



NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

Thomas A. Stith, III

President

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the State Board of Community Colleges
Community College Presidents
Boards of Trustees Chairs
Community College Chief Academic Officers, Chief Admissions Officers, Basic Skills Directors, Business Officers, Continuing Education Officers, Customized Training Directors, Distance Learning, Chief Financial Officers, Financial Aid Officers, Personnel Directors, Student Development Administrators, Public Information Officers, Registrars, & Other Interested Parties

FROM: Jonathan R. Harris, *NCCCS General Counsel*

RE: **Additional Five-Day Comment Period for the Proposed Adoption of 1D SBCCC Subchapter 800 – Credit for Prior Learning**

DATE: February 23, 2021

On November 24, 2020, the State Board of Community Colleges (“SBCC”) provided public notice that it initiated the rulemaking process to adopt the following subchapter:

1D SBCCC Subchapter 800 – Credit for Prior Learning

The SBCC received public comments on the above rule through January 13, 2021. After consideration of the public comments, the SBCC is recommending changes to 1D SBCCC Subchapter 800 – Credit for Prior Learning. The changes constitute a substantive change under 3A SBCCC 100.2(l), meaning the proposed subchapter will be posted for an additional five days of public comment.

The proposed subchapter, including the changes, is published on the NC Community College System's website, www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/sbcccode. For your convenience, a copy of the proposed rule, with the changes indicated, is attached to this memorandum. The items bolded (other than the headings), indicate a proposed change that the SBCC approved. “Strikeouts” indicate deletion of prior suggested language.

Any member of the public has the right to submit written comments on the proposed changes. Please note that any person who submits a public comment on behalf of their community college should comply with their college’s local process for submitting comments on a proposed rule. **Written comments on the changes must be received within five (5) business days and by no later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, 2 March 2021.** Written comments shall be directed to the following email address: publiccomments@nccommunitycolleges.edu or via postal mail at

Jonathan Harris, 200 W. Jones Street, 5001 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-5001.
Thank you for your attention to this matter.

CC21-007
E-mail Copy

Attachment



1 **State Board of Community Colleges Code**
2 **TITLE 1. COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

3
4 **CHAPTER D. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

5
6 **SUBCHAPTER 800. CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING**

7
8 **1D SBCCC 800.1 Definitions**

- 9 (a) Certification. An industry-recognized credential or designation that is obtained once
10 the student has successfully passed a certification exam. Certification differs from
11 licensure in that certification is a validation of specific industry-valued competencies
12 and not a legal requirement for practicing a profession.
- 13 (b) College-level learning. Knowledge, skills, and competencies equivalent to those
14 expected of a student who successfully completes the corresponding curriculum
15 course.
- 16 (c) Continuing Education. Definition consistent with 1D SBCCC 300.1(a).
- 17 (d) Continuing Education Course. Definition consistent with 1D SBCCC 300.1(b).
- 18 (e) Credit for Prior Learning (CPL). Curriculum credit awarded for college-level learning
19 obtained through prior learning experiences other than curriculum coursework. This
20 definition does not include curriculum credit transferred from another accredited US
21 institution of higher education.
- 22 (f) Credit for Prior Learning standard. A designated amount of academic credit colleges
23 shall award for college-level learning that fulfills established criteria.
- 24 (g) Curriculum course. Definition consistent with 1D SBCCC 400.8.
- 25 (h) Curriculum Course Review Committee (CCRC). Definition consistent with 1D SBCCC
26 400.8(h).
- 27 (i) Curriculum program. Definition consistent with 1D SBCCC 400.3(a).
- 28 (j) Licensure. A legal status granted by a government entity that provides permission to
29 practice a profession. Licensure restricts practice of the profession to individuals who
30 have met specific qualifications in education, professional experience, and/or have
31 successfully passed an examination.

1 (k) Prior Learning Assessment. An evaluation of whether a student has obtained the
2 requisite level of verifiable college-level learning outside of the traditional learning
3 environment for curriculum credit.

4 (l) Continuing Education Leadership Committee (CELC). Definition consistent with 1D
5 SBCCC 300.5 (b)(2).

