



Undergraduate Transfer Information Guide for Department Chairs and Deans

with supporting information from AACRAO

Presented by the Strategic Enrollment Management Transfer Committee

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This document was prepared by the Strategic Enrollment Management Transfer Committee to help department chairs navigate course transfers. Our shared goal is to help students who are generating college credits at other institutions come to SVSU through a process that is transparent, simple, and efficient while maintaining appropriate academic standards. It is a guidance document and not meant to replace or override any official policies or procedures at SVSU. Specific questions regarding its contents can be directed to the SVSU Registrar's Office registrar@svsu.edu.

What is my role as department chair?

You may be contacted by the Registrar's Office or another office on campus and asked to review courses from other universities. Your job is to determine if the course is equivalent to a course within your department, acceptable as a course that can apply directly to your major, or if it can apply as elective credit towards your major. You may be asked for input regarding other departments that should be consulted. Your timely response will help students when they come to SVSU.

What organizations provide guidance for course transfers?

AACRAO and MACRAO

The mission of American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) is to serve and advance higher education by providing leadership in academic and enrollment services.

[AACRAO – Who We Are](#)

The Michigan Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers ([MACRAO](#)) works within the AACRAO system.

Why are transfer equivalencies/evaluations important to Saginaw Valley State University?

- Students have the right to clearly know how credits transfer
- Transfer credit and policies should reflect the mission and goals of the institution
- Significantly cuts down on the number of course petitions
- Reduces cost of debt and saves time for student and institution
- Creates partnerships with other institutions/high schools for enrollment initiatives

Where can transfer credit come from?

- Community Colleges (in-state and out-of-state)
 - Includes High School Dual Enrollment
 - Includes Great Lakes Bay Early College and other Early/Middle Colleges
- Public/Private Universities (in-state and out- of-state)
- Advanced Placement (AP)
- International Baccalaureate (IB) Schools
- DANTES Exams
 - CLEP (College-Level Examination Program)
 - DSST Exams (Traditionally offered to military personnel, but now open to civilians as well)
- Military Credit
 - Joint Service Transcripts (Navy, Marine Corps, Army and Coast Guard)
 - Community College of the Air Force
 - Air University
- [MiTransfer Pathway Agreements](#)
- Strengthening MiWorkforce Pathways

What transfer resources does SVSU offer?

- [SVSU's Transfer Hub – Transfer Policies and Resources](#)
- [Transfer Equivalency Tool](#)
- [Michigan Transfer Network](#)
 - [Transfer Your Courses](#)
 - [Saginaw Valley State University homepage](#)

What standards does SVSU use to accept credits?

Saginaw Valley State University accepts credit from ***regionally*** accredited institutions. Accreditation agencies are overseen (not determined) by the U.S. Department of Education and the [Council for Higher Education Accreditation](#) (CHEA).

What is the difference between regional and national accreditation?

Institutions with national accreditation focus more on trade and vocational studies.

Institutions with regional accreditation focus more on rigorous academics.

There are six regional accreditation agencies that serve the United States:

- Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)
 - NY, NJ, PA, DE, MD, Washington D.C.
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)
 - CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)
 - AK, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA
- Higher Learning Commission (HLC)
 - AR, AZ, CO, IO, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, OK, NM, SD, WI, WV, WY
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)
 - FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, AL, TN, TX, VA
 - U.S. students in Mexico, the Caribbean, Central American and South America
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)
 - CA, HI
 - Including territories of Guam, American Samoa, Northern Marianas Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, the Pacific Rim, East Asia, and parts of the Pacific and East Asia

What happens when courses come from universities with quarter semesters?

The Registrar's Office will convert credit hours based on the guide below.

- 1 quarter hour = 0.67 semester hours
- 2 quarter hours = 1.33 semester hours
- 3 quarter hours = 2 semester hours
- 4 quarter hours = 2.67 semester hours
- 5 quarter hours = 3.33 semester hours
- 6 quarter hours = 4 semester hours

What are the maximum number of credits that a student can transfer to SVSU?

Maximum credits allowed to transfer in:

- Up to 93 transfer credits from 4-year institutions
- Up to 62 transfer credits from 2-year institutions
- Up to 93 transfer credits from combination of 4-year and 2-year institutions
- There can be exceptions to this rule depending on certain articulation agreements

Can I change the number of credits when courses transfer?

