

CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING AND STUDENT RECORDS

Acceptance of Transfer Credit

South Piedmont Community College (SPCC) evaluates credit for transfer from other collegiate level institutions. The College ensures that all associated coursework and learning outcomes are at the collegiate level and comparable to those offered at SPCC. After such evaluation, SPCC accepts qualifying coursework.

Transfer credit cannot be used to satisfy the College's institutional credit requirements, which prescribe that 25 percent of credit hours must be earned through instruction offered by South Piedmont.

Students who have completed coursework at other colleges and universities should submit official transcripts of all post-secondary work. Credit will be evaluated in the context of the current SPCC college catalog and awarded according to the following criteria:

- Prior coursework must correspond in instructional hours and content and must be substantially similar to SPCC courses required in the degree, diploma, or certificate being sought. Quarter-hour courses must equate to the semester-hour equivalent of the current required course, either by a combination of courses or as standalone by using the 3:2 ratio (2/3). Coursework must have been completed at a regionally accredited college recognized by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges or other nationally known accrediting body.
- All college-level courses completed with a "C" or better will be considered for transfer credit, regardless of the program of study. If a course completed at another college is not transferred, but the student thinks it meets the course requirements, a course description from the year appropriate college catalog can be submitted for review. A final decision will be made by the College. Transfer credits will appear on the student's South Piedmont transcript with a grade of TA, TB, or TC. Time limits may exist on courses that apply toward certain programs of study (e.g. computers/health sciences).
- Transfer students must meet Residency Requirements for Graduation.

To be considered for acceptance of transfer credit from an international university, an official English language transcript is required and the student must have an International Transcript Evaluation completed by an evaluation agency at their expense. The transcript and the grading system can be submitted to an agency recognized by the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES), for an international evaluation. A letter grade of "A," "B," or "C" and earned credit hours must be provided for each course. Course equivalencies based on terms such as "Excellent" or "Good" are not acceptable. If the official transcript is in the English language and the institution is accredited in the U.S., an International Transcript Evaluation may not be required.

Regional accreditation is the educational accreditation of schools, colleges, and universities in the U.S. by one of seven (7) regional accrediting agencies. The seven (7) regionally accrediting agencies are: Middle State Commission on Higher Education, New England Association of Schools and Colleges, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (aka Higher Learning Commission), Northwest Accreditation Commission, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. Online regionally-accredited college credits are considered for transfer credit.

A student might not receive credit for all previous courses. If a student did not successfully complete a course, the course is obsolete, South Piedmont does not have an equivalent course, the timeframe has expired, the course is graduate level, or if the previously attended college is not regionally accredited, are some examples of why a course may not transfer. Please contact the Registrar's Office concerning

any possible errors or questions regarding transcript evaluations.

Credit for Prior Learning

Credit for Prior Learning may be awarded to students under the following procedures. Students and faculty should refer to the procedure defined for their prior learning type.

Continuing Education (CE)/Non-credit Courses

Students who have met South Piedmont's program admission requirements and have completed one of the approved Continuing Education (CE) courses may request to receive the equivalent course credit on their SPCC transcript. Approved non-credit courses and equivalent curriculum courses are listed on the College's website. Each approved CE course articulation has an approved date of origin; CE courses completed prior to the approved date of origin are not eligible for articulation.

Request is made by completing the [Non-credit to Credit form](#). Students will receive notification of the decision after the Registrar reviews the request. Credit is awarded without a grade. The form is kept in the student's academic record along with any supporting documentation.

Certification/Credential

Students who have met South Piedmont's program admission requirements and have certain currently valid industry certifications may request equivalent course credit on their SPCC transcript. Valid industry certifications and equivalent curriculum courses are listed on the College's website. The student must be active in their program of study and have a currently valid official certification. The student must also maintain their certification throughout completion of the program.

Request is made by completing the [Credential to Credit form](#) and providing the official certification. Students will receive notification of the decision after the Registrar reviews the request. Credit is awarded without a grade. The form is kept in the student's academic record along with any supporting documents.

High School to Community College Articulated Credit

Students who have met SPCC's program admission requirements and have completed an approved high school to community college articulated course may receive High School Articulated credit on their SPCC transcript. The student must enroll within two (2) years of their high school graduation, have earned a grade of "B" or higher in the course at the high school level, and scored a 93 or higher on the articulated course post-assessment.

Request is made by submitting an official high school transcript. After reviewing the transcript, the Registrar awards High School Articulated credit to students meeting the criteria. All approved and recorded High School Articulated credit is assigned a grade of "TP."

Military Education and Training

Students who have met SPCC's program admission requirements and have military credit for prior learning may receive credit for documented military training on their SPCC transcript.