7 **1D SBCCC 800.2 General Provisions**

8 (a) The purpose of this Subchapter is to guarantee that all North Carolina Community
9 Colleges follow consistent academic conventions to ensure the integrity of the CPL
10 process and to establish minimum standards for all NC community colleges.

11 (b) Consistent with the provisions of this Subchapter colleges are authorized to award
12 CPL using the following prior learning methods:

13 (1) Apprenticeship

14 (2) Certifications and licensures

15 (3) Courses listed in high school to community college articulation agreements

16 (4) Military education and training

17 (5) Standardized examinations

18 (6) Challenge exams/Proficiency

19 (7) Portfolio assessment

20 (8) Public Safety Training (PST) prefix courses

21 (c) Colleges may award curriculum CPL when the documentation of prior learning meets
22 or exceeds a demonstration of learning outcomes at the institutions' standards for
23 awarding credit for the corresponding curriculum course. Institutions may award CPL
24 that exceeds the minimum standards established in this Subchapter.

25 (d) Colleges may only award curriculum CPL that is directly applicable to a student's
26 declared curriculum program of study.

27 (e) CPL for advanced courses does not negate the requirement to meet requisite learning
28 outcomes.

29 (f) CPL may be used to fulfill program requirements except for mandatory institutional
30 requirements. Examples may include, but are not limited to, requirements of external
31 agencies that specifically prohibited the use of CPL to fulfill the program requirements.

- 1 (g) CPL cannot be used to satisfy the college's institutional credit requirements, which
2 prescribes the minimum percentage of credit hours a student must earn through
3 instruction offered by the institution awarding the credential. No greater than seventy-
4 five percent (75%) of the credit hours required for graduation from a curriculum
5 program of study may be earned through CPL.
- 6 (h) Any CPL awarded by a college shall be reflected in the student's records by the
7 college's Registrar Office without quality points assigned, except for allowances for
8 graded military credit as described in 1D SBCCC 800.6.
- 9 (i) Course Credit CPL standards approved by the CCRC shall be **considered for**
10 **transfer transferable** to any college in the North Carolina Community College
11 System.
- 12 (j) The local board of trustees shall adopt a policy governing the awarding of CPL. At a
13 minimum, the local policy shall be consistent with standards established by this
14 Subchapter. The local policy may include additional opportunities for students to
15 receive CPL. Each college shall publish its CPL policy in the college's educational
16 catalog.
- 17 (k) Colleges shall establish a procedure that students must follow to request a prior
18 learning assessment. This procedure shall be published in the college's educational
19 catalog.
- 20 (l) To be eligible to receive CPL, students must meet all of the following criteria:
21 (1) Meet all admission requirements for their program of study.
22 (2) Be enrolled in a curriculum program to which the credit will directly apply; and
23 (3) Request a prior learning assessment consistent with the college's CPL
24 procedures and provide all documentation by the published deadlines.
- 25 (m) Nothing in this rule shall be construed to supersede limitations imposed by an
26 accreditation, credentialing, licensure, or other external agency on the application of
27 CPL towards credentials under their purview. In such instances, the college shall
28 document the applicable limitations in the student's file.
- 29 (n) **It is possible that CPL from (b)(1), (b)(2), (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7), or (b)(8) may not**
30 **be transferable to UNC System constituent institutions. Furthermore, UNC**
31 **System institutions may request documentation to determine potential course**

1 credit. Colleges should encourage students to consult a UNC System transfer
2 advisor before using these CPL sources to attain credit at a community college
3 institution.

4
5 **1D SBCCC 800.3 Apprenticeships**

6 (a) The NCCCS recognizes “Registered Apprenticeships” as defined by the U.S.
7 Department of Labor.

8 (b) At a minimum, colleges shall award CPL based on statewide articulation as approved
9 by the CCRC for related instruction provided by external entities for registered
10 apprenticeship programs. A college may award CPL for related instruction provided
11 by external entities for which statewide articulations have not been established by
12 the CCRC consistent with its local CPL policy.

