

**SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY
ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE
SAN JOSÉ, CA 95192**

S24-1, University Policy, Credit for Prior Learning

Rescinds: [F15-5](#), [F15-11](#), [F73-8](#), and [F83-5](#)

Legislative History: At its meeting of February 5, 2024, the Academic Senate approved the following policy recommendation presented by Senator Wong for the Curriculum and Research Committee. San José State University currently only has two policies related to credit earned from examinations, namely “Credit by Exam for Challenge Examinations” ([F15-5](#)) and “Advanced Standing by Examination” ([F73-8](#)) and their amendments ([F15-11](#) and [F83-5](#)). There is no policy addressing academic credit earned from other forms of prior learning and a new policy is needed to comply with the EO.

ACTION BY UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT:

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**Signed and approved by
Cynthia Teniente-Matson, President,
San José State University on March 18, 2024.**

Whereas: The California State University Chancellor’s Office Executive Order EO 1036, [Policy on Credit for Prior Learning](#), mandates that each CSU campus “shall apply toward admission eligibility and/or the degree, academic credit earned from (1) examinations, (2) learning, skills, and knowledge acquired through experience, (3) learning acquired outside formal higher education and/or (4) education, training and service provided by the Armed Forces of the United States”; and

Whereas: San José State University currently only has two policies related to credit earned from examinations, namely “Credit by Exam for Challenge Examinations” ([F15-5](#)) and “Advanced Standing by Examination” ([F73-8](#)) and their amendments ([F15-11](#) and [F83-5](#)); and

Whereas: there is no policy addressing academic credit earned from other forms of prior learning and a new policy is needed to comply with the EO; and

Whereas: for clarity, it is desirable to combine [F15-5](#) and [F73-8](#) with the new policy; and

Whereas: some contents in the “Advanced Placement for Examination” section in [F73-8](#) are no longer relevant and the rest are deemed not necessary to be specified in a university policy; be it therefore

Resolved: that [F15-5](#), [F15-11](#), [F73-8](#), and [F83-5](#) are rescinded and the following becomes university policy.

Approved: January 29, 2024

Vote: 9-0-0

Present: Kouros Amirkhani, Marc d’Alarcao, Megan Chang, Stefan Frazier, Marie Haverfield, Heather Lattimer, Scott Shaffer, Cristina Velarde, Hiu-Yung Wong

Absent: Ellen Middaugh, Richard Mocarski

Workload Impact: University catalog and website will need to be updated. Faculty subject matter expert(s) in each program will need to be appointed. Faculty subject matter expert(s) will need to evaluate the credibility of prior learning. The Academic Disqualification and Reinstatement Review Committee may need to handle additional appeal cases. The Testing Office needs to administer additional assessments.

Financial Impact: Increase in workload in the Testing Office. Faculty who develop the assessment need to be compensated. Students need to pay the assessment fees. Ideally, the cost will be offset by the assessment fees.

UNIVERSITY POLICY

Credit for Prior Learning

1. Background

As stated in the latest revised version of EO 1036 (August 22, 2023), [Policy on Credit for Prior Learning](#), “awarding academic credit for prior learning promotes access for fair and equitable recognition of prior learning, helps support student retention and persistence, reduces time to graduation and assures quality and equity across various academic experiences.” Four categories of credit for prior learning are addressed in EO 1036, including academic credit earned from (1) examinations, (2) learning, skills, and knowledge acquired through experience, (3) learning acquired outside formal higher education and/or (4) education, training and service provided by the Armed Forces of the United States.

This policy documents the procedures, criteria, and appeal processes for earning academic credit from categories (1)-(4). Policies related to credit for exams are inherited from the rescinded policies “Credit by Exam for Challenge Examinations” ([F15-11](#)) and “Advanced Standing by Examination” ([F73-8](#)).

In this document, the general rules will be discussed followed by the policies of the four categories in the order presented in EO 1036.

