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### Operating Instruction 3.21.1.2 Course Equivalency Rationale and Operating Instructions

A sending college or university can request a rationale from a receiving college or university when the sending faculty member(s) believes their course is equivalent to a course at the receiving college or university.

The form below provides a way to facilitate communication between the faculty members at the colleges or universities involved. The form, provided as a convenience, is for college and university use, and is not intended to be used by students. However, the information provided on the form can be used to help explain to a student why courses are not considered equivalent.

Once the sending faculty member has received the rationale from the receiving college or university, he or she can learn what enhancements can be made to the course, should they choose to do so. This process may increase the number of course equivalencies in the system, thus benefiting students, and encourages faculty members at different colleges and universities to better collaborate and communicate.

If the receiving faculty member doesn't respond to the request for a rationale or the sending faculty member is not satisfied with the rationale, he or she may consult with the System Transfer Committee and/or administrators at the college or university involved to obtain a satisfactory response.



**Course Equivalency Rationale Form**

Refer to System Procedure 3.21.1, Part 4 Subpart A to determine course equivalencies.

Sending course information can be provided on this form or attach a course outline.

Sending Course Title

Receiving Course Title

Course Number

Course Number

Credits

Credits

Lab

Lab

Description

Description

Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes

Rationale explaining why they are or aren't equivalent:

If not equivalent, what would be required for this course to be equivalent?

**Note:** Please ensure any curricular changes/equivalencies are communicated to the DARS encoders.

### **Course Equivalency Developed by the Transfer Oversight Committee**

Use the following steps when evaluating courses, whether from system or non-system colleges or universities to see if they're comparable or equivalent to courses at the receiving institution:

- 1) Determine if a comparable course is offered at the receiving institution. It is important to remember that a course may be comparable even though it may be offered in a different department or have a different course title at the sending institution.
- 2) Faculty units in the discipline usually make determinations about course equivalencies; however, each college and university determines its individual processes.
- 3) Minnesota State course outlines and descriptions may be accessed by going to the system transfer website:
  - a. CollegeSource ([www.collegesource.com](http://www.collegesource.com)) provides a way to access college and university information and thousands of college catalogs.
  - b. TES (Transfer Evaluation System) (<http://tes.collegesource.com/>) provides direct access to course descriptions at hundreds of national colleges and universities, thus saving staff time.  
Note: Minnesota State has a system-wide agreement to use CollegeSource and TES.

Electronic transcripts are available from any Minnesota State college and university where the student has been admitted. If the student takes a course at the original sending college or university after transferring, the student will need to re-request a review of an updated transcript. The student is responsible for arranging for an official transcript and any other required supporting documentation to meet the institution's policy and procedures when they are transferring from colleges/universities outside of Minnesota State.

- 4) See System Procedure 3.21.1, Part 4, Subpart A for information on determining course comparability and equivalencies.
- 5) Transfer decisions cannot be made solely on the source of accreditation of a sending program, college, or university. Courses must be evaluated for transfer using the Operating Instruction 3.21.1.2. The course title is not sufficient to determine whether courses are equivalent or not. A course may sound like a course at your institution based on the title; however, the content of the course may not have sufficient overlap to be equivalent. Conversely, a course with a different title may be comparable and equivalent.

- 6) There may be enough information provided in the course description to make a determination of equivalency; however, the course outline (or syllabus from a non-Minnesota State institution), including course content and/or learning outcomes may be required to provide additional information. Course outlines are required by System Procedure 3.22.1 to include: "Subpart C. Content. Course outlines contain elements of the courses, including the subject, course number, course title, course description, credits, lecture hours, lab hours, prerequisites, co-requisites, Minnesota transfer curriculum goals, outline of learning outcomes, and revision histories." Note: If a course outline from Minnesota State does not have all the required elements to make an evaluation, contact that college or university to request that it be updated. Required elements are found in System Procedure 3.22.1, Part 3, Subpart C.
- 7) Because courses may be revised or updated periodically, it is important to have a process to re-review course equivalencies. When changes are made to courses at your institution, other transfer specialists and DARS encoders need to be aware of them. The DARS/Transferology team requests curriculum updates from all system institutions annually.
- 8) International credit is usually referred for evaluation from a NACES approved evaluator.

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Date and Subject of Revision:

No Additional HISTORY.