



The State University  
of New York

**Office of the Chancellor**

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**MEMORANDUM**

**June 2, 2026**

**TO: Members of the Board of Trustees**

**FROM: Dr. John B. King Jr., Chancellor**

**SUBJECT: Adoption of a Policy on Equitable Evaluation of Transfer Credit**

**Action Requested**

The proposed resolution would authorize the adoption of a systemwide SUNY policy establishing consistent, equitable, and transparent standards for evaluating and applying undergraduate transfer credit to support student mobility and timely degree completion while preserving institutional academic authority.

**Resolution**

I recommend that the Board of Trustees adopt the following resolution:

**Whereas** the State University of New York is committed to supporting student success, access, and timely degree completion, including for students who transfer between campuses, and recognizes that facilitating student mobility and ensuring equitable academic treatment for transfer students are central to SUNY's mission and strategic priorities; and

**Whereas** the SUNY Board of Trustees has previously affirmed the importance of student mobility and seamless transfer through Resolution 2009-138 on November 17, 2009, and Resolution 2012-89, on December 17, 2012; and

**Whereas** on December 17, 2024, the SUNY Board of Trustees endorsed and approved the policies and recommendations of the SUNY Transfer Task Force; and

**Whereas** inconsistencies in the evaluation and application of transfer credit may create unintended barriers to degree progress and disproportionately impact transfer students, and the Board recognizes the need for a consistent, transparent, and equitable systemwide framework governing such evaluation; and

**Whereas** the proposed Policy on Equitable Evaluation of Transfer Credit establishes clear principles and standards to ensure that transfer coursework is assessed using academic criteria comparable to those applied to coursework completed in residence, while affirming institutional authority and faculty governance in academic decision-making, provided that such decisions are applied consistently, transparently, and with documented academic rationale; and

**Whereas** in October 2025, the Office of Student Success in collaboration with the Office of Academic Affairs convened a representative working group consisting of faculty and staff participants from a cross-section of SUNY campuses representing multiple sectors and geographic regions, as well as shared governance bodies, to develop recommendations for a policy promoting consistent and equitable grading policies and practices; and

**Whereas** in March 2026, the working group recommendations were shared with the SUNY Trustees for discussion and input; and

**Whereas** in March 2026, the working group recommendations were distributed to campuses and shared governance bodies as a discussion draft for system-wide comment, and feedback was subsequently received and analyzed in consultation with the working group, which served as the foundation for the final policy language provided herein and the forthcoming guidance; now, therefore be it

**Resolved** that the Policy on Equitable Evaluation of Transfer Credit, as set forth in the attachment to this resolution, be, and hereby is, approved; and be it further

**Resolved** that the Chancellor or designee be, and hereby is, authorized to take all necessary and appropriate steps to implement such policy; and be it further

**Resolved** that beginning in fall 2026, each campus shall engage faculty through shared governance bodies in reviewing and, as needed, revising or establishing campus policies consistent with the Policy on Equitable Evaluation of Transfer Credit, which shall be adopted by June 30, 2027; and that, in cases where full implementation in systems and in practice will extend beyond Fall 2027, a campus shall establish in collaboration with the Office of Transfer and Articulation and Student Success and submit for approval alternative implementation plans and timelines; and be it further

**Resolved** that the Office of Student Success will distribute guidance to support implementation and promote systemwide consistency in equitable grading policies and practices.

**Attachment**

## **Policy on Equitable Evaluation of Transfer Credit**

### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent, equitable, and transparent systemwide framework for the evaluation and application of undergraduate transfer credit toward degree requirements across the State University of New York (SUNY). This policy is intended to promote student mobility, timely degree completion, and equitable academic treatment, while preserving institutional authority over academic standards. The policy aligns with SUNY Board of Trustees directives, including Seamless Transfer requirements and the SUNY General Education Framework, and reflects applicable accreditation standards and nationally recognized best practices.

The policy was developed through a representative, systemwide process. The policy development working group included participants from a cross-section of SUNY campuses representing multiple sectors and geographic regions, as well as shared governance bodies. Draft policy language was presented at plenary sessions of the respective governance bodies and was broadly disseminated across SUNY. An open comment period was provided to solicit input from all SUNY faculty, staff, and students.

