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ACADEMIC DATA MANAGEMENT		Date 6-14-2025

### PURPOSE

The Vermont State Colleges (“VSC”) shall maintain a system of academic data management that allows comprehensive and timely access to data that inform institution and system planning, management and decision-making. The purpose of this policy is to maintain the integrity and effectiveness of the VSC's academic data system.

### STATEMENT OF POLICY

The VSC supports transparent, student-centered access to learning opportunities at all institutions. To do so, the VSC shall maintain a single course database, student records system and official transcript. Credits earned within the VSC are not considered transfer credits. Requirements related to graduation, class-level, enrollment status, course repeat and transfer shall be standardized. The VSC shall have a common grade scheme and common standards for academic and graduation honors. The VSC shall have standard definitions related to academic standing academic notice and dismissal.

To implement this policy, VSC institutions shall follow the procedures below. All academic catalogs and other related documents must reflect this policy and the procedures below. These procedures are subject to change and shall be reviewed annually.

### PROCEDURES

#### **1. Maintenance of single course database**

A. To maintain the single course database while allowing for the natural development and change of curriculum at each institution over time, on an annual basis the VSC registrars shall review those courses defined as equivalent for the purposes of a transfer pathway and when appropriate reassign a single course number, title, and single-sentence course description following the VSC naming and numbering guiding principles enumerated

below. Such system-level definitions shall not preclude individual institution elaboration of course descriptions and learning objectives in academic catalogs, syllabi, and other related documents.

B. Prior to the adoption of a new course, VSC registrars shall similarly evaluate the new course for potential substantial equivalence, defined as having at least 70% of the course learning outcomes in common, with an existing course. Reassignment of course numbers and titles shall follow the following guiding principles:

#### VSC Course Naming Guiding Principles

- a. Courses may not share titles. Courses with repeated or similar titles create confusion for students as they move between institutions. A CCV student who takes a 200 level course at CCV called Criminology would be justifiably confused about why they need to take another course called Criminology at VTSU. Additionally, that student would then have two transcribed courses called Criminology. Finally, similarly named courses beg the question of whether the learning in the two courses is sufficiently different to warrant awarding credit twice to a student who takes both courses. Note: this principle applies even if the course is offered by a different department and/or has a different subject designator.
- b. For the same reasons that courses may not share titles, courses should generally not share similar titles. For example, the titles “Poetry” and “Poetry I” would likely not be adequately differentiated to avoid confusion on the part of students.
- c. Courses that offer sequenced learning in the same category (such as Anatomy & Physiology I and II) should be titled with sequential numbers starting at one.
- d. Courses that serve as the only offering in that category (such as Organic Chemistry) should be titled as “Introduction to X” or simply “X” as appropriate. Note: In cases where one institution teaches the second level and another institution does not, this may result in an institution offering Subject I without having a Subject II offering to follow.
- e. In the event that one institution proposes a course with a title that already exists in the system, the existing course will retain its title and number, and the institution proposing the new course must designate a different title.
- f. When there is a question about the course level (1000, 2000, 3000, etc.) that is not resolved by the VSC Course Numbering Guiding Principles articulated below, the level should be set at the 1000 or 2000 level. This allows the course to potentially be part of a 60 plus 60 credit transfer pathway for a student from CCV to VTSU. As CCV cannot teach courses above the 2000 level, any VTSU program that includes more than 60 credits at the 3000 level or above would not be a candidate for a 60 plus 60 credit pathway.

- g. In general, prerequisite courses should be at a lower level than the course requiring it as a prerequisite. This is particularly important with course sequences.

### VSC Course Numbering Guiding Principles

Designating course levels (ie, 1000, 2000, etc.) is important in maintaining integrity of the curriculum and providing the most transparent student experience. VSCS registrars shall use the following primary considerations when determining a course number for a proposed new course:

#### 1000-Level Courses

These are typically introductory courses having no university-level prerequisites, often presenting basic concepts and terminology. Students in such courses are expected to operate largely at the “knowledge” and “comprehension” levels, but should be provided opportunities to develop at the “application” and “analysis” levels.

