

**Guidelines for the awarding of undergraduate academic credit for study away from Rice, including international study**

Rice policy on credit for coursework taken away from campus, including internationally, must comply with SACS principles on awarding credit.

I. For cases in which Rice awards credit directly as the School of Record, three modalities exist:

- a. *Direct Rice management of coursework or program at another location.* Rice faculty teach and/or oversee operations. Examples include the Rice School of Architecture Paris (RSAP), and the Anthropology Department's summer Archaeological Field School in Tanzania. This option involves considerable commitment of personnel, facilities, and financial resources.
- b. *Rice contracts with a third party to operate a program.* The contractual agreement ensures that Rice can satisfy the quality control and evaluation requirements contained in the SACS principles concerning awarding academic credit. This involves commitment of limited personnel and financial resources to monitor and evaluate the contractual agreement. This option is essentially the approach used with agreements for student exchanges with another institution except that it is available only to a limited number of students from the two schools and tuition is usually not exchanged.
- c. *Rice awards "Credit by Examination".* Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are determined by Rice faculty, and the student must demonstrate via an examination by Rice OR a third party that these have been achieved at a level of at least C- or higher (or other Rice approved level). This option would permit any number of students to participate in learning experiences around the world with preapproved SLOs established. Faculty would supervise the entire examination process.

II. When another accredited institution is the School of Record, transfer credit is traditionally awarded. For international institutions, this is usually done via Study Abroad programs recognized and approved by Rice. The use of Rice reviewed and approved accredited-institutions as sponsors of study abroad satisfies the quality control and evaluation issues inherent in the SACS principles concerning awarding academic credit. Credit is transferable upon receipt of a transcript indicating an equivalent grade of C- or better. Under Rice's current policy, grades are not entered and credit is NOT used in the calculation of the Rice student's GPA. Students may not transfer courses taken pass/fail or on a similar basis at other institutions.

The faculty of a Rice undergraduate program (major, minor, interdisciplinary major or minor, certificate) may seek to identify specific courses taken at designated institutions for special transfer credit status. In these specially designated courses, transfer credit is pre-approved for a specific Rice equivalent course within the department or program, and the grade (including grades lower than C-) will be recorded and included in calculation of the GPA. Guidelines and procedures for securing this special designation follow.

A. General Provisions

1. The faculty of a Rice undergraduate program (major, minor, interdisciplinary major or minor, certificate) may determine that a specific set of courses at another institution is

integral to the Rice program's curriculum either as a requirement or as an elective. (This would be a modification of the program's existing curriculum and degree requirements and would require written documentation to reflect these changes, as well as a change of the program description in the General Announcements.) If the institution is foreign it would have to be included on the approved Study Abroad list and adhere to all the Study Abroad rules and requirements.

2. A formal agreement with the other institution is required, approved by the President's Office (and Study Abroad, if foreign), and should include the names of the courses that would be designated with the Rice program's course numbers, the names of the individuals supervising the agreement at each institution, a sunset clause and evaluation process to evaluate the quality and success of the agreement, a clear statement about how these courses are to be paid for, and by whom, including if an exchange program is established, and justification of why the agreement is in the best interest of Rice students in the Rice academic program. The number of courses to be included under this designation is not limited. A separate agreement must be proposed and approved for each Rice program and each institution. Courses taken at the other institution but not included in the agreement are not eligible for transfer under this designation. The usual transfer policies apply and the grade will not be included in the student's GPA unless the courses are specially designated and approved for grade transfer. Procedures for securing this designation are described in section 5.
3. The following rules for accepting transfer credit from another institution apply in all cases (from the GA section on Transfer Credit):

*Courses taken at another college or university that are appropriate to the Rice curriculum may be approved for transfer credit toward a Rice undergraduate degree. Students must have taken the course at a United States academic institution accredited by a regional accrediting agency, or at a foreign institution accredited by the appropriate agency, such as the government's Ministry of Education. Studies done in one's home country constitute transfer credit through the Office of the Registrar. Official transcripts from the transfer credit institution must be sent directly from the institution's registrar to Rice's Office of the Registrar or hand-delivered in an official sealed envelope. For students participating in an official study abroad program (i.e., studying in a country that is not one's home country) this coursework must be approved by Rice's Study Abroad Office.*
4. When the specially designated courses are approved as part of the program requirements, credit will be counted as residential credit and will not count under limits on transfer credit specified elsewhere.
5. As a first step in securing special designation for courses to be taken at another institution and accepted for Rice transfer credit with recorded grade, faculty proposing courses will submit a curricular proposal to the CUC with letters of support and approval from their Department(s), and academic Dean(s). The proposal should provide the rationale for the program at the designated institution(s), the specific courses for which special transfer credit status is sought, and how students will be assessed in accordance with Rice standards. With CUC approval of these curricular elements, faculty proposers will proceed to finalize a formal agreement with the designated institution(s), as specified in (2) above. The Dean of Undergraduates will assure that foreign institutions meet the

requirements for listing under Rice's Study Abroad approved listing and that all agreements have been reviewed by appropriate administrative offices regarding legal, risk analysis, General Announcement statement, and accreditation. The CUC will inform the Faculty Senate as soon as it receives signed approvals on the curricular proposal from the Dean of Undergraduates and the President's Office.

6. The faculty proposal will include the new Rice equivalent course or courses that will be used solely for articulation with the preapproved, specially designated courses and which will be listed in the program requirement and published in the GA. The Office of the Registrar will assist in this process.

#### B. Applicability and Scope of the Policy

Because of the sunset provision (normally five years) for each agreement the courses that receive this designation need to have effective dates listed in the General Announcements. Renewal of the designation will be made by the CUC upon receipt of a report evaluating the agreement and support letters from the department, deans and dean of undergraduates.