Request is made by providing an official transcript documenting the education and training. Official transcripts may be requested through Joint Services Transcript or the Community College of the Air Force. Course credit is awarded based upon approved credits applicable to a student's chosen program of study. Students will receive notification of the decision after the Registrar reviews the transcript. Credit is awarded with a grade of "T" on the student transcript.

Standardized Examinations

Students who have met SPCC's program admission requirements and have completed an approved standardized exam may receive standardized examination credit on their SPCC transcript. College-

Level Examination Program (CLEP) and Advanced Placement (AP) exam names, minimum scores, and equivalent curriculum courses are listed on the College's website.

Request is made by submitting appropriate documentation verifying official scores. An official score report from the College Board must be provided to the College's Admissions Office for AP and CLEP consideration. Course credit is awarded based upon the academic program of study. For Advanced Placement credit, a grade of "AP" is awarded on the student transcript. For CLEP, credit is awarded without a grade on the student transcript.

Challenge Exams/Proficiency

Students who have met SPCC's program admission requirements may receive academic credit for an eligible course by demonstrating the required level of proficiency for that course through completion of a challenge exam. The College's website includes a list of courses for which challenge exams are currently offered.

Request is made for the challenge exam by contacting the instructor for the course. Students are required to register for the class section, pay regular tuition, and attempt the challenge exam prior to the 10 percent point of the term.

After completion of a challenge exam with a score of "B" or better, students should submit the [Credit by Examination](#) form. Students will receive notification of test results from the Registrar. Credit is awarded with a grade of "CE" on the student transcript. Transfer credit from challenge examinations is not guaranteed.

Developmental/Supplemental courses, courses with a clinical component, and courses that have CLEP examinations are not eligible for challenge exams. Students receiving financial assistance should consult with the Office of Financial Aid and Veterans Affairs for any implications of participating in a challenge exam. Career and College Promise (CCP) students may participate in Challenge Examinations to earn college credit but may not earn dual credit (high school credit not permitted).

Registered Apprenticeship

Students who have met SPCC's program admission requirements and have completed a registered apprenticeship may request equivalent course credit on their SPCC transcript. Approved curriculum courses are listed on the College's website. The student must be active in their Program of Study and have completed an articulated registered apprenticeship.

Request is made by completing the [Apprenticeship to Credit](#) form and providing official copies of the Journey Worker's card and Apprenticeship Agreement. Students will receive notification of the decision after the Registrar reviews the request. Credit is awarded without a grade. The form is kept in the student's academic record along with any supporting documents.

Public Safety Training (PST) Prefix Courses

Students who have met SPCC's program admission requirements and have prior learning in industry recognized training and/or credentials from North Carolina Public Safety Training Organizations (NCDPS, NCOSFM, NCDOJ, NCCCS, NC Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission and NC Sheriffs' Education and Training Commission), may receive credit on their SPCC transcript for Public Safety Training (PST) courses as specified in the NCCCS Common Course Library. Students must be active in a Program of Study which offers PST course prefixes.

Request is made to the Registrar by submitting official documentation of state-mandated, agency, or non-credit training including documentation of required minimum hours. After review, students will receive notification of the decision. Credit is awarded without a grade. Official documentation is retained in the student's file.

Portfolio Assessment

Students who have met South Piedmont's program admission requirements and have prepared a portfolio

with evidence of prior learning may request to receive course credit on their SPCC transcript. Approved curriculum courses, academic expectations, portfolio requirements, and submission guidelines are in development and will be listed on the College's website.

Request is made by completing the Credit by Portfolio Assessment Form and submitting a portfolio that meets all requirements and adheres to submission guidelines for the course. Following the Registrar's review of the request and faculty assessment of the portfolio, students will receive notification of the decision. Credit is awarded without a grade. The form and portfolio are kept in the student's academic record.

Mathematics Direct Placement

A student may place directly into Calculus I (MAT 271) if the student has met at least one of the following criteria within five (5) years of enrolling in the course:

- A score of 2 or higher on the AP Calculus AB exam.
- A grade of C or higher in an AP Calculus course and an unweighted HS GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- A score of 90 or higher on the ACCUPLACER College-Level Math (CLM) test.
- A score of 46 or higher on the trigonometry section of the ACT Compass Math Placement Test.
- A score of 580 or higher on the SAT Math (taken prior to 2016) and a grade of C or higher in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study Pre-Calculus course or an equivalent course from another state.
- A score of 600 or higher on the new (March 2016 and beyond) SAT Math and a grade of C or higher in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study Pre-Calculus course or an equivalent course from another state.
- A score of 24 or higher on the ACT Math and a grade of C or higher in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study Pre-Calculus course or an equivalent course from another state.
- A score of 560 or higher on the SAT Subject Test in Mathematics Level 2.
- Local diagnostic exam or challenge exam which demonstrates proficiency in Pre-Calculus courses(s) competencies.
- An unweighted high school GPA of 3.5 or higher and a grade of C or higher in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study Pre-Calculus course or an equivalent course from another state.