13 (c) Work-based learning (WBL) course credit may be granted for the experiential
14 portion of a Registered Apprenticeship. Documentation including completed time
15 on task shall be provided through an Apprenticeship Agreement and shall
16 constitute the documentational requirements of a WBL experience.

17
18 **1D SBCCC 800.4 State or Industry Recognized Credentials**

19 (a) The CCRC, based on recommendations from the CELC, shall have the authority to
20 approve CPL standards for state or industry recognized credentials that document
21 similar college-level learning as corresponding curriculum courses and, therefore,
22 are eligible for articulated curriculum credit. Prior to approving CPL, the CCRC shall
23 have written concurrence by two-thirds of colleges.

24 (b) At a minimum, colleges shall award CPL for successful completion of state or
25 industry recognized credentials consistent with the CPL standards approved by the
26 CCRC. A college may award CPL for state or industry recognized credentials for
27 which statewide articulations have not been established by CCRC consistent with its
28 local CPL policy.

29
30 **1D SBCCC 800.5 Courses Listed in High School to Community College Articulation**
31 **Agreements**

- 1 (a) The North Carolina High School to Community College Articulation Agreement is an
2 agreement between the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the
3 North Carolina Community College System. The articulation agreement ensures that
4 when a student is proficient in a high school course included in the agreement, the
5 student can receive college credit for that course at any North Carolina community
6 college.
- 7 (b) Colleges shall award credit to students who have completed a high school course
8 and met the criteria as outlined in the High School to Community College Articulation
9 Agreement.
- 10 (c) A college may award credit for successful completion of other high school courses
11 consistent with any local high school to community college articulation agreements
12 entered into by the college and an education entity providing secondary education.

13
14 **1D SBCCC 800.6 Military Education and Training**

- 15 (a) Definitions.
- 16 (1) “United States Armed Forces” consists of the Air Force, Army, Navy, Marine
17 Corps, Space Force, and Coast Guard.
- 18 (2) “Military Education and Training”. Education and training that has been
19 documented on a transcript issued by one or more branches of the Armed
20 Forces.
- 21 (3) Military Credit Advisory Council (MCAC). A joint council of faculty and staff
22 members from the NC Community College System and the University of North
23 Carolina, MCAC oversees the process for establishing uniform standards for
24 awarding Credit for Prior Learning for military training and experience. MCAC
25 also ensures the transferability of these credits among institutions of both
26 systems.
- 27 (4) Military Prior Learning Academic Panels. Panels of academic faculty approved
28 by MCAC are authorized to determine standards for awarding credit for identified
29 subject areas.
- 30 (b) Awarding of Credit.

- 1 (1) At minimum, colleges shall award Credit for Prior Learning based on military
2 education and training consistent with the standards adopted by the
3 appropriate Military Prior Learning Academic Panel.
- 4 (2) A college may award Credit for Prior Learning for military training and education
5 related to occupations and/or courses for which standards have not been
6 established by an approved Military Prior Learning Academic Panel consistent
7 with its local Credit for Prior Learning policy pursuant to the following:
- 8 (A) Air Force: Community College of the Air Force transcripts are evaluated by
9 the college registrar or designated college official as a traditional college
10 transcript.
- 11 (B) Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard: Colleges should refer to
12 recommendations from the American Council on Education for occupations
13 and courses not currently evaluated by the Military Prior Learning Academic
14 Panels or documented on the Community College of the Air Force
15 transcript.

17 **1D SBCCC 800.7 Standardized Examinations**

- 18 (a) “Standardized examination”. Any form of examination that requires all test takers to
19 answer the same questions, or a selection of questions from a common bank of
20 questions following established protocol and that is scored in a standard or
21 consistent manner.
- 22 (b) Colleges shall award Credit for Prior Learning for the following standardized
23 examinations consistent with the standards herein:
- 24 (1) Advanced Placement (AP). Advanced Placement is a program of college-
25 preparatory courses for high school students administered by The College
26 Board, an educational nonprofit organization. Standardized AP exams are used
27 to assess student mastery of course content. Students receive scores on a “1”
28 to “5” scale, with “5” being the highest.
- 29 (A) An AP exam score determines how many credits are awarded towards
30 specific coursework.

