

Memo To: All UH-Downtown/PS Holders
From: Dr. Loren J. Blanchard, President
Subject: Credit by Approved College Credit
Equivalencies

UH-Downtown/PS 03.A.11
Issue No. 9
Effective Date: 11/15/2024
Page 1 of 4

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This PS sets forth policies and procedures for obtaining credit by examination or other non course-based means.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. Equivalency Agreement: An agreement between the University and another agency or academic institution that establishes the credit worthiness of a course of study offered by that agency to be judged equivalent to credit-bearing college courses.
- 2.2. Examination: An instrument to assess one's knowledge or skill in an academic subject.
- 2.3. Portfolio of Documentation: A record of actions, experiences, and achievements submitted by a student and approved by a program, department, or college as the equivalent of one or more courses or a given number of semester credit hours.
- 2.4. Prior Learning Assessment (PLA): Describes the process of evaluating learning gained outside of credit-bearing college courses. This process calls attention to the purpose of the evaluation receiving college credit equivalency for acquired learning.

3. POLICY

- 3.1. It is the policy of the University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) to recognize the knowledge and achievements of its students, including the knowledge that they can demonstrate through alternate assessment methods.
- 3.2. All recommendations by faculty members and administrators in regard to the recognition of academic achievement shall be based on high academic standards and the best interests of the students.
- 3.3. Students may earn and apply credit toward degrees by establishing their knowledge or skills by means of:

- 3.3.1. State, nationally, or internationally recognized standardized examinations and/or examinations widely used within a professional field. For a comprehensive list of examinations, see the UHD catalog.
- 3.3.2. Examinations, portfolios of documentation, PLA, or equivalency agreements developed or approved by a program, department, or college, and approved through the normal articulation approvals process.
- 3.4. The Provost Office maintains and publishes the list of approved examinations or alternative methods of documenting academic credit and communicates course and credit equivalencies on its website. Special notices to the Registrar, the Testing Office, and academic advisors will also be published on this website so that such information is widely available.
- 3.5. Generally, credit by examination or by means of other equivalencies is for first-year and second-year courses, (or first year for graduate work) unless an explicit exception is noted in the listing provided by the Office of Academic Affairs.

4. PROCEDURES

- 4.1. AP Credit: HB 1992 passed in the 84th Legislature (2015) established “the minimum required score on an Advanced Placement examination for granting course credit for a particular lower-division course.” The Legislature stated that “an institution of higher education may not require a score of more than three unless the institution’s chief academic officer determines, based on evidence, that a higher score on the examination is necessary to indicate a student is sufficiently prepared to be successful in a related, more advanced course for which the lower-division course is a prerequisite.”
 - 4.1.1. AP credit is articulated as equivalent to a UHD course “in consultation with the relevant department,” just as with transfer credit (03A10 Acceptance of Transfer Credit §3.1.8).
 - 4.1.2. AP credit that does not correspond to courses listed in the UHD catalog may, with the program’s Dean’s approval, substitute for a course required by the major.

- 4.1.3. AP credit that neither corresponds to courses listed in the UHD catalog nor substituted for a major requirement will be applied to the free elective area of the degree.
- 4.1.4. In maintaining a current list of AP Exam articulations with UHD courses, the Provost Office will present to the relevant subject-area departments the AP Exams that have yet to be reviewed.
- 4.2. International Baccalaureate (IB): In accordance with Statutory Statement on the International Baccalaureate (IB) from the Texas Education Code §51.968 “an institution of higher education shall grant at least 24 semester credit hours or equivalent course credit in appropriate subject areas to an entering freshman student for successful completion of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program.” Exact credits given based on test difficulty (high level, standard level), test area, and whether test was accompanied by diploma are listed on the IB webpage maintained by the Office of Admissions. IB credit is articulated as equivalent to a UHD course “in consultation with the relevant [academic] department,” just as with transfer credit (03A10 Acceptance of Transfer Credit §3.1.8).
- 4.3. UHD Testing Center Examinations: In the case of credit by examination, the Testing Center administers nationally accepted standardized examinations, as specified in the UHD Catalog. Programs/Departments may administer examinations of their own design or which they adopt, provided that the examinations are agreed upon by the usual curriculum approvals process. Repeated exam attempts may be limited by the testing agencies or policies developed by UHD programs for program-specific exams.
- 4.4. Credit received by examination, portfolio of documentation, or equivalency agreement does not count toward the UHD 30-hour residency requirement for graduation.
- 4.5. No grade is awarded for courses for which credit has been obtained by examination, nor are hours received for such courses averaged into the cumulative grade point average for graduation. The following information appears on the student's transcript:
 - 4.5.1. The course for which credit was received is listed.
 - 4.5.2. The number of hours of credit received is listed.
 - 4.5.3. The examination, portfolio and equivalency agreement through which credit was received is listed.

5. REVIEW PROCESS

Responsible Party (Reviewer): Senior VP for Academic Affairs and Provost

Review Period: Every five years, on or before July 1, and as necessary.

Signed original on file in Human Resources.

6. POLICY HISTORY

Are the previous issue dates known? If so, please include them. If not, please let me know.

Issues #1-5: Dates unavailable

Issue #6: 09/28/10

Issue #7: 05/28/13

Issue #8: 05/01/23

Issue #9: 11/15/24 (this issue)

7. REFERENCES

[PS 03A10 Acceptance of Transfer Credit](#)

[Texas Education Code §51.968](#)

[Credit by Examination Web Site](#)

[International Baccalaureate \(IB\) Credit](#)

[HB 1992 passed in the 84th Legislature \(2015\)](#)

[Provost Office Website](#)

8. EXHIBITS

There are no exhibits associated with this PS.