#### 2000-Level Courses

Such courses are at an intermediate level of difficulty, and sometimes survey a subfield within a discipline. They often have a prerequisite at the 100-level. Students taking such courses should solidify their abilities at the knowledge and comprehension levels, and be provided ample opportunity to develop their application and analysis skills, and/or demonstrate synthesis within a focused scope as appropriate for a culminating experience in an associate degree program.

#### 3000-Level and 4000-Level Courses

Such courses are at an advanced-undergraduate level of difficulty, and are generally taken by majors, minors, and other students with a well-defined interest and demonstrated ability in a particular subject area. While continuing to develop proficiency at the lower cognitive levels, 3000-level courses are expected to provide students with the opportunity to operate at the “synthesis”, “evaluation”, and “creation” levels. Courses at the 4000-level operate mostly at the synthesis”, “evaluation”, and “creation” levels. They are often of a “seminar” nature, with the students taking significant responsibility for the course agenda. In particular, courses which provide students with the opportunity to perform directed research are usually at the 4000-level.

Supplemental Considerations for designating course levels shall include:

- i. Course levels an institution is authorized to teach (ie, CCV is not eligible to teach anything above a 2000-level course and therefore may not propose a 3000-level course)
- ii. Standards as determined by accreditors
- iii. Transparency to students
- iv. Ease of student pathway between VSCS institutions
- v. Standards and practices at other institutions
- vi. Class level alignment (ie, generally 1000-level courses are appropriate for first year students, 2000-level courses for sophomores, etc.)

## **2. Transcripts**

Consistent with its single course database and its vision of student-friendly academic policies and procedures, for courses taken since and including summer 2002, the VSC shall have a single official transcript format with these characteristics:

- a. Credits earned within the VSC are not considered transfer credits.
- b. All VSC courses taken and grades received shall be listed.
- c. All VSC courses count in the determination of quality points and in the determination of cumulative Grade Point Average (“GPA”).
- d. The transcript shall clearly identify the institution where each course was taken, and the institution from which the transcript was issued.
- e. Institutions shall maintain institutional amelioration policies, whereby students may request to remove certain grades from their GPA calculation. In all cases, grades cannot be ameliorated if they've already been included in calculations for awarding a degree. Grade history shall be removed from cumulative totals only; no courses or grades shall be deleted from the transcript.
- f. For students attempting to ameliorate grades at a different VSC institution than the VSC institution at which the grades were awarded:
  - amelioration requires one semester and at least 6 credits of satisfactory academic progress (2.0 GPA or better) following the semester for which amelioration is requested.
  - amelioration is allowed only once in a student's career.
  - approval must be granted by the chief academic officer at the home institution in consultation with the chief academic officer at the other institution.

## **3. Graduation requirements for undergraduate programs**

- a. Each institution shall determine which courses must be taken by its matriculated students to fulfill specific degree program requirements.
- b. For a bachelor's degree 30 credits, including substantial advanced work in the major or concentration must be taken at the institution conferring the degree. For an associate's degree, at least 15 credits must be taken at the institution conferring the degree; institutions may require more than 15 credits at their institution for an associate's degrees.
- c. Students must complete major program and earn a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA.
- d. Students must complete all other graduation requirements, as detailed in institution catalogs.

**4. Class level**

The class level of a student is determined system-wide for standard two and four-year programs as follows:

First Year:	0-29.9 credits
Sophomore:	30-59.9 (all students in all two-year programs remain at sophomore level after 60 credits)
Junior:	60-89.9
Senior:	90 and above

**5. Course Repeat**

Students may repeat a course once without permission. For repeated courses the initial grade remains on record and does not count towards GPA. Only the most recent grade and credits count for GPA.