- 1 (B) Colleges shall award credit to a student who earns a score of “3” or
2 higher on an AP exam as approved by the CCRC. Course credit is
3 awarded based upon the academic program of study.
- 4 (C) A college may award credit for AP scores and courses beyond those
5 approved by the CCRC as determined by local college policy.
- 6 (2) Cambridge Assessment International Education Examinations. Cambridge
7 Assessment International Examinations are a series of internationally
8 recognized college-level examinations administered by Cambridge
9 Assessment International Education, a unit of the University of Cambridge.
- 10 (A) Upon review and evaluation of student submitted documentation by the
11 college designee, students may earn credit based on the **AS and A Level**
12 exam(s) taken and grades(s) earned. An official grade report from
13 Cambridge International must be provided to the college.
- 14 (B) Students shall earn college credit if a grade of e/E or better (which is the
15 equivalent to a grade of C in the United States) is earned on the
16 Cambridge International **AS and A Level** Examination.
- 17 (C) Using the current Cambridge translation table, course credit is awarded
18 and listed on the student’s academic record. Course credit is awarded
19 based upon the academic program of study.
- 20 (D) The course credit equivalency is documented on the student record.
- 21 (3) College-Level Examination Program® (CLEP). The College-Level Examination
22 Program® is a credit-by-examination program offered by the College Board, an
23 educational nonprofit organization. The program allows students from a wide
24 range of ages and backgrounds to demonstrate their mastery of introductory
25 college-level material.
- 26 (A) If a CLEP exam in a subject is offered by the College Board, colleges shall
27 require a student to take the CLEP exam if he or she seeks to demonstrate
28 proficiency in the subject area by examination.
- 29 (B) Colleges shall award credit to a student who scores at or above the credit-
30 granting score recommended by the American Council on Education at the
31 time the college evaluates the student’s official score. report. Colleges

- 1 shall award the same amount of credit to a student who scores
2 satisfactorily on the relevant CLEP exam as a student who successfully
3 completes the related course.
- 4 (C) Students who perform satisfactorily on College-Level Examination
5 Program exams shall receive a standardized code in the college’s Student
6 Information System.
- 7 (D) Students who did not receive a satisfactory score on a CLEP exam may
8 retake the exam after three (3) months.
- 9 (4) DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST). DANTES Subject Standardized
10 Tests are credit-by-examination tests developed by the Defense Activity for
11 Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES), a United States Department of
12 Defense program.
- 13 (A) Colleges shall award credit to a student who scores at or above the credit-
14 granting score recommended by the American Council on Education at the
15 time the college evaluates the student’s official score report. Colleges shall
16 award the same amount of credit to a student who scores satisfactorily on
17 the relevant DSST as a student who successfully completes the related
18 course.
- 19 (B) Students who did not receive a satisfactory score on a DSST may retake
20 the exam after three (3) months.
- 21 (5) International Baccalaureate® (IB) Diploma Programme. International
22 Baccalaureate® Diploma Programme is a college-preparatory program for
23 students age 16-19 administered by International Baccalaureate®, an
24 international educational foundation. Standardized IB exams are used to
25 assess student mastery of course content. Students receive scores on a “1” to
26 “7” scale, with “7” being the highest.
- 27 (A) International credentials must be obtained from a recognized international
28 institution that is validated by a US credentialing agency. A grade of (70)
29 percent or higher must be earned for the courses being considered for
30 credit.

1 **1D SBCCC 800.8 Challenge Exams/Proficiency**

2 (a) Challenge Exam/Proficiency. A departmental or institutional exam for a community
3 college course used to determine if a student's subject matter proficiency is equal to
4 or greater than the corresponding proficiency the student would have achieved had
5 he or she completed the actual course.

6 (b) Challenge Exam/Proficiency Standards

7 (1) Each college is responsible for ensuring the validity and reliability of institutional
8 challenge exams/proficiency.

9 (2) Challenge exams/proficiency may be handwritten, computer-based, oral,
10 practical, or a combination of these administration methods.

