



Applies to: International transfer students

Responsible Office

Office of Academic Affairs

POLICY

Issued: 09/30/2019
Revised: 03/01/2022 (minor revision)

Understanding the variables involved in the international transfer credit evaluation process is imperative to ensuring that students are awarded credit consistently and equitably. This policy is designed to facilitate the transfer of students and credits from foreign institutions of higher education to The Ohio State University, assure maximum utilization of prior learning, and encourage students to advance as far through the educational system as they can in pursuit of their goals.

Purpose of the Policy

To facilitate fair and consistent transfer credit evaluations of international course work.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Acceptability	In reference to course work, the quality of having met standards for evaluation and award of transfer credit.
Accreditation	The educational status of an institution assessed by specific governing bodies and associations indicating that an institution has met certain minimum standards.
College-level course work	Course work that is non-remedial, post-secondary curriculum that offers an advanced level of content and rigor.
International course work	Course work that is performed within the curriculum of a course of study in an institution located outside of the United States.
Official transcript	A document issued by an institution showing enrollment dates, courses, grades, grading scale, and earned academic credentials. Transcripts must arrive directly from the originating institution to the appropriate office and be signed and certified by the registrar or similar institutional authority.
Originating institution	An institution (i.e., college, university, agency, organization) at which course work has been taken and/or academic credit earned by a student seeking international transfer credit.
Semester Hour Equivalent Value	The number of semester hours of credit assigned to a course on the basis of content and amount of time required for completion.

Policy Details

- I. Policy Implementation
 - A. Evaluation methodology
 1. In evaluating whether **international course work** will be acceptable for transfer, Ohio State will review admissions requirements, grades, length of program, program type, and credential qualifications and requirements at the **originating institution**. A comparative analysis between equivalent length of study at the originating institution and Ohio State will involve assessing one year’s worth of higher education study at the foreign institution against one year’s worth of study at Ohio State.
 2. If Ohio State determines that the credit from the foreign institution is eligible for evaluation and meets standards for satisfactory academic performance as defined in the following procedures, Ohio State will apply criteria relative to the level and content of the course to determine **acceptability** for transfer credit.
 3. The University Registrar oversees the awarding of undergraduate transfer credit, and the appropriate degree-granting college will determine its applicability to specific degree requirements.

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4. The Graduate School oversees the transfer and application of graduate-level credit. See the [Graduate School Handbook](#).
- B. Professionally recognized resources and recommendations
 1. Ohio State employs, updates in accordance with, and recognizes the research and recommendations of professional associations to establish best practices in international transfer credit evaluation. Associations commonly used include, but are not limited to, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, American Council on Education, Council for Higher Education Accreditation, and NAFA: Association for International Educators.

PROCEDURE

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- I. General Standards for Transfer Credit Eligibility
 - A. Ohio State will evaluate and award transfer credit for course work documented on an **official transcript**. Transfer credit will be awarded for successfully completed **college-level course work** from an accredited institution, based on the content, level, length of study, and comparability to Ohio State course offerings.
 - B. Collegiate institutions can offer classes, certifications, programs, and non-credit bearing courses to students that are not approved and recognized as official course work of those institutions. Only college-level course work that is transcribed on the institution's official transcript, issued by the institution's registrar's office, or similar authorizing designee, will be eligible for transfer credit as outlined in this policy.
- II. Official Documentation Required for Transfer Credit
 - A. Official transcripts are to be sent directly to Ohio State from the originating institution. All documents issued in a language other than English must include a certified translation. Additional information on sending official transcripts to Ohio State can be found on the [University Registrar Transfer Credit webpage](#).
 1. Transcripts issued to students will not be accepted for the evaluation and awarding of transfer credit.
 2. Transcripts and evaluations provided by a credential service, such as Educational Credentials Evaluators (ECE) or World Education Services (WES), are not accepted for transfer credit evaluation.
 3. Chinese Institutions (People's Republic of China): Ohio State requires that transcripts from Chinese institutions be submitted with a verification report from the Center for Student Services and Development, Ministry of Education (CSSD) to be considered official. Any transcript that does not include a verification letter from CSSD will not be evaluated.
 4. Documentation Exceptions: Ohio State recognizes that, in some circumstances, it is impossible for students to obtain duplicate copies of official transcripts. In these cases, eligibility for evaluation of credit will be determined on an individual basis. Documents classified as official for admission purposes may be unacceptable for transfer credit evaluation.
- III. Determining Accreditation or Recognition Status
 - A. For domestic transfer credit evaluation, the **accreditation** held by the originating institution determines the eligibility of a course for evaluation and the award of Ohio State credit. While some foreign institutions hold regional United States accreditation as recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, many do not. Those foreign institutions holding regional United States accreditation are governed by Ohio State's [Transfer Credit policy](#), not this International Transfer Credit policy.
 - B. For foreign institutions not holding regional United States accreditation, Ohio State looks to quality assurance bodies and Ministries of Education that have been authorized to operate by their respective governments as a baseline for accepting and awarding transfer credit. Ohio State will only consider awarding transfer credit from foreign institutions that have been recognized by the country's Ministry of Education or authorized quality assurance body, or that have regional United States accreditation.