**6. Transfer Credits**

- Courses taken outside of the VSC must have grades of C- or better to be accepted.
- In a sequence of inter-related courses, if the first course is passed with a grade below C-, but the second grade is C- or higher, both courses shall be accepted.
- For transfer students who hold a two-year degree, credits applied to that degree shall be accepted as transfer credit.

*Note:* See also VSC Policy 108: Transfer of Credit.

**7. Full-time/Part-time and Overload Status**

Full-time, part-time and overload status per semester are defined as follows:

**Undergraduate**

Less than half-time:	0-5.9 credits
Half-time:	6-8.9 credits
3/4 time:	9-11.9 credits
Full-time:	12-18 credits
Overload for CCV:	over 18 credits
Overload for VTSU:	over 19 credits

**Graduate**

Half-time:	3-5.9 credits
Full-time:	6 or more credits

**7. Grade scheme**

The VSC shall have a common grade scheme and quality points at the undergraduate and graduate levels for all institutions (see below).

**8. Good standing**

Defined as 2.0 GPA, except 1.75 GPA for students with fewer than 30 earned or GPA credits, whichever is higher.

**9. Academic notice**

- a. Academic notice takes effect when cumulative GPA falls below “good standing” level.
- b. A student already on academic notice whose cumulative GPA remains below “good standing” level is subject to dismissal.
- c. Students subject to academic dismissal or who leave an institution while on academic notice shall remain on academic notice upon their return.

**10. Dismissal**

- a. The following requirements apply to students dismissed from one VSC institution with respect to enrollment at another VSC institution (all are subject to institutional exception/waiver):
  - generally, students dismissed from one VSC institution for academic reasons, if admitted, may take courses at another VSC institution.
  - students must reapply to the VSC institution from which they've been dismissed if they wish to re-enroll.
  - institutions shall maintain all other/ current processes related to dismissal.
- b. Students may be dismissed for disciplinary reasons.

**11. Auditing**

- a. The choice to audit a course must be made prior to the end of the Add/Drop period.
- b. An audited course does not count toward a student’s credit load.

**12. Academic honors**

Honors apply to full-time, matriculated undergraduate students with no incomplete or failing grades. Criteria are:

- a. GPA of 3.5-3.9: Dean’s List
- b. GPA of 4.0: President’s List

Semester honors are based on 12 or more letter graded credits per semester, with the exception that full-time nursing students are eligible for semester honors. Honors shall not be awarded if an incomplete is outstanding when grades are formally reported for the term or if grades are changed.

Part-time students may be eligible to receive semester honors, in accordance with individual institution policy.

**13. Graduation honors**

Effective for the graduating classes of spring 2006, criteria for graduation honors are:

- a. Of total credits required for graduation, at least 30 graded credits for a two-year degree and 60 graded credits for a four-year degree must be earned at the VSC.
- b. Graduation honors for two and four-year programs require final, cumulative GPA as follows:

Cum laude:	3.5-3.6
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Magna cum laude: 3.7-3.8

Summa cum laude: 3.9-4.0

c. Graduation honors for certificate programs require final cumulative GPA as follows

Honors: 3.0-3.49

High Honors: 3.5 or above

*Note:* credits earned before 2002 are not used in this calculation.

d. Students in the final two years of a “2+2” degree program may petition to receive graduation honors provided they have earned a minimum of 30 graded credits at the VSC.

#### 14. Transcript charge

Institutions may charge for transcripts and shall have uniform policies for transcript, grade, and diploma holds.