### **II. Authority**

This policy is issued under the authority of the SUNY Board of Trustees, including Trustees' Resolution 2009-138 (Student Mobility) and Trustees' Resolution 2012-189 (Seamless Transfer Requirements), as well as related system guidance in Memoranda to Presidents, Volume 13, Number 3 (June 13, 2013), and subsequent implementation directives.

### **III. Scope**

This policy applies to all SUNY State-operated and community college campuses. This policy applies to undergraduate coursework completed prior to matriculation at a receiving SUNY campus. It does not apply to students pursuing a second degree at the same level or to coursework undertaken after matriculation, which may be governed by separate institutional policies. Campuses may elect to apply the principles of this policy more broadly where appropriate.

### **IV. Policy Statement**

SUNY campuses shall evaluate and apply transfer coursework and award credit using academic standards comparable to those applied to equivalent coursework completed in residence, except as otherwise provided herein.

## **V. Core Principles**

### *A. Protection of Student's Academic Progress*

No provision of this policy shall be interpreted to require the acceptance or application of transfer coursework when doing so would be inconsistent with a student's best interest or would impede progress toward degree completion.

### *B. Academic Integrity and Faculty Oversight*

Consistent with the provisions of this policy, campus faculty retain primary authority, through established shared governance bodies, to determine course equivalencies, credit applicability, requirement fulfillment, and appropriate academic standards associated with transfer credit acceptance.

### *C. Equitable Treatment*

Transfer coursework shall be evaluated and applied to student degree requirements in a manner that ensures equitable treatment relative to comparable coursework completed in residence by students at the receiving campus.

### *D. Clarity, Transparency, Consistency and Documentation*

All standards, determinations, and limitations governing the evaluation and application of transfer credit shall be clearly defined, publicly communicated, consistently applied, and supported by documented academic rationale.

### *E. Minimization of Unnecessary Loss of Credit*

Policies and practices shall be designed to minimize the unnecessary loss of credit and avoid barriers to degree completion, consistent with academic quality and integrity.

## **VI. Standards for Evaluation and Acceptance of Transfer Credit**

Transfer coursework shall be evaluated using grading standards and learning outcomes comparable to equivalent coursework completed in residence. Institutions retain authority to exercise academic judgment, provided

decisions are consistent, transparent, and documented.

*A. General Evaluation Standards*

1. In evaluating transfer credit for newly matriculated students, each SUNY campus shall determine course applicability using grading and academic performance standards that ensure equitable treatment relative to equivalent coursework completed in residence.
2. Transfer coursework shall be evaluated based on course content, learning outcomes, and level.
3. Where a minimum grade is sufficient to satisfy a degree requirement or prerequisite for coursework completed in residence, the same minimum grade shall be accepted for equivalent transfer coursework.
  - a. For example, where a grade of X is deemed sufficient to satisfy a requirement for coursework completed in residence, a grade of X shall likewise be considered sufficient to satisfy that requirement when earned in an equivalent transfer course.

*B. Institutional Authority and Academic Decisions*

1. Receiving institutions retain authority and discretion, consistent with institutional policies and academic standards, applicable accreditation standards and nationally recognized best practices, to exercise sound academic decision-making in evaluating transfer coursework in support of student progress and successful degree completion.
2. Such authority may include establishing specific minimum grade thresholds, limiting the applicability of certain credits, and applying other clearly defined academic criteria where it is academically justified.
3. All determinations shall be applied consistently and transparently via documented review processes or standards and may consider both academic implications and potential financial aid or eligibility impact on students.

**VII. Academic Standards Governing Transfer Credit**

### *A. Minimum Grade Thresholds*

1. Campuses may establish minimum grade thresholds governing the acceptance or application of transfer coursework, including standards applicable within specific disciplines, requirement categories, or defined academic or programmatic contexts, provided such standards are applied consistently to all students.
2. Such standards must be specific, narrowly tailored to their intended academic purpose, clearly articulated, publicly published, and applied consistently within their defined scope to all matriculated students.

### *B. Limitations on Grade Thresholds*

1. Grade thresholds shall not be applied as categorical prohibitions that preclude the acceptance of transfer coursework without transparent, explicit, and documented academic support.
2. Grade-based limitations on transfer credit are permissible only when comparable coursework completed in residence is subject to the same grade-based limitations.

### *C. Academic and Programmatic Contexts*

1. In clearly defined academic or programmatic contexts, campuses may apply discipline- or program-specific standards affecting transfer credit when those standards are grounded in established academic expectations and are applied consistently and communicated clearly to all students.
2. Within such contexts, academic or programmatic standards shall not be applied or structured to restrict transfer coursework unless the same restrictions apply to comparable coursework completed in residence.

