

Policy CCRE-001: Course for Credit

Status: DRAFT

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NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Policy Manual

Item	Description
Policy Title	Course for Credit
Policy Category	Course for Credit (CCRE)
Policy ID	CCRE-001
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Statutory Reference	GS 115C-8 G.S. 115C-12; G.S. 115C-81.5

1. Each local board of education shall ensure that all required and elective courses have sufficient rigor, breadth, and depth to be awarded high school credit, in accordance with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.
2. A high school principal shall award course credit toward high school graduation based upon a student’s demonstration of sufficient mastery of the standards for a course as defined in the NC Standard Course of Study. Current graduation requirements are found in SBE policy GRAD-004.

2.1 Credit toward high school graduation may be awarded for: high school courses included in the NC Standard Course of Study, including those provided by the NC Virtual Public School; Advancement Placement courses; International Baccalaureate courses; Cambridge International Examination courses; locally developed high school courses; and public university, community college, and private college-courses.

2.2 Course Instructors shall provide instruction on the complete standards for the course as outlined in the NC Standard Course of Study, the

Advanced Placement syllabus, the International Baccalaureate syllabus, or the locally-developed course syllabus, as appropriate.

2.3 Credit for the following courses must be earned through the high school (Grade 9 and beyond) except where indicated otherwise:

English

- English I: This credit may be earned prior to Grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan;
- English II: This credit shall be earned in the high school, Grade 9 or beyond;
- English III and English IV: These credits may be earned with appropriate college-level course(s).

Math

- NC Math 1, NC Math 2, and NC Math 3: These credits may be prior to Grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan;
- The fourth math credit may be earned in middle school or with an appropriate college-level course(s);
- Students seeking to complete minimum course requirements for UNC institutions must successfully complete four mathematics courses that include a mathematics course with NC Math 3 as a pre-requisite.

Science

- Earth/environmental science: This credit may be earned prior to Grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan or with an appropriate college-level course(s);
- Physical science: This credit may be earned prior to Grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan or with an appropriate college-level course(s);
- Biology: This credit may be earned prior to Grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan or with an appropriate college-level course(s).

Social studies

For students who entered Grade 9 for the first time between 2014-2015 and 2019-2020:

- American History: Founding Principles, Civics and Economics: This credit may be earned in middle school. This course must follow the NCSCOS in its entirety and may not be satisfied by an Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or Cambridge International Examination (CIE) course, dual enrollment or any other course that does not fully address the NCSCOS.
- World History: This credit may be earned in middle school or with an appropriate college-level course(s);
- American History I and American History II: These credits may be earned in middle school or with an appropriate college-level course(s).
- Economics and Personal Finance: This credit shall be earned in high school, grade 9 and beyond.

For students who enter Grade 9 for the first time in 2020-21 and beyond:

- American History: This credit may be earned prior to grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan or with an appropriate college-level course(s);
- The Founding Principles of the United States of America and North Carolina: Civic Literacy: This credit may be earned prior to grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan or with an appropriate college-level course(s);
- World History: This credit may be earned prior to grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan or with an appropriate college-level course(s);
- Economics and Personal Finance: This credit shall only be earned in high school, grade 9 and beyond.

Health and Physical Education

- The health and physical education credit may be earned with an appropriate college-level course(s). Refer to 2.4 below;
- The CPR requirement may be met through instruction in the middle school, or by providing documentation of successful completion of an instructional program and/or test approved by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross. [see GS §115C-81 (e1)]

Computer Science

For students who enter Grade 9 for the first time in 2026-27:

- The computer science credit may be earned prior to grade 9 as part of an accelerated plan or with an appropriate college-level course(s).

Electives and other credits

- Elective credits may be earned with an appropriate college/university college-level course(s); World Language credits may be earned in middle school or with an appropriate college/university college-level course(s).
- Credit requirements added in the future may be earned in middle school for disciplines where such credit is currently allowed (English, math, science, social studies, and world languages), or with an appropriate college/university college-level course(s), unless explicitly prohibited in this or other State Board of Education policies.

Note: Graduation requirements are determined when a student enters Grade 9 for the first time. High school courses may be taken prior to Grade 9 with an accelerated plan as outlined above for high school course credits. These credits may satisfy specific graduation course requirements if those courses are part of the graduation requirements as outlined in GRAD-004 when a student enters Grade 9.

2.4 Students may earn dual credit for any high school course and meet graduation requirements using an appropriate college course or combination of college courses. Principals shall award dual credit according to the Career and College Promise program guidelines established by the Department of Public Instruction

(DPI). For courses not addressed by DPI guidance, a principal may award dual credit for a college course if an evaluation of the course content against NC Standard Course of Study requirements demonstrates that the college course offers substantial coverage of the high school course standards.