2. General Rules

Through prior learning assessment, an undergraduate student may be awarded up to a total of 30 credit units (excluding AP and/or IB credits) and a graduate student may be awarded up to a total of 6 credit units from the four categories of credit for prior learning. Note that for graduate students, the total units earned through Open University, credit transfer from institutions outside of SJSU, and credit for prior learning cannot exceed 30% of the required units. Only units will be awarded (not the grade) and the results will not be used in the GPA calculation.

Appeals should be submitted to the Office of Undergraduate Education for undergraduate students or the College of Graduate Studies for graduate students to be adjudicated by the Academic Disqualification and Reinstatement Review Committee.

The objectives, policies, procedures, and bases for awarding credit for documented prior learning shall be fully described in the SJSU catalog and web site.

- 3. Credit for Exams** - SJSU awards credit to be applied toward the degree and/or admission eligibility for students who pass a standardized examination or Credit by Exam - Challenge Exam. Standardized examinations include Advanced Placement (AP) Tests, International Baccalaureate (IB), and College Level Examination Program (CLEP).

A. Standardized Exam:

a. General Rules

- i. Evaluating appropriateness of examinations is performed by Chancellor's General Education Advisory Committee and the current list can be found at [CSU Systemwide Credit for External Examinations](#). The passing score and the minimum amount of credit awarded for the calculation of admission eligibility and toward the degree shall be based on this list.
 - ii. The name of the examination, student's score, and credit earned shall be identified on the student's academic record.
 - iii. Students who enter with an Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT), full or partial certification in CSU General Education (GE) Breadth, IGETC, any future CSU General Education requirements, certifications that apply credits earned by passing standardized examinations as authorized by CSU policy and set forth in Section 3.A.a.i of this policy are honored.
 - iv. Credit for passage of standardized examinations shall not be awarded if
 1. the student has taken that examination within the previous term and received a passing score,
 2. equivalent degree credit has been previously earned for regular coursework, prior learning assessment, or other instructional processes, or
 3. credit has been granted at a level more advanced than the content level in the examination.
 - v. Care shall be taken not to award duplicate credit because of overlapping tests, college-level courses, or both. Where there is partial overlap, the amount of examination credit shall be reduced.
- b. **College Level Examination Program (CLEP)** - The college level examination program (CLEP) is designed to be a means through which recognition, academic credit and advanced placement may

be given for less conventional forms of educational experiences. Those who may have reached a university level of education in certain areas through home or correspondence study, on-the-job training, television courses, non-university-based online courses, or other means, may take the CLEP examination and receive credit toward graduation. Students who have received conventional university credit for courses taken in the areas covered by the examination are not eligible to receive credit through the CLEP examination.

Specific details of the program may be obtained from the Testing Office.

- c. **Advanced Placement (AP) Program of the College Board and International Baccalaureate (IB)** San José State University grants credit toward its undergraduate degrees for successful completion of examination of the Advanced Placement Program of the College Board or the International Baccalaureate examination. Students who present passing scores will be eligible to receive credits in accordance to the university and the chancellor's office.

B. Special Examination / Course Credit by Exam (CBE) - Challenge Exam - Specific Course Credit. Credit by examination is designed to encourage a regularly enrolled student to seek university credit in courses in which the person appears to be reasonably well qualified by training or experience, but for which the student has not earned credit by the usual academic processes. Courses for which credit by special examination may be earned are determined by the department, from those listed in the current university catalog. Information about challenge examinations shall be included in campus catalogs and web sites.