#### 15. VSC undergraduate grading scheme

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Point Value</i>	<i>Credit Earned</i>	<i>P/NP Equivalent</i>
A+	4.00	Y	P
<b>A</b>	<b>4.00</b>	Y	P
A-	3.70	Y	P
B+	3.30	Y	P
<b>B</b>	<b>3.00</b>	Y	P
B-	2.70	Y	P
C+	2.30	Y	P
<b>C</b>	<b>2.00</b>	Y	P
C-	1.70	Y	P
D+	1.30	Y	P
<b>D</b>	<b>1.00</b>	Y	P
D-	0.70	Y	P
<b>F</b>	<b>0.00</b>	N	NP

**16. VSC transcript notations for undergraduate student work receiving other than letter grades**

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Legend</i>	<i>Point Value</i>	<i>Credit Earned</i>
P	Pass	0.00	Y
NP	No Pass	0.00	N
AU	Audit	0.00	N
TR	Transfer Credit	0.00	Y
CR	Credit Granted (non-course work)	0.00	Y
I	Incomplete	0.00	N

**17. Miscellaneous Undergraduate Grading Provisions**

1. Comments on Midterm Grade Reports:

Instructors shall be able to add comments to grades at midterm that will be printed on the grade report. Comments must be selected from one or more "notes" that have been set up in the system such as "please see instructor", "student never attended", "student missed midterm exam", or "poor attendance". Additions to the notes may be made upon request by a institution registrar, on an ongoing basis, provided that the notes apply to situations that are encountered by a significant number of instructors at various VSC institutions as determined by the VSC registrars.

2. The Effects of Dropping or Withdrawing From a Course on Grading:

The standard VSC add/drop period is 2 weeks. If a student drops or withdraws from a course:

- during the Add/Drop period, the course is not listed on the student's transcript.
- after the Add/Drop period and up until 60% of the course is completed, the course is listed with a grade of W (there is always an ability to award a W at any point in the semester).
- after the ninth week of classes, the student receives the earned grade determined at the end of the semester unless a special course withdrawal is granted with approval of the Academic Dean. A special course withdrawal from a course taken outside the home institution can be approved only by the Academic Dean of the institution offering the course, following consultation with the Academic Dean of the home institution.

3. Incomplete Grades (I):

Grades of "Incomplete" automatically revert to an F at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> week of the semester immediately following award of the I, unless otherwise determined by the instructor. Instructors have the option of assigning a default grade other than F. Courses carried through an I to the following semester do not count toward the

student's credit load for tuition billing purposes or for additional credit toward graduation.

4. Credit Granted (CR) for Non-Course Work:

Students who are granted credit on the basis of College Level Examination Program ("CLEP") examinations, military credit, lifetime experience portfolios, AP courses or other similar circumstances (as determined by the institution where the student is matriculated) shall receive a CR in the grade field. CR distinguishes the credit from TR, which is used for credits that are transferred in from another college or university.

Students who demonstrate success in meeting the learning objectives of an existing course at an institution via a "Course Challenge" or "Challenge by Exam" (as determined by the institution where the student is matriculated) shall have the course recorded as institutional credit with a CR in the grade field.

**18. VSC Graduate Grading Scheme**

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Point Value</i>	<i>Credit Earned</i>	<i>P/NP Equivalent</i>
<b>A</b>	<b>4.00</b>	Y	P
A-	3.70	Y	P
B+	3.30	Y	P
<b>B</b>	<b>3.00</b>	Y	P
B-	2.70	Y	P
C+	<b>2.30</b>	Y	NP
<b>F</b>	<b>0.00</b>	N	NP

Signed by:



Dr. Elizabeth K. Mauch, Chancellor

Date	Version	Revision	Approved By
10/29/02	1.0	Adopted	VSCS Board of Trustees
12/12/03	2.0	Revised	VSCS Board of Trustees
6/11/04	3.0	Revised	VSCS Board of Trustees
4/24/08	4.0	Revised	VSCS Board of Trustees
5/26/16	5.0	Revised	VSCS Board of Trustees
6/21/18	6.0	Revised	VSCS Board of Trustees
6/12/23	7.0	Revised due to system transformation	VSCS Board of Trustees
6/14/25	8.0	Updated to clarify procedures for determining course equivalence and change in academic standing language.	VSCS Board of Trustees