No, students will be awarded the same number of credits that they earned, despite how many credits the SVSU course is. For example, if Delta's ENG*111 is 4 credits (and SVSU's ENGL*111 is 3 credits) the student will transfer in 4 credits. Or if Delta's MTH*119 is 3 credits (and SVSU's MATH*103 is 4 credits) the student will transfer in 3 credits. They transfer in what they already earned.

Can I change the course level when they transfer?

Yes, AACRAO's best practice is to establish a method for articulating across credit levels, **driven by course content and not course nomenclature**.

- "Transfer 100/200 level coursework at the same level, articulate 200/300 level coursework when academic content and rigor is the same, and transfer 300/400 level when possible" (pg. 9)

How close is "close enough" when it comes to content?

- AACRAO recommends giving direct credit for transfer evaluation when at least **70% of the curriculum matches** your institution's (pg. 12).

How often should I review changes to coursework?

- Review coursework every five years, unless discipline requires a more frequent review (pg.12). If a course is not transferrable after a change to either the sending or receiving university, maintain documentation indicating the reason why.

How should I handle international transcripts?

- International institutions are deemed accredited if their Ministry of Education, or equivalent, acknowledges the institution.
- Course transfers from foreign universities can also be approved via departmental memos or university-to-university agreements (e.g., 2+2 agreements). These eliminate course petitions.
- Other types of international credit:
 - A-Levels – Cambridge International Exams, Edexcel International, etc.
 - Passing scores will always receive 5 credits.
 - Students can earn general education category elective credit (e.g., MATH*1C3 or BIOL*1C4). For direct credit, students will need to course petition (unless already approved by the department).
 - BTEC
 - Depending on the level, these credits are similar to US community colleges/vocational schools. But the higher the level the more rigorous the curriculum (could be equivalent to upper division university courses).
- If you have questions, both the Office of the Registrar and International Programs may be contacted. Both offices work on processing and evaluating different types of international transcripts.

What types of transfer courses can I approve?

Direct transfer (this is the most common)

- Delta's ACC*211 = SVSU's ACCT*213
- Delta's SOC*211 = SVSU's SOC*111

Elective credit that will count in my major/minor

- Delta's ENG*213 (Advanced Technical Communication) transfers to SVSU as RPW*2EL with a comment telling students/advisors that it can count as a "*RPW elective for PTW majors/minors only. Contact chair*". Students will need to course petition this class.
- Delta's SOC*215 (Sociology for Minority Groups) transfers to SVSU as SOC*2EL with a comment telling students/advisors that it will be "accepted for SW Interdisciplinary major – course petition".

Degree Audit/Category Transfers in my major/minor

- Delta's COM*112 can transfer into SVSU as COMM*105B **OR** COMM*BC. Students in the College of Business will receive COMM*BC because it will automatically count within their Business Cognates requirement without having to course petition the department chair constantly.
- Delta's MTH*115 can transfer into SVSU as MATH*1EL **OR** MATH*1TE, with a comment of "MATH*1TE for Lower Elementary Bands only".

2:1 Transfers for Direct Credit

- MATH*263 + MATH*264 (Delta) = MATH*262 (SVSU)
- PHL*207 + PHL*210 (Delta) = PHIL*210B (SVSU)
- With a comment saying students must take both courses to equal SVSU's one course.

Different Course Levels

- Delta's CJ*250 transfers into SVSU as CJ*350
- Delta's PSY*251 transfers into SVSU as PSYC*350

There are some other unique situations (see below). Contact the Registrar's Office if one of these situations may apply.

- Delta's COM*222 can transfer into SVSU as THEA*136 **OR** THEA*2C2, with a comment of *"THEA*136 for theater majors and THEA*2C2 for all other majors"*.
- Delta's BIO*130 transfers into SVSU as BIOL*1C4L, with a comment of "For PSYC majors ONLY – Can use BIO*130 for Biology requirement" (would need to course petition).

How are General Education Category transfers handled?

General Education Category Elective Credit is reviewed and approved by the Registrar's Office.

- Delta's ENG*112 = SVSU's ENGL*1C10
 - Not enough to make it SVSU's ENGL*212 but has enough content to satisfy the requirements needed for general education category 10.

Resource

AACRAO, ["A Guide to Best Practices: Awarding Transfer and Prior Learning Credit"](#).