- a. CBE - Challenge exams are not permitted to generate FTES, nor associated WTU (Weighted Teaching Units) workload.
- b. For appropriate courses, available upon student request (per Title 5, §40408), SJSU shall provide a challenge exam.
- c. CBE - Challenge exam will not be allowed in a course in which the student has received a failing grade in the same course previously attempted, or in which the student has unsuccessfully sought credit by examination. Students are not eligible to take a CBE-Challenge exam for a particular course if that course has already

been taken for a letter or CR/NC grade. A “W” grade shall not prevent a student from taking a CBE-Challenge exam. A student may not receive credit by examination via Challenge exam to remove a grade of “F,” “WU”, or “NC”. Students shall not be allowed to take a campus generated challenge examination for a particular course more than once. As is current practice, if a challenge exam is passed, then a grade of CR and a notation of CBE shall be recorded on the transcript. Earned units (UE) must be generated and these must be recorded on the SJSU transcript. Units earned through challenge exams will not be counted as part of the SJSU residency requirements. Only matriculated SJSU students are eligible to take CBE-Challenge exams.

- d. Where there are existing AP or CLEP or IB exams that have been determined to earn General Education (GE), American Institutions (AI), and/or course credit (see current SJSU Catalog for list), these external exams should be used rather than campus generated challenge exams. If there is a discrepancy between the units earned according to the CBE website and the units assigned to the articulated course at SJSU, the units found at the CBE website shall be assigned.
- e. Where there are no external AP or CLEP or IB exams equivalent to SJSU courses, the determination of whether “campus-originated challenge examinations” (per EO-1036) are available for a particular course is determined by the department or college curriculum committee, and not by individual faculty who may teach that course. A list of courses allowable for CBE via challenge exams shall be recommended by departments/colleges, approved by their respective Dean’s Offices, and maintained by the Office of Undergraduate Education and College of Graduate Studies. Credit by examination for 100W is not eligible for CBE-Challenge Exams. Courses that are cross-listed will be determined by the home department following consultation with the other department.
- f. The Registrar’s Office shall work with the College of Graduate Studies and Office of Undergraduate Education to develop reporting forms, processes, and transcript notations consistent with this policy.
- g. The Testing Office will oversee registration and reporting results of all campus challenge exams. The Testing Office can oversee

administration of the exam and will coordinate with the department where needed. The Testing Office, in consultation with UE and CGS, will determine the costs of administering the exams and propose a fee to the Course Fee Advisory Committee. The Testing Office shall establish deadlines for the test administration and work with the Accessible Education Office if requested by the student.

4. Credit for Demonstrated Learning, Knowledge, or Skills Acquired Through Experience (Experiential Credit Recognition)

A. Conditions:

- a. Students should be matriculated at SJSU at the time of awarding the credit. Before academic credit becomes a part of a student's academic record, undergraduate students shall complete 15 units at SJSU, and graduate students shall complete 3 units in residence at SJSU.
- b. Experiential learning has to be academically creditable and verifiable through a prior learning assessment methodology.
- c. Academic credit for learning, knowledge, or skills acquired through experience shall not be used in determining eligibility for admission, unless it was previously transcribed on the student's academic record.

B. Assessment:

- a. Assessments for experiential credit recognition shall be created and evaluated in accordance with academic standards by faculty subject matter expert(s). One or more faculty who are subject matter experts shall be appointed by the department chair or program director. Supporting information may be supplied by a field supervisor and/or employer. Examples of assessment methodologies include written examinations, portfolios, personal interviews, demonstrations, and/or other appropriate means of documentation. The individual program should establish the appropriate assessment and inform the Testing Office and UE or CGS.
- b. The assessment of experiential credit recognition should be appropriate to the applicant's degree objectives and/or general education requirements.
- c. The Testing Office will oversee the registration and reporting results of all assessments of experiential credit recognition. The Testing Office can oversee the administration of the assessment and will coordinate with the department where needed. The Testing Office, in consultation with UE and CGS, will determine the costs of administering experiential credit recognition and propose a fee to the

Course Fee Advisory Committee. The Testing Office shall establish deadlines for the experiential credit recognition administration and work with the Accessible Education Office if requested by the student.

