

# CHANCELLOR FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES MEMO

CCCM # 6300 (October 2, 1980)

*SUBJECT: Awarding Credit for Learning Which Has Taken Place Outside  
Of Educational Institutions*

- A. References: Guidelines for Awarding Credit for Learning Which Has Taken Place Outside of Educational Institutions, October, 1980. (Attachment I)
- B. Background and Purposes: A variety of practices exist on the campuses for awarding credit for learning which has taken place outside of educational institutions. There is a need for more consistency in the awarding of such credits and recording them on student transcripts. The purpose of this memo is to spell out minimal system-wide guidelines for the granting and recording of credit. The guidelines were developed from 1976-1980 after consultation with campuses and the Chancellor's Committees on Credit.
- C. Responsibilities: Each college is responsible for determining whether or not it will grant credit by means of each of the non-traditional methods outlines in Attachment I.
- D. Procedures: To be determined at each college.
- E. Revisions: None.

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GUIDELINES FOR AWARDING CREDIT FOR LEARNING  
WHICH HAS TAKEN PLACE OUTSIDE OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

I. Philosophy:

The community colleges recognize that education occurs in variety of setting and ways other than through the regular credit courses offered by accredited colleges and universities. Some of the learning which takes place outside educational institutions are applicable to the degrees and certificates offered by community colleges. Where this is the case, it is desirable that students obtain credit for such learning. The community colleges consider it to be inappropriate to use student and institutional resources to require students to “relearn” competencies already acquired.

II. Purpose

The purpose of granting credit for learning which has taken place outside of educational institutions is to enable student to complete degree and certificate programs more rapidly and without repetition when they have already acquired knowledge or skills relevant to their programs of study.

All community colleges in Hawai‘i already grant credit in some instances for learning which has taken place outside of educational institutions, either by offering credit by examination, accepting Advanced Placement tests, or following the ACE guidelines on Military Credit. The intent of this document is to spell out minimal system-wide guidelines for the granting of credit.

The guidelines below discuss separately “credit by examination” and “non-traditional crediting.”

III. Policies Affecting Credit by Examination (Challenge Examination):

Credit by Examination is a means of assessing student learning which may have been acquired in a wide variety of ways, by administering an instructor-developed comprehensive examination covering a specific course in the college curriculum which the student has chosen to challenge. Since it is a long established procedure, Credit by Examination is not viewed as a non-traditional means of earning college credit.

The following minimal guidelines are applicable to awarding credit by examination:

1. It is the responsibility of each college to determine which competencies (knowledge, skills, and understandings) attained in non-traditional settings are applicable to programs offered at the college.

2. Formal campus curriculum channels should be used to establish procedures for administering credit by examination.
3. Credit will be granted to enrolled students
4. Each college, though established curriculum procedures, should identify those courses which are not appropriate for credit by examination.
5. Challenge examinations shall be developed and administered by faculty members who normally offer the course being challenged.
6. The means of evaluation used shall be comparable to that used in the regular course.
7. Each college shall distinguish, on student's transcript, those credits earned by credit by examination.
8. Students shall not receive letter grades for credits granted through credit by examination, but shall receive the designation "CR" (Credit), or other non-grade notation appropriate to the college.
9. Credit by examination may not be used to meet the residency requirement. (Exception: the Provost may waive this provision when, in his or her judgment, the student has completed adequate course work at the college in regular courses to warrant the awarding of a degree or certificate from that college.)

#### IV. Policies Affecting Non-Traditional Crediting:

The following guidelines apply to learning or competencies which have been acquired through work experience (including military), life experience (including travel), military courses, and courses taken from non-collegiate institutions or organizations. The term "non-traditional" when used in these guidelines refers to these means of acquiring competencies.

Although students who have acquired knowledge or competencies through any of the means above may obtain credit by examination when their competencies match a course taught by the college, there are other means of granting credit which streamline these decisions for the college and for the student. Each of these non-traditional means is discussed below, along with guidelines specific to that means. Following these definitions and guidelines are general guidelines which apply to all non-traditional crediting.

Each college may decide to offer or not offer credit by each means discussed below. If the college decides to offer the option, it will need to develop more detailed procedures based upon these general and specific guidelines. The Provost of each campus may make exceptions to the guidelines where merited by individual cases.

