ENGL 1010 – Composition I and ENGL 1020 – Composition II. Students who earn the score as outlined in the Columbia State Community College *Catalog and Student Handbook* on the ACT Mathematics test may receive credit for MATH 1710 – Precalculus. Information about Enhanced ACT English scores and corresponding course credit can be found in the Columbia State Community College *Catalog & Student Handbook*.
- d. SAT: Students who earn a total score for both the SAT Essay and the SAT Reading & Writing tests that is equivalent to the approved total score or above on the ACT English and ACT Reading tests as determined by the College Board’s most recent ACT-SAT Concordance Table may receive credit for ENGL 1010 – Composition I and ENGL 1020 – English Composition II. Students who earn a SAT Mathematics score that is equivalent to the required ACT Mathematics score as outlined in the Columbia State Community College *Catalog and Student Handbook* and as determined by the College Board’s most recent ACT-SAT Concordance Table may receive credit for MATH 1710 – Precalculus.
- e. IAAP: Students having successfully passed sections of the IAAP examination are eligible to receive credit at Columbia State.
- f. Defense Subject Standardized Test (DSST): Students may earn college credit for acceptable scores on the DSST based on Columbia State or TBR policy, or credit can be awarded based upon the semester credit hours recommendations and minimum scores suggested by the American Council on Education (ACE). To receive credit, students must submit an official DSST (or DANTES) transcript for review.

B. Columbia State “Credit by Examination”

- 1. Examinations and other evaluations may be available for courses as determined by the appropriate division dean(s). This applies to examinations and evaluations that are developed, validated, and regularly reviewed by academically qualified Columbia State faculty. These examinations will only be developed if an external examination is unavailable. (Terms related to Dual Credit agreements are found in Section III of this policy.)

2. Procedures are as follows:
 - a. The Student must have completed 12 semester credit hours of resident credit at Columbia State (not including learning support courses).
 - b. The Student must contact the instructor of the course to (1) discuss the course syllabus and text, (2) decide whether it is reasonable to attempt the examination, and, (3) if deemed reasonable, schedule an appointment to take the examination.
 - c. Prior to taking the examination, the student must seek approval from the appropriate division dean and obtain the dean's signature on the Application for Permission to Take Credit by Examination Form.
 - d. The student must submit this form and payment to Business Services. As of Fall 2019, all students seeking "Credit by Examination" are required to pay the appropriate evaluation fee.
 - e. After the examination is administered to the student, the instructor shall submit the Credit by Examination Grade Report and a copy of the receipt of fee payment to the appropriate division dean.
 - f. Upon approval by the division dean, the Credit by Examination Grade Report and a copy of the receipt of fee payment are submitted to the Records Office.
 - g. Credit will be awarded provided the student's performance on the test is at least a "C". Grades or quality points are not awarded and the academic grade point average is not affected.
 - h. Credit awarded prior to the last day of final exams will be posted to the student's record in that semester. Credit awarded after the last day of final exams will be posted to the student's record in the following semester.
- IV. External Credit for Military Service/Schools

Credit awarded for educational experiences successfully completed in the armed forces is governed by recommendations from the current [Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experience in the Armed Services](http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/Military-Guide-Online.aspx) (<http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/Military-Guide-Online.aspx>). Military transcripts must be presented to the Records office. Upon presentation of a separation (DD Form 214), and completed Request to Grant Credit for Military Service Form the following credit may be awarded:

- A. Up to six semester credit hours in health and physical education or physical education and military science is granted for a minimum of three years, eleven months, and twenty days of reserve or National Guard service in the armed forces of the United States. Veterans, who have fewer than three years, eleven months, and twenty days will be awarded one semester credit hour for each year of reserve or National Guard duty.
- B. Credit may be awarded for attendance at military schools and job classifications based upon recommendations from the Office of Educational Credit of the American Council on Education (ACE) after consultation with an academic advisor. Military service credit is awarded if proper documentation supporting service-related educational experiences is presented to the director of records before the end of the second term of enrollment and that documentation is submitted to the Veteran's Affairs certifying official.
- C. Veterans with less than one year of continuous full-time service who have completed basic training while on active duty will be awarded credit as recommended in the Guide to Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services.

V. Dual Credit for Specific High School Courses

A student may receive credit for a course of study and/or those courses as determined by a current Columbia State Dual Credit (LDC) or Statewide Dual Credit (SDC) Agreements.

A. Columbia State Dual Credit (LDC)

1. To receive credit a student must:

- a. Be enrolled in a program/course approved through an LDC Agreement with a high school or School District at the time of completing the Columbia State course.
- b. Have received a regular high school diploma.
- c. Provide official transcript of work completed at the high school.
- d. Attend the Columbia State testing day or designated time for the evaluation of credit.
- e. Pass the assessment requirements for each course for which credit is requested.

- f. Be enrolled in Columbia State within the time specified from the date of graduation from high school per Columbia State LDC Agreement with that School District or high school(s).
 - g. Contact the appropriate division dean to request credit to be applied to the student's record.
2. Postsecondary credit will be granted for the credit course taken at Columbia State upon successful admission to Columbia State.
 3. Credit awarded must be for a specific course or course sequence and must be based on the student successfully passing a challenge examination or assessment that evaluates each student learning outcome for the corresponding Columbia State course in which credit will be awarded.
 4. Transfer of articulated credit from Columbia State to other institutions is at the discretion of the receiving institution.
- B. College - High School LDC Agreement
1. A LDC Agreement outlining completion and evaluation requirements must be developed for each course or program and be approved by the College and the High School or School District.
 2. The vice president for academic affairs, or their designee, will work with the deans who are responsible for initiating and drafting the articulation agreement.
 3. The division dean will determine that the course of study or certain other high school courses align and address all learning outcomes for the corresponding Columbia State course in which credit will be awarded. The vice president for academic affairs will approve the alignment and ensure that all learning outcomes are addressed in the course of study or other high school courses under consideration.
 4. All Columbia State Dual Credit (LDC) agreements must follow the approval process as determined by the TBR chancellor.
 5. Consult the Dual Credit Guiding Principles for additional information and procedures.

C. Statewide Dual Credit (SDC) Agreements must include:

1. A high school course taught by high school faculty aligned to Tennessee postsecondary standards set by a statewide consortium of college faculty
2. A required exam provided by the Tennessee department of Education to earn credit upon matriculation to any Tennessee postsecondary institution.
3. To receive credit a student must:
 - a. Be enrolled in a career/technical secondary program at the time of completing the Columbia State course.
 - b. Have received a regular high school diploma.
 - c. Pass the required exam to receive post-secondary credit at TN institutions.
 - d. Be enrolled in a postsecondary institution within the time specified from the date of graduation from high school as stipulated in the SDC Agreement.
 - e. Contact the Records Office to request credit to be applied to the student's record.

VI. External Credit for Occupational and Workplace Training

Credit awarded for completion of workplace (e.g., corporate, volunteer, government) training and industry certifications may be awarded based on recommendations by nationally recognized college credit recommendation services (e.g., American Council on Education, ACE) or the individual evaluation and determination of Columbia State. A letter grade of "TP" will be assigned for this type of credit granted. Because no grade is assigned other than "TP," No quality points are awarded to count toward GPA.

December 1988; Revised: September 24, 1997; May 28, 2001 (new policy format); September 8, 2011 (new policy format and updated titles); July 14, 2014 (changed policy name and included PLA Policy per TBR mandate); November 19, 2015 (removed the sections on accepting block credit from Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology and Department of Labor Apprenticeship Program per TBR mandate); Revised September 2019; reviewed/accepted by Cabinet, approved/signed by President