- C. Credit and Academic record:
 - a. Credit shall be awarded for a specific university course or a specific requirement.
 - b. For students who enter with an Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT), full or partial certification in CSU General Education Breadth, and consistent with CSU [policy on transfer](#), transcribed credit awarded for demonstrated learning, knowledge, or skills acquired through experience shall be accepted for articulation and transfer, including credits for CSU-GE breadth, CSU-IGETC, and any future CSU General Education requirements based on current system-wide articulation guidance.
 - c. The student's academic record shall identify the specific course or category of degree requirement for which the student has received credit for demonstrated learning, knowledge, or skills acquired through experience.

5. Credit for Prior Learning Acquired Outside of Traditional Higher Education

- A. Eligibility:
 - a. Students can earn academic credit for the completion of learning acquired outside traditional higher education based on recommendations provided by organizations that conduct evaluations of training offered by employers or the military. Examples of such organizations are the National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS) and the American Council on Education (ACE).
 - b. Students can also earn academic credit for other learning outside of traditional higher education that utilizes learning assessment methods such as portfolio assessment, attempted independently or as part of a course, and industry-recognized credentials. Examples of industry-recognized credentials are listed in [the ACE National Guide](#).
 - c. SJSU shall accept and award course credit as recommended by ACE National Guide to College Credit for Workforce Training, as appropriate for a student's academic objectives which is determined by the department chair or program director-appointed faculty who are subject matter expert(s).
- B. Credit:
 - a. Credit shall be awarded for a specific university course or a specific requirement.

- b. For students who enter with an Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT), full or partial certification in CSU General Education Breadth, and consistent with CSU [policy on transfer](#), transcribed credit awarded for learning acquired outside of traditional higher education shall be accepted for articulation and transfer, including credits for CSU-GE breadth, CSU-IGETC, and any future CSU General Education requirements based on current system-wide articulation guidance.

6. Credit for Education, Training and Service Provided by the Armed Forces of the United States

A. Scope:

This section pertains to education, training, and service completed during military service but not at one of the many U.S. Armed Forces institutions that are institutionally accredited to offer associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. Education completed at one of those institutions should be evaluated in the same manner as other institutionally accredited colleges and/or universities.

B. Credit:

- a. Students shall be granted undergraduate or graduate credit for learning acquired through education, training, and service provided by the Armed Forces of the United States as recommended by the [American Council on Education \(ACE\) Military Guide](#). Such credit shall be applied as appropriate towards the completion of students' academic programs based on the number of units recommended by ACE in The Military Guide.
- b. Credit shall be awarded for a specific university course or a specific requirement.
- c. For students who enter with an Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT), full or partial certification in CSU General Education Breadth, and consistent with CSU [policy on transfer](#), transcribed credit awarded for education, training, and service provided by the Armed Forces of the United States shall be accepted for articulation and transfer, including credits for CSU-GE breadth, CSU-IGETC, and any future CSU General Education requirements based on current system-wide articulation guidance.
- d. Completion of basic military training (boot camp) may be used to satisfy Area E in the university's general education requirements, Title 5, Section 40405.1(A)(5). However, satisfaction of Area E in this

manner does not exempt students from completing health courses required to earn a teacher credential.

- e. When assigning academic credit for the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT), three lower division semester hours for language shall equate to three-semester units (or their quarter equivalent) in CSU GE Breadth sub-area C2 or any future CSU General Education equivalent sub-area. Moreover, [the ACE National Guide](#) should be followed.

C. Documentation and Academic Record

- a. Both the completed military courses and the schools at which the work was completed must be documented on Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) transcripts or Joint Services Transcripts (JST).
- b. The objectives, policies, procedures, and bases for the awarding of credit for documented prior learning shall be fully described in the campus catalog and website.
- c. Credit earned for education, training, and service in the U.S. Armed Forces shall be clearly identified in the student's academic record.
- d. Acceptable documentation for awarding DLPT GE or Course Credit includes:
 - i. Official Defense Language Institute Foreign Language (DLIFLC) Transcripts
 - ii. Official Joint Services Transcripts (JST)
 - iii. Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) DLPT Examinee Results
 - iv. DA Form 330 Language Proficiency Questionnaire