2.5 Prior to 2018-19 academic school year, college and university courses shall earn high school dual credit as specified below:

Semester Hours Credit***	High School Credits
1-4*	1
5-8**	2
9 or more**	3

*For college courses having an associated lab component (such as math or foreign language lab), the combination of the course and the lab count as a single course and earn one credit only.

** These occur only in certain Career and Technical Education courses.

*** High school credit applies to college courses in college curriculum programs.

2.6 Beginning with the 2018-19 academic school year, college and university courses shall earn high school dual credit as specified below:

College Semester Hours Credit	High School Credits
1-2	0
3-4	1
5-8	2
9 or more	3

College credit is determined by the course credit value indicated officially by the college system, such as, the Combined Course Library for the NC Community College System. College class hours and lab hours shall not be combined to equal high school course credit. However, college course credit may be combined when two or more courses of one or two semester hour credits are taken in the same academic year.

High school credit applies to college courses in college curriculum programs.

Effective 2019-20, high school credit may be awarded for articulated Career and College Promise (CCP) Workforce Continuing Education pathways that have been approved by the CCP Leadership Team (CCPLT) and do not duplicate efforts by the high school. The CCPLT consists of representatives from NCDPI Career and Technical Education Advanced Learning and Gifted Education Divisions and Community College System Office representatives from Workforce Continuing Education, Career and Technical Education, and Academic Programs.

3. Students in grades 6-8 who pass English I and/or mathematics, science, social studies, or world language courses that are described in and aligned to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for grades 9-12 may use the course(s) to meet high school graduation requirements. Such course(s) shall count toward meeting graduation requirements and the number of credits required to graduate, and shall appear on the high school transcript. These courses shall not be included in the calculation of students' high school Grade Point Average (GPA). Student GPA shall be computed only with courses taken during high school.

4. An e-learning course qualifies for course credit if it meets the following requirements:

4.1 Local Education Agencies (LEAs) may partner with eligible providers of e-learning opportunities other than the North Carolina Virtual Public School. Eligible providers shall meet all of the following:

- Be accredited by a regional accrediting agency such as, but not limited to, AdvancEd or the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).
- Employ teachers who hold teaching licenses from states that participate in the NASDTEC Educator Identification Clearinghouse.
- Ensure that courses offered to North Carolina students are aligned to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study.

4.2 Where available, EOG tests, EOC tests, and post-assessments must be used as an indicator of student mastery. The student's base school schedules and administers EOC and EOG tests. These scores shall be included in the determination of the base school's state and federal accountability reports.

4.3 Enrollment in an e-learning "for credit course" shall count towards satisfying local board requirements related to minimum instructional days, seat time policies, student attendance, athletic and/or extracurricular obligations. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are instructed to be purposeful in establishing processes and procedures to

enroll and manage such e-learning students in an environment where they can be successful.

5. Credit may not be awarded for school bus driving, office assistance, teacher assistance, or laboratory assistance.

6. Credit recovery shall be governed by the following definitions and parameters:

Credit Recovery

6.1 The term “credit recovery” will be used to refer to a block of instruction that is less than the entirety of the Standard Course of Study for that course. Credit recovery delivers a subset of the Standard Course of Study or blueprint of the original course in order to specifically address deficiencies in a student’s mastery of the course and target specific components of a course necessary for completion.

6.2 The length of credit recovery ~~courses~~ shall be dictated by the skills and knowledge the student needs to recover and not be a fixed length of seat time **or necessarily an official course. If an entire course is repeated, use the option in Section 7.**

When credit recovery is exercised, the original record of the course being completed and failed will remain on the transcript. **An additional credit cannot be earned for the credit recovery.**

6.3 **Prior to the 2025-26 school year, the LEA a PSU shall allow may award** a grade pass or a fail for each credit recovery course. The mark will not affect the student’s GPA.

Beginning with the 2025-26 school year, for non-elective graduation requirements, the PSU shall award a numeric grade for credit recovery. The numeric grade assigned to credit recovery shall be factored into the pre-existing Incomplete or Fail course grade on the student’s transcript to a degree that is proportional to the percentage of the course completed through credit recovery, resulting in a new passing numeric grade for the course.

Beginning with the 2025-26 school year, for elective courses, the PSU may award a numeric grade or Pass grading mark for credit recovery in accordance with local policy. This grade will replace the Incomplete or Fail grading mark.

~~6.4 A student wishing to modify his or her GPA shall repeat a course for credit and not seek a credit recovery solution.~~

6.5 A local school board may not limit the number of credit recovery courses taken by a student prior to graduation.

6.6 The End-of-Course (EOC) exam associated with the credit recovery course may be administered no later than 30 days upon the completion of the credit recovery course.