##### A. Specific Definitions and Guidelines:

1. Credit for work experience: College credit granted for learning which occurred on the on the job in either a civilian or military position, and which can be documented sufficiently to permit evaluation.

Credit for other “life” experiences: College credit granted for learning which has taken place in self-education projects; through newspaper, radio, or television without formal registration for a course; as a result of travel; or in other ways.

- a. Students are examined and evaluated individually.
  - b. Evaluation shall be performed by a faculty member or members in the relevant academic area, following guidelines and procedures developed by the college.
  - c. Given that competencies attained through life or work experience may not precisely match courses offered at a college, awarding of credit should be based in part upon a determination that a student has acquired competencies which permit him or her to enter the next sequential course in that discipline or field, where one exists.
  - d. To maintain quality control at the college in the awarding of non-traditional credits, recommendations for credit should be reviewed and approved by a faculty body.
2. Military courses: College credit for formal course work taken while in military service, based upon the evaluation of such courses done by the American Council on education.
- a. The student must document successful completion of the course, but need not be evaluated individually.
  - b. Colleges using the ACE handbook on Military Courses need not accept all recommendations, but may select only those applicable to their programs.
3. Credit for non-collegiate institutional learning: College credit awarded for successful completion of a formal course offered by an institution other than a college or university when that course has been evaluated and found comparable to college course material. The college may use the recommendations of the Non-Collegiate Institutional Learning Project Hawai‘i; recommendations of similar Projects in California, New York or elsewhere; or the results of the college’s own evaluation of courses offered in the community.
- a. The student must document successful completion of the course, but need not be evaluated individually.
  - b. Colleges using any one of the evaluation booklets available need not accept all recommendations, but may select only those applicable to their programs.
4. Equivalency Examination: Evaluation of learning in a broad discipline or subject area evaluated by passing an examination prepared and validated against comparable college work. Examples are the CLEP and Advanced Placement Tests.
- a. The cut-off scores for awarding credit and the amount of credit to be awarded shall be determined by the faculty.

- b. A student who has passed the examination at the level set by the college is awarded the appropriate credit without further review.

## B. General Guidelines

1. It is the responsibility of each college to determine which competencies (knowledge, skills, and understandings) attained in non-traditional setting are applicable to programs offered at the college.
2. Credit may be granted in areas taught by the college even though the student's knowledge does not match specific courses taught.
3. Formal campus curriculum channels should be used to establish procedures for evaluation of learning in non-traditional settings.
4. Evaluations will normally be done for enrolled student only.
5. Credit will be granted only toward the degree or certificate program which the student is pursuing at the college. At the time of the evaluation, a statement of the outcomes of the evaluation, including credits to be granted, when they will be recorded, and any other qualifications should be placed in the student's file and a copy of the statement given to the student. The credit will be recorded on the transcript only after the student has completed 12 credits in residence at the college.
6. Credit may be granted to meet specific requirements or in lieu of electives.
7. If a student who has been tentatively granted credit decides to change his/her program, the non-traditional credits already granted must be reevaluated for applicability to the new program.
8. Each college shall distinguish, on the student's transcript, those credits earned by any means other than registration in and completion of a regular credit course on that campus.
9. Students shall not receive letter grades for credits granted for learning through non-traditional alternatives. Credit should be recorded on the transcript as advanced placement credit.
10. Each campus may limit the number or percentage of credits which may be granted to a student through non-traditional alternatives. This number may vary for each program within the college.
11. Credit granted through non-traditional alternatives may not be used to meet the residency requirement. (Exception: the Provost may waive this provision when, in his or her judgment, the student has completed adequate course work at the college in regular courses to warrant the awarding of a degree or certificate from that college.)

## C. Staff Support: Chancellor's Office

1. Distribute booklet: "Hawai'i Guide to Crediting Noncollegiate-Sponsored Learning."

2. Update course information annually by contacting agencies whose courses have been reviewed to assess if course changes may affect the award of credit.
3. Conduct an evaluation of the project by keeping records on the use of credit recommendations by colleges and students. Campuses will report annually.
4. Work with agencies whose courses have positive recommendations to publicize the availability of credit.