MEMORANDUM

2/21/2019

TO:      Evelyn Benavides, Chair of APC
From:    Rameen Mohammadi, Associate Provost
RE:      Transfer credits

I am proposing for faculty to consider improving the existing language in the college catalog that addresses transfer of credit to Oswego after matriculation. There are two significant issues that the change in language addresses:

1. how lower division courses transfer in where the equivalent Oswego course is upper division or when upper division courses from four-year institution transfer in when the Oswego course is lower division.
2. The conditions under which students can not earn more credits when taking courses elsewhere after matriculation.

Unfortunately, in all these cases, for the students who have followed our process for taking courses elsewhere and received approval, it is only after they take a course, have the transcript sent to us, and we have processed it that they learn that the course could not count in the way they needed it to.

I am proposing that our current statement in the college catalog be changed. A new statement will also be added the off-campus study approval form to address the stipulations for counting transfer credits. Additionally, a note will be added in the student’s degreeWorks whenever an off-campus study is approved when these circumstances exist.

Lower/Upper Division Credit Evaluation of Transfer Credits
Faculty in a number of academic departments have identified courses taught at community colleges that are equivalent to our upper division courses or at least close enough to what is taught in the particular course where the student should not repeat the course here at Oswego. This has been the practice to help our students, and certainly never intended to misguide anyone. There are instances where a lower division courses from a four-year college are made equivalent to an upper division course at Oswego as well.

Community Colleges as part of their mission can only provide lower division programs (e.g., AA degree) and lower division courses for those programs. It is not part of a Community College’s mission to offer upper division courses. Although rarer, it is also possible that a lower division course from a four-year college is made equivalent with one of our upper division courses; since the student did not take an upper division, we have the same issue that we had with courses from CCs in these cases as well. A less typical case occurs when a course is deemed upper division elsewhere at a four-year college but we consider the course as lower division.

Currently in the section of the catalog titled Approval for Off-Campus Study, we only state the following; which has proven to be incomplete in ensuing the college policies are made clear:

Courses from community colleges will be accepted for lower division credit only.

Memo was updated after the 2/8/2019 APC meeting
Maximum Number of Credits Transferred in

College catalog is quite clear on the minimum number of credits that must be completed at a four-year college (includes Oswego), but, in the context of taking courses off campus, this fact is sometimes lost on students and their advisors; they assume the student can not only complete a requirement by taking a course at a Community College, but, also earn the credits for that course.

The issue of not being able to earn any new credit when taking courses elsewhere is subtle. Students who have already earned the maximum allowable credits from a community college, in most cases, 60 credits, cannot transfer anymore credits to Oswego from a CC.

Currently the catalog in the Approval for