Students' receiving Direct Placement will not be awarded transcribed credit for MAT 171 and MAT 172 (will not show on a student's transcript). See the Advising Center for more information.

Student Records

South Piedmont Community College will comply with the Amendment to Public Law 93-380, (Privacy Rights of Parents and Students) which sets forth obligations for the maintenance and release of certain student information.

The following documents will be maintained as part of the student's institutional records for five (5) years and are subject to all state and federal regulations governing the safety and confidentiality of those records:

- Complete application
- Registration, change forms, and notices
- Veterans records
- Transcripts
- Test records (when applicable)
- Statement of waiver by the student for release of records, which also contains a list of those persons to whom the records are accessible

South Piedmont Community College will use the above information for the sole purpose of assisting students in the attainment of educational goals at this institution. The information gathered as listed above

may be shared with appropriate professional personnel at the institution for the accomplishment of this goal. Students have the right to request and be permitted, within the limitations of Public Law 93-380, to review the above listed records in the presence of either the Director of Student Advocacy and Accountability or a counselor. Students must provide identification and complete a FERPA [Consent to Release Student Information](#) form found in [Student Forms](#). Students will be allowed to view records within 45 days of the request.

Catalog of Record

The catalog that is current when a student enrolls in the College is called the catalog of record. The program of study listed in the student's catalog of record outlines the requirements that must be met for graduation. When changes occur in a program of study, a student may elect to move to the next catalog in which those changes are effective or continue in the current catalog. Any deviation from the catalog of record must be received through the Change of Program form located in [Student Forms](#).

If a student has not attended South Piedmont Community College for at least one academic year, re-entry must be under the catalog in effect at the time of readmission.

Continuous Enrollment

As long as a student maintains continuous enrollment, the student's records (test scores, transfer credit evaluation, etc.) will remain valid. Continuous enrollment is defined as enrollment in consecutive fall and spring semesters. If a student does not maintain continuous enrollment, the student will be required to reapply to the college and may be required to take the Placement Test, and/or repeat coursework.

Transcripts

Copies of official South Piedmont Community College transcripts may be requested by completing a [Transcript Request](#) available in the Registrar's Office or in [Student Forms](#), or through the National Student Clearinghouse at <https://www.getmytranscript.org>. Detailed information can be found on the College's website. Allow time for processing and mailing.

Transcripts are sent upon the written request of the student only. No transcript will be furnished for a student whose financial obligation to the College has not been satisfied. Transcripts cost \$5 each. If paying by check, the check must include a driver's license number and phone number. Starter checks are unacceptable.

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)

South Piedmont Community College adheres to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. §1232g; 34 CFR Part 99), which is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. FERPA applies to all educational agencies and institutions that receive funding under any program administered by the Department of Education. Once a student reaches 18 years of age or attends a postsecondary institution at any age, the student becomes an "eligible student," and all rights formerly given to parents under FERPA transfer to the student.

The eligible student has:

- the right to have access to (inspect and review) their education records
- The term "education records" is defined as those records that contain information directly related to a student and which are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution.
- the right to seek to have the records amended if the student believes their records to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights

- the right to have control over (consent to) the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the records (except in certain circumstances specified in the FERPA regulations)
- the right to file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U. S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20202

FERPA generally prohibits the improper disclosure of personally identifiable information derived from education records. Thus, information that an official obtained through personal knowledge or observation or has heard orally is not protected under FERPA.

Access to Education Records

Under FERPA, a school must provide an eligible student with an opportunity to inspect and review their education records within 45 days following its receipt of a request. Copying any records may be at the expense of the student.

Amendment of Education Records

Under FERPA, an eligible student has the right to request that inaccurate or misleading information in their education records be amended. While a school is not required to amend education records in accordance with the eligible student's request, the school is required to consider the request. If the school decides not to amend a record, the school must inform the student of their right to a hearing to challenge the content of those records. If after the hearing the school still decides not to amend the record, the eligible student has the right to insert a statement in the record setting forth their views. The statement must remain with the contested part of the eligible student's record for as long as the record is maintained. Amendment procedures may be used to challenge facts that are inaccurately recorded, but may not be used to challenge a grade, an opinion, or a substantive decision made by a school about an eligible student.

