

**STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES**  
**Military-Credit for Prior Learning Policy**

**Request:** The Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina and the State Board of Community Colleges have jointly developed a plan for implementing a uniform system of granting course credits to all students enrolled in constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina and all students enrolled in State community colleges based on the students' military training or experience. The plan includes a description of the procedure to be utilized in evaluating military training or experience and its correlation to school course credits. It is requested that The State Board of Community Colleges approve this plan.

**Background:** SL 2014-67 (SB 761)

**Legislative Requirements:** N.C. SL 2014-67 (SB 761) requires the UNC Board of Governors and the State Board of Community Colleges to devise and implement a plan for the uniform granting and transferring of course credits for military training and occupational experience to veteran students enrolled in North Carolina universities and community colleges.

To satisfy the requirements of SL 2014-67 (SB 761), and to carry out the plan, representatives from UNC General Administration and the NC Community College system office have formed a plan to accomplish the evaluation process.

**Creating Standards Across the State for Assessing Military Training**

1. Create an advisory board
2. Choose your academic areas to participate in the evaluation process
3. Solicit/choose faculty members for each panel
4. Train faculty discipline panel members
5. Evaluate occupations and courses
6. Consistency - Vote and achieve consensus on credit evaluations
7. Share credit evaluations with the 58 community colleges and 16 universities
8. Transcription - Create a cross functional team to develop standards for transcript codes
9. Determine what data are needed to track the success of efforts. Develop a plan for data collection and reporting.
10. Seek funding to enable quicker evaluation of occupations, courses, and to implement technology

**Advisory Board**

To satisfy the requirements of SL 2014-67 (SB 761), and to carry out the plan, representatives from UNC General Administration and the NC Community College system office formed a Military Credit Advisory Council (MCAC). The MCAC is comprised of faculty, staff, and administrators from UNC and Community College institutions, and of representatives from both system offices.

- The overarching purpose of the MCAC is to ensure that military training courses and occupational experiences are evaluated by faculty members from our own universities and community colleges in an independent manner, and using standard levels of objectivity and rigor.
- The MCAC shall approval additional academic panels
- The MCAC shall approve additional and/or new panel members

- The MCAC shall guide the processes for reviewing and awarding credit based on military training experience
- The MCAC shall facilitate the creation of a transparent and accessible system for informing veteran students on how this credit would transfer to any North Carolina Community College or UNC institution

**Choose the academic areas to participate in the evaluation process**

Based on the MCAC's research, the academic areas selected to be evaluated first for potential academic credit are:

- Allied Health
- Business
- Computer Sciences and Information Technology
- Criminology and Criminal Justice
- Education
- English and Communication
- Humanities (including foreign language)
- Nursing

These areas have been designated as high priority due to the number of active duty or veteran service members who could present these credentials to the systems.

**Additional Academic Panels**

Based on review of many Joint Services Transcripts (JST), and data from the Department of Labor, the request for additional academic panels was presented to the MCAC. The second phase of subject areas being evaluated are:

- Automotive
- Aviation
- Culinary Arts
- EMS/EMT
- Engineering (Associate in Applied Science)
- Fire Protection Services
- Supply Chain Management

NC State licensure and accreditation board representatives need to be included in evaluation meetings commensurate with their disciplines.

**Solicit/choose faculty members for each panel**

Community college chief academic officers and University provosts were asked to nominate faculty members to serve on military training and occupational experience evaluation panels. Also, as a means of providing helpful background knowledge to other panel members, we specifically asked provosts and chief academic officers to nominate some faculty that had served in the military, who had experience with the awarding of military credit, or who had worked as American Council on Education (ACE) faculty evaluators. The MCAC reviewed each nomination and selected the panel members. Faculty were assigned to panels that correspond to their area of academic expertise.

### **Train faculty discipline panel members**

Thorough orientation and training must be provided to all faculty panel members before they are asked to make any credit recommendations. This training needs to include:

- Background information on SL 2014-67 (SB 761)
- A detailed explanation and demonstration of the ACE evaluation process
- Information on the formal military training and curriculum development process
- An overview of administrative procedures and ground rules, and other areas
- Faculty, Registrars, Enrollment Officers, Admissions Advisors, and other non-faculty staff members should be included in training to offer their input and include them during the initial stages of what will be an ongoing process.
- UNC and community college military CPL project leads possess the knowledge to deliver the necessary training

### **Evaluate Occupations and Courses**

The discipline-focused review groups composed of faculty from community colleges and universities review selected courses and MOSs, use information gathered from ACE, from military schoolhouses and educational liaisons, and from their institutions to determine appropriate credit to award. Their determinations: (1) assure consistency of award of credit across institutions wherever possible, (2) are transparent in the description of how credit will be applied to specific degree programs at constituent institutions, (3) address relevant accreditation policies and licensing requirements and principles and adhere to appropriate policies at local institutions, and (4) address the transferability of credit between institutions, including any articulation agreements that may be affected by the decisions.

The 58 community colleges and 16 UNC universities will report to the project leads when they are presented with an occupation that has not been evaluated. The leads will work with the American Council on Education (ACE), the academic faculty panels, and individual service branches for further evaluations.

### **Vote and achieve consensus on credit evaluations**

Each panel must agree with 75% majority on the credit evaluations. This cycle of training, followed by credit decisions, will be ongoing. In all cases, credit recommendations will be forwarded to the Senior Vice President/Chief Academic Officer from each system for review.

### **Share credit evaluations with the 58 community colleges and 16 universities**

Compile and maintain a database of credit that is awarded through the system-wide processes described here, as well as credit that is awarded within certificate, diploma, and degree programs in the Community College and University systems. A technical committee, within UNC-GA, is determining the specifications and resources necessary for the publication of the database described above.

### **Transcription Challenges**

Create a cross functional team to develop standards for transcript codes

**Funding and Technology**

Currently the crosswalk of occupation to course credit is kept in an Excel spreadsheet that Registrars/Admissions will utilize. The goal is to have this information readily available on the SO website.

UNC-General Administration (UNC-GA) has begun the task of automating this process. Their work will include all the data relevant to community colleges as well as their universities. Links to the UNC-GA website will be placed on the NC Community College website. Each of the 58 community colleges may choose to place the UNCGA link on their respective websites.

**Rationale:** Facilitating access to educational pathways for active-duty personnel and veterans includes awarding “credit where it’s due,” i.e., awarding academic credit for training experiences that align with and demonstrate mastery of the college-level learning outcomes that are part of courses and curricula within the Community College and University systems of the state. This access includes assuring that information about the award of credit is easy to find and consistently communicated to students and prospective students. The plan that we have developed will put a process in place to assure both goals.

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