## **VIII. Special Academic Contexts and Exceptions**

### *A. Academic Recovery, GPA Rehabilitation, and Fresh Start Programs*

A receiving campus may limit the acceptance of coursework below established grade or GPA thresholds for students subject to academic recovery, GPA rehabilitation, or fresh-start determinations when acceptance would conflict with the academic objectives of those determinations, consistent with institutional

academic policies.

### *B. Alternative Grading Modes*

1. If a receiving campus allows coursework completed under alternative grading modes (e.g., pass/fail, satisfactory/unsatisfactory) to satisfy requirements when completed in residence, it must also accept equivalent transfer coursework completed under the same or comparable grading modes.
2. Documentation from the originating institution (e.g., a transcript legend or grading policy) must clearly define the minimum level of performance required for successful completion, and such performance must be recognized as satisfactory by the receiving campus.
3. Campuses may establish reasonable limits on the amount of coursework completed under alternative grading modes that may be applied toward degree requirements, provided such limits are applied consistently and communicated clearly to all students.

### *C. Transfer GPA and Programmatic Standards*

1. Campuses may establish transfer GPA requirements for admission, program continuation, major declaration, or entry into specific academic programs.
2. Transfer credit may be limited where acceptance of coursework would preclude a student from meeting established, consistently applied, and clearly communicated overall or programmatic GPA standards.
3. Campuses may, at their discretion, calculate a transfer GPA for formal or evaluative purposes. Inclusion of a transfer GPA on official transcripts or academic records is optional and governed by campus policy.

## **IX. Application of Credit vs. Degree Requirements**

1. Campuses may distinguish between the award of transfer credit and the application of coursework toward specific degree requirements.

2. A transfer course may be determined to satisfy a requirement without the award of credit in explicitly defined circumstances when supported by clearly defined, consistently applied, and clearly communicated academic standards based on an evaluation of learning outcomes and course equivalency.
3. Such determinations must be transparent with documented academic support and applied in a manner that minimizes unnecessary loss of credit.

## **X. Credits-in-Residence (Institutional Residency) and Credit Limits**

1. Campuses may establish credits-in-residence (residency) requirements consistent with institutional policy and degree standards.
2. Where credits-in-residence requirements limit the total amount of transfer credit that may be applied, campuses shall clearly publish such requirements.
3. In cases where a student's transfer credit exceeds allowable limits, campuses shall prioritize the application of coursework that most directly fulfills degree requirements and supports timely degree completion.

## **XI. Student Responsibilities and Institutional Processes**

### *A. Transcript Submission*

Students are responsible for ensuring that final, official transcripts from all previously attended institutions are submitted by published campus deadlines.

### *B. Deadlines*

Receiving campuses may establish reasonable deadlines for transcript receipt and may apply post-matriculation transfer policies to transcripts received after such deadlines, provided these deadlines are clearly communicated and applied consistently, and students are held harmless when delays beyond their control may occur.

## **XII. Appeals**

1. Each campus shall maintain a process by which students may appeal determinations related to the award of credit in accord with the established appeals processes set forth in the SUNY Seamless

Transfer policies.

2. Campuses shall ensure that appeal processes are clearly communicated, accessible, and aligned with institutional academic policies.

### **XIII. Governance and Institutional Responsibilities**

1. SUNY campuses shall engage faculty through established shared governance bodies in the development, review, and implementation of local policies and procedures required to comply with this policy, particularly where such policies affect academic standards, curriculum, and the evaluation of transfer credit.
2. Each campus shall adopt and publish policies aligned with this framework in official policy documents and academic catalogs or bulletins.

### **XIV. System Guidance and Oversight**

1. SUNY System Administration shall disseminate guidance to support the implementation of this policy, including interpretive direction, model templates, and recommended practices. Such guidance is intended to promote consistent, transparent, and equitable application across campuses.
2. This policy shall be reviewed on a regular cycle by appropriate advisory bodies to ensure alignment with SUNY strategic priorities, accreditation expectations, and evolving best practices.

### **XV. Policy Establishment**

Beginning fall 2026, campuses are expected, through established shared governance bodies, to review and, as appropriate, reaffirm, revise, or establish policies to align with the requirements outlined above. All such policies must be adopted by June 30, 2027.