11 (3) Developmental courses (as defined in 1D SBCCC 400.3(b)) supplemental
12 courses (as defined in 1D SBCCC 400.8(b)(1)), and courses including clinical
13 practice (as defined in 1D SBCCC 400.1(c)(2)) are not eligible for challenge
14 exams/proficiency.

15 (4) Challenge exams/Proficiency that are administered for courses contained in
16 the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) may be provided when the
17 exam is vetted, administered, and graded by a qualified instructor in the
18 discipline.

19 (c) Limitations on Students Eligible to Take Challenge Exams/Proficiency

20 (1) A student must meet all pre-requisite requirements before he or she is eligible
21 to take the challenge/proficiency examination for a course.

22 (2) A student may only attempt a challenge exam/proficiency once.

23 (3) A student may not take a challenge exam/proficiency if he or she has already
24 earned a grade for the course. A challenge exam/proficiency may not be used
25 to supersede a grade a student already earned in the applicable course.

26 (4) Career and College Promise (CCP) students, as defined in 1D SBCCC 400.11,
27 may participate in challenge/proficiency examinations to earn college credit but
28 may not earn dual high school credit. To earn dual credit, students must enroll
29 and successfully complete the college course.

- 1 (5) If a CLEP exam in a subject is offered by the College Board, colleges may
2 require a student to take the CLEP exam if he or she seeks to demonstrate
3 proficiency in the subject area by examination.
- 4 (d) Colleges shall award credit for the applicable course to a student who successfully
5 earns a grade of “C” or higher on a challenge exam/proficiency.
- 6 (e) If the college requires the student to enroll in the course to be challenged, for
7 practical purposes the test should be administered and graded by the first week the
8 course is offered but no later than course census. Individuals who are unsuccessful
9 may choose to stay enrolled in the course to earn course credit.
- 10 (f) If the college challenge/proficiency examination occurs outside of regular course
11 enrollment, then ~~a standard minimum administrative~~ **an optional assessment**
12 **fee will apply may be charged to cover administrative cost per 1E SBCCC**
13 **700.6.**
- 14 (g) For students enrolled in the course, successful challenge/proficiency examination
15 completion may result in the student falling below full-time student status which could
16 negatively impact their financial aid status; therefore, students should consult with
17 their advisors beforehand to discuss various options.
- 18 (h) Federal Pell grant funds cannot be used to pay for challenge exams/proficiency.
- 19 (i) Student hours shall not be reported for budget/FTE which result from challenge
20 exams/proficiency except that the actual time required to take the exam may be
21 counted in membership; students shall be registered in the class consistent with 1E
22 SBCCC subchapter 300 or 1E SBCCC Subchapter 400 (1G SBCCC 200.95).
- 23 (j) Challenge Exams/Proficiency are not calculated into a student’s cumulative grade
24 point average.

25

26 **1D SBCCC 800.9 Portfolio Assessment**

- 27 (a) Portfolio for Life and Work Experiences. A collection of artifacts documenting
28 competencies gained through prior learning experiences that a student formally
29 submits to a college.

- 1 (b) Portfolio assessment. The evaluation of a Portfolio for Life and Work Experiences by
2 subject matter experts designated by the local college in its local policy to determine
3 whether a student is awarded Credit for Prior Learning.
4 (c) Colleges may award Credit for Prior Learning based on portfolio assessment as
5 provided by their local policies.
6 (d) **If the college challenge examination occurs outside of regular course**
7 **enrollment, then an optional assessment fee may be charged to cover**
8 **administrative cost per 1E SBCCC 700.6.**
9

10 **1D SBCCC 800.10 Public Safety Training (PST) Prefix Courses**

- 11 (a) Courses in the Combined Course Library with a Public Safety Training (PST) prefix
12 can be used for awarding prior-learning credit for industry-recognized public safety
13 training and/or credentials.
14 (b) Consistent with 1D SBCCC 400.8(c), credit shall be considered for public safety
15 training that meets the criteria outlined in the Public Safety Training (PST) course
16 descriptions as listed in the Combined Course Library.
17 (c) Official documentation from the training provider **or credentialing entity** shall be
18 provided to the college that validates, at a minimum, the description and length of
19 training.
20

21 History Note: Authority G.S. 115D-5;

22 Eff.