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IV. Award of Undergraduate Credit

A. Determining undergraduate level of course work

1. Course level is a descriptor that is often used in the United States, but may not have an equivalent in foreign education systems. In cases where there is uncertainty of the comparability to the U.S. course level, understanding the country's educational system is imperative. Review of course descriptions and syllabi assist in drawing comparisons to appropriate academic level.
2. An analysis of the program of study or curriculum plan may be conducted in order to determine course sequencing and length of the program.

B. Evaluating content

1. Course work evaluated and deemed acceptable based on its content and comparability relative to Ohio State curriculum will be awarded university transfer credit. Transfer courses may be evaluated as direct equivalents or generalized credit as outlined in Procedure III, B 2-5 of the [Transfer Credit policy](#).

C. Determining the **semester hour equivalent value** assigned

1. Ohio State transfer credit hour values are based on the credit value assigned by the originating institution. An institutional analysis is used to determine a proper and consistent conversion of credit to Ohio State semester hours, due to the wide variety of education system structures and academic calendars.
 - a. Semester academic calendar
 - i. If the institutional analysis determines the international educational system is comparable to the United States' system, as well as Ohio State's semester hour definition of awarding credit, a one-to-one ratio is used to award credit. If international course work is listed as semester hours on the transcript, and an institutional analysis determines that the designation does not hold the same weight as a U.S. semester hour, a ratio (see section C.1.b. below) is used to award equivalent credit.
 - b. Calculating ratios: comparing one year's worth of work
 - i. When determining comparability of educational institutions (with the exceptions outlined below), the standard practice is to compare one year's worth of work from the international institution to 30 semester hours. If discrepancies exist between systems, a ratio is used to adjust the hours to equate the transfer work accordingly.
 - ii. European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) units: 2 ECTS units = 1 U.S. semester hour
 - iii. United Kingdom Credit Transfer Assurance Scheme (CATS) units: 4 CATS units = 1 U.S. semester hour
 - iv. People's Republic of China: 1 Chinese credit hour = .667 Ohio State semester hour
 - c. In the absence of a documented credit system, Ohio State will determine the target number of semester credits per year of a student's program and divide that by the total number of courses taken to create a credit ratio.

D. Determining Satisfactory Academic Performance

1. Grades

- a. To be eligible for undergraduate transfer credit, students must earn a grade equivalent to "C-" or higher on a 4.0 scale. Ohio State uses professionally recognized resources listed in Policy Details I.B to convert grades to the U.S. equivalent.
 - b. In order to be eligible for graduate transfer credit, a course must carry a grade equivalent to "B" or Satisfactory in each course for which credit is to be transferred. The Graduate School oversees the transfer and application of graduate-level credit. See the [Graduate School Handbook](#).
2. Completion outcome, completed course performance, and passing performance level
 - a. Refer to Procedure III.E of the [Transfer Credit policy](#).

V. Appeals

- A. Colleges have the authority and responsibility to determine the applicability of university transfer credit against specific degree requirements, and appeals related to those issues are outside the scope of this policy.

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Therefore, the degree-granting colleges maintain separate policies and procedures to respond to appeals of international transfer credit applicability decisions.

- B. If a student wishes to challenge a decision under this International Transfer Credit policy, an appeal must be submitted in writing to the associate registrar (SAE-TransferCredit@osu.edu).
 1. The associate registrar will examine the appeal to determine whether the International Transfer Credit policy was appropriately applied to yield the initial evaluation. The appeal will be denied when it is determined that the policy was appropriately applied. An appropriate correction will be issued if the policy was misapplied. Appeals denied by the associate registrar may be appealed to the university registrar who will issue a final decision.

Responsibilities

Position or Office	Responsibilities
Associate registrar	Examine appeals to this policy.
Degree-granting college	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine the applicability of international transfer credit to specific degree requirements. 2. Maintain policies and procedures to respond to appeals of international transfer credit applicability decisions.
Graduate School	Oversee the transfer and application of graduate-level credit.
Originating Institution	Send official transcripts directly to Ohio State.
Students	Submit any appeals in writing to the associate registrar.
University	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish best practices in international transfer credit evaluation as set forth in the policy. 2. Evaluate and award international transfer credit as set forth in the policy.
University Registrar (office)	Evaluate whether to award international transfer credit as set forth in the policy.
University registrar (individual)	Issue a final decision on appeals denied by the associate registrar.

Resources

Governance Documents

Transfer Credit policy, go.osu.edu/transfer-credit-policy

Additional Guidance

FAQs, registrar.osu.edu/transfer_credit

University Registrar Transfer Credit webpage, registrar.osu.edu/transfer_credit

The Graduate School Handbook, gradsch.osu.edu/handbook

Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Transfer credit questions	Office of the University Registrar	614-292-9330	SAE-TransferCredit@osu.edu registrar.osu.edu/transfer_credit

History

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