6.7 By the beginning of 2019-20 school year, the LEA shall develop local policy and procedures addressing the implementation of credit recovery opportunities across the school district to support student achievement. At a minimum, credit recovery policies

and procedures shall address factors for student participation, content alignment to original course, instructional delivery methods and a process to ensure consistency in implementation across the district.

7. Repeating a course for credit shall be governed by the following definitions and parameters:

Repeating a Course for Credit

7.1 The term “repeating a course for credit” will be used to refer to a high school course repeated via any delivery method when the entire Standard Course of Study for that course is being taught to the student for a second time.

7.2 Students are permitted to repeat a course for credit when they have failed a course. Local boards of education may develop policies that define specific circumstances when students other than those who fail a course may repeat a course for credit.

7.3 Students repeating a course for credit shall receive a grade and take the associated End-of-Course (EOC) assessment. Those students who have already scored at Level 3, 4, or 5 on the associated EOC assessment may elect either to retake the EOC or use the previous passing EOC score as at least 20% of their final grade. If the student retakes the EOC, the higher of the two scores will be used in the calculation of the final grade.

7.4 Beginning in 2015–16, for students who initially fail a high school course and repeat the course for credit, upon completion of the repeated course, the new course grade shall replace the previous grade for the course.

7.5 When a student repeats a course for credit and passes the course, the student only earns credit towards graduation once.

8. Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM)

8.1 Credit by Demonstrated Mastery is the process by which LEAs shall, based upon a body-of-evidence, award a student credit in a particular course without requiring the student to complete classroom instruction for a certain amount of seat time.

8.2 “Mastery” is defined as a student’s command of course material at a level that demonstrates a deep understanding of the content standards and application of knowledge.

8.3 Credit by Demonstrated Mastery shall be available for all NC students in grades 9-12 for high school courses and in grades 6-8 for high school courses offered in middle school. LEAs may choose to make CDM available for students in grades 6-8 for middle grades content.

8.4 Students shall demonstrate mastery through a multi-phase assessment, consisting of (1) a standard examination, which shall be the EOC/EOG where applicable, or a final exam developed locally and (2) an artifact which requires the student to apply knowledge and skills relevant to the content standards. LEAs may require additional requirements, such as performance tasks. This multi-phase assessment process builds a body-of-evidence that allows a committee to determine if the student has a deep understanding of the standards for the course or subject area, as defined by the North

Carolina Standard Course of Study, thereby earning credit for the course without experiencing it in the school setting.

8.5 DPI shall develop implementation guidelines for this policy. These guidelines shall provide guidance for LEAs regarding scoring of assessments as well as local implementation. The guidelines shall establish minimum scores for the standard examination and artifact creation. Students must attain minimum scores to earn Credit by Demonstrated Mastery.

8.6 The following courses are excluded from Credit by Demonstrated Mastery:

- Career and Technical Education (CTE) work-based learning courses (refer to CTED-003 for work-based learning policy);
- CTE courses that have a clinical setting as a requirement of the course, such as ProStart, Early Childhood Education I/II and Nursing Fundamentals;
- CTE Advanced Studies courses;
- CTE courses in pilot and/or field test status;
- English Language Learner (ELL) courses;
- Healthful Living required courses;
- AP, IB, and CIE courses; and
- Occupational Course of Study (OCS) Occupational Preparation I, II, III, and IV courses

9.0 Honors Level Courses

9.1 Definition of Honors Level Courses

Honors level courses are distinguishable from standard level courses in depth and scope. These courses must be designed and implemented to:

- Meet the needs of students with advanced learning needs by providing a differentiated course of study and opportunities based on their aptitudes, achievement, and interests.
- Provide depth in rigor, complexity, challenge, and creativity beyond the standard level course.
- Adjust pacing to increase depth and scope.
- Foster growth and achievement for students with advanced learning needs.

9.2 Inherently Honors Courses

Courses designated as *inherently advanced or inherently honors* are designed initially at the honors level and do not have standard level courses. These courses are designed at the state level with rigor and complexity. Inherently honors courses vary in expectations according to content area. These courses are outlined in GRAD-009.

9.3 PSUs that offer honors level courses shall:

- Develop Honors Level Courses using the NCDPI Honors Level Course Guide.
- Implement and attest by the end of 2024-25 academic year.
- Thereafter, evaluate Honors Level Courses every three (3) years or earlier as needed based on changes with the Standard Course of Study (SCOS) and local needs.

9.4 Honors Level Course Guide

NCDPI shall develop an Honors Level Course Guide. This guide shall provide guidance for PSUs regarding implementation and evaluation of honors level courses, and be reviewed and updated periodically.

Policy Reference Disclaimer:

These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

State

GS 115C-12

Description

[Powers and duties of the Board generally](#)

GS 115C-81(9d)

[Power to Develop Exit Standards and Graduation Requirements](#)