FERPA was intended to require only that schools conform to fair recordkeeping practices and not to override the accepted standards and procedures for making academic assessments, disciplinary rulings, or placement determinations. If FERPA amendment procedures are not applicable to an eligible student's request for amendment of education records, the school is not required under FERPA to hold a hearing on the matter.

Disclosure of Education Records

Under FERPA, a school may not generally disclose personally identifiable information from an eligible student's education records to a third party unless the eligible student has provided written consent. Written consent forms are available on the www.spcc.edu website under Student Panel, Forms (Etrieve), under Registrar, FERPA-Consent to Release Student Information form; through the SPCC Registrar's Office at the Monroe Campus, Polkton Campus, and Tyson Center for Technology; or by emailing the registrar at registrar@spcc.edu to receive the form. By completing the FERPA [Consent to Release Student Information](#) form, the student allows South Piedmont Community College to verbally disclose information to indicated parties who appear in person with a government-issued picture ID.

However, there are exceptions where a school can disclose personally identifiable information from an eligible student's education records to a third party without written consent:

- School officials with legitimate educational interest in the information
 - a. "School officials" are defined as a person employed by or under contract with the college in an administrative, supervisory, academic, or support staff position, or a board member, trustee, attorney, sponsor, or collaborating high school liaison.
 - b. "Legitimate educational interest" is defined as the school official needing access to information in a student's record in order to perform their job, and/or maintain safety or security for the campus, and the school official performing a task related to a student's education or is providing a service/benefit to the student.

- Other schools in which the student is transferring
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
- Accrediting organizations
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoenas
- To the parent of a dependent student if the parent has claimed the student on the most recent year's income tax statement
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies
- State and Local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law
- "Directory Information" as defined by FERPA is information contained in the education records of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. "Directory Information" may be disclosed and includes:
 - a. Student's name
 - b. Student's hometown
 - c. Dates of attendance at the college
 - d. Credentials earned and dates awarded
 - e. Student's major field of study or program
 - f. Information that may not be disclosed without written consent:
 - Student ID number
 - Student's email or mailing address
 - Student's telephone number
 - Social Security Number
 - Grades/GPA
 - Class schedule
 - Employment information
 - Academic performance information
 - Admission information
 - Transcripts
 - Financial information
 - Disciplinary information, unless imminent threat
 - Class attendance information
 - Student's current enrollment status

As a note: conditions specified in the FERPA regulations at 34 CFR § 99.31 have to be met before a school may non-consensually disclose personally identifiable information from education records in connection with any of the exceptions mentioned above.

Law Enforcement Records

"Law Enforcement Records" created by law enforcement for a law enforcement purpose and maintained by law enforcement are not "education records" subject to the privacy protections under FERPA. However, education records shared with law enforcement do not lose their protected status as education records and are subject to the privacy protections under FERPA.

Complaints

To file a complaint with The Family Compliance Office, a student must have suffered an alleged violation of their rights under FERPA. Information will not be considered if provided by a third party. The Office may investigate those timely complaints that contain specific allegations of fact giving reasonable cause to believe that a school has violated FERPA. A timely complaint is defined as one that is submitted to the Office within 180 days of the date that the complainant knew or reasonably should have known of the alleged violation of FERPA. Complaints that do not meet FERPA's threshold requirement for timeliness are not investigated. If the Office does investigate the complaint, and it is determined that the school violated FERPA, the school and the complainant are so advised, and the school is informed of the steps it must take to come into compliance with the law. The investigation is closed when voluntary compliance is achieved.

Complaints regarding access or amendment to records should include: date of the request for access or amendment to the education records; name of the school official to whom the request was made (a dated copy of any written request to the school should be provided, if possible); the response of the school official, if any; and the specific nature of the information requested, or the specific nature of the inaccurate information for which the amendment was requested and evidence provided to the school to support the assertion that such information is accurate.

Complaints regarding improper disclosure should include: the date or approximate date the alleged disclosure occurred or the date the student learned of the disclosure; the name of the school official who made the disclosure, if that is known; the third party to whom the disclosure was made; and the specific nature of the education records disclosed.

[Complaint forms](#) may be obtained by calling 202-260-3887. Please mail the completed form to:

U.S. Department of Education
Student Privacy Policy Office
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-8520

Destruction of Records

Unless there is an outstanding request by an eligible student to inspect and review education records, FERPA permits the school to destroy such records without notice to the student. (NCCC Records Retention and Disposition Schedule issued by the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and Records; G.S. §121-5 and G.S. §132-8)

Adapted from U. S. Department of Education (FERPA General Guidance for Students, June 26, 2015) Updated June 2021