

# Non-Traditional College Credit

## 1. **College-Level Examination Program (CLEP)**

Students who obtain the credit-granting score required on the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams may earn credits and course exemptions up to 40% of the total required for program completion. CLEP measures prior knowledge in a wide variety of disciplines that have been acquired through independent study, prior course work, on-the-job training, professional development, cultural pursuits, or internships. CLEP examinations are given at specific testing centers throughout the state. The College policy standards regarding CLEP may be obtained from an instructional dean or the registrar.

## 2. **Advanced Placement**

Credit by Advanced Placement (AP credit) may be obtained by high school students who present acceptable scores on the College Entrance Examination Board test. A score of 3 or higher on Advanced Placement subject examinations is accepted by all Alabama public community colleges for credit for a minimum of one course in the subject area corresponding to the test. A minimum score of 4 on the English Language/Composition Advanced Placement test is required to receive credit for English Composition I (ENG 101). Additional Advanced Placement credit in a single subject area may be awarded by the individual institution at its discretion based on an evaluation of the student's high school record and career goals.

## 3. **International Baccalaureate (IB)**

Credit for International Baccalaureate Credit may be earned by high school students who present acceptable scores on the IB credit examinations. Southern Union State Community College accepts a score of 5 or higher on the IB exams in the following six subject areas: language and literature, language acquisition, individuals and societies, sciences, mathematics, and arts.

## 4. **Articulated Credit**

The purpose of Articulated Credit is to provide high school students who have successfully completed approved career technical courses at their high schools a continuing articulated program that builds on past learning experience and eliminates unnecessary duplication of instruction.

### **Articulation Criteria**

- a. A current Statewide Career/Technical Education Course Articulation Agreement (the "articulation agreement") is in effect for the postsecondary course for which articulation credit is sought.
- b. The secondary course(s) applicable to the articulation agreement are certified under the Alabama State Department of Education Business and Industry Certification (BIC) standards.
- c. Teachers of the secondary courses for which articulation credit is sought must have been certified by the Alabama State Department of Education to teach those courses at the time the student passed the course(s).
- d. At the time the student passed the secondary course(s) for which articulation credit is sought, teachers of those courses must have met the instructor qualifications established by the Alabama State Board of Education for postsecondary instructors of the collegiate course(s) in which articulation credit is requested.
- e. The student must have earned a letter grade of "B" (3.0 on a 4.0 scale) or higher in the secondary course(s) for which articulation is being sought.
- f. The student must be admitted to the college from which articulation credit is granted.
- g. A student may receive articulation credit only for courses creditable to his or her declared program of study.
- h. Articulation credit must be requested by the student no later than 16 months following high school graduation.
- i. Secondary coursework completed in grades 11 and 12 is eligible for articulation credit. Students may receive statewide articulation credit for coursework completed in the 10th grade where the student continues and completes coursework in the same program area through the 11th and 12th grades.
- j. Articulation credit is not available in postsecondary courses for which there is an age requirement that was not met by the student at the time the student passed the secondary course(s) for which articulation credit is sought.
- k. Articulation credit is not available in postsecondary courses if granting such credit violates policies or regulations of licensure agencies or regulatory boards.
- l. The secondary teacher or Career/Tech Administrator is authorized to provide certification signatures. This form is available in the offices of the Dean of Technical Education and Workforce Development and the Dean of Academics.

## 5. **Credit for Military Training and Educational Experiences**

Military credit may be awarded on the basis of recommendations in the Guide to the Evaluations of Educational

Experiences in the Armed Services published by the American Council on Education (ACE). Credit may be awarded if Southern Union offers an equivalent course and the ACE credit hour recommendation is the same as the course offered by Southern Union. Students must submit an official military transcript to the College Records office for evaluation. Military transcripts can be obtained through the Joint Services Transcript website at [www.jst.doded.mil](http://www.jst.doded.mil). Once military transcripts are received the student should contact an academic adviser for a full evaluation of prior credit.

6. **Nursing and Emergency Medical Services Non-Traditional Credit Option**

Students transferring in to the ADN Program who have completed the LPN Program and are currently licensed in Alabama will be awarded 15 non-traditional hours after successful completion of the NUR 209 Concepts for Healthcare Transition Students.

Students transferring into the ADN program who have completed the Paramedic program and are currently licensed as a paramedic can be awarded 15 non-traditional hours at the completion of the NUR 209 Concepts for Healthcare Transition Students.

Students transferring in to the EMS Program from a non-accredited EMT Program will be awarded 10 hours of non-traditional credit upon completion of EMS 108 Directed Studies course (if they are entering the Advanced Medical Emergency Technician level), or EMS 156 Advanced Medical Technician Clinical (if they are entering the Paramedic level)

7. **Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC) Course**

Air Force ROTC is an educational program designed to prepare young men and women for becoming Air Force officers while completing a four-year degree. Through an agreement with Auburn University, Southern Union students may take basic AFROTC classes for credit at the University. However, to earn a commission, the student must transfer to Auburn to complete a four-year degree and advanced AFROTC classes. A student must contact the AFROTC office at Auburn University prior to enrollment.

8. **Credit Awarded Through Non-Traditional Means**

Southern Union recognizes that learning occurs in a variety of ways. As such, college credit may be awarded for learning obtained through non-traditional means, including, but not limited to credit awarded for prior learning, military training credit, and local and state-wide articulation agreements.

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) is a means for a student to receive college-level credit for learning that took place in a non-traditional learning environment, such as on-the-job training, military training, professional development seminars, volunteerism, and experience in-field. PLA relies heavily on aligning learning gained through experience with outcomes found in traditional courses of higher education.

Credit awarded through nontraditional means may be awarded by examination or nationally recognized guidelines (AP, CLEP, ACT/PREP, DSST, Challenge Exams, ACE PONS/CREDIT, ACE/MILITARY) or through other statewide programs identified by the Alabama Community College System.

**Process Overview**

- a. The student must be admitted to the institution and meet all requirements for the program in which credit for prior learning is being sought.
- b. The student must make application to the institution for prior learning through the PLA contact for the program in which the credit is being sought.
- c. The PLA contact will guide the student through the process and will be the point of contact for all questions concerning PLA.
- d. A portfolio evaluation will be required for prior learning assessment.  
The student must compile a portfolio that includes a detailed summary of individual experiences applicable to college-level learning. The portfolio should include a description of experiences, and the skills learned from these experiences. The portfolio must contain a brief life history, statement of individual's career goals, description of experiences (work and non-work related) and related learning matched to courses for which credit is being sought, and any supporting documentation (e.g., licensures, certifications, continuing education units, training records, employer statements).
- e. A program area instructor will evaluate the portfolio for student's knowledge, skills, and experience in the program field to determine if the student should be considered for PLA credit.
- f. Upon completion of portfolio evaluations, the candidate will be informed of recommendations for award of credit or coursework needed. A \$25.00 portfolio assessment fee is required for each portfolio evaluation.
- g. All documentation of the PLA process, including evaluation results, will be maintained in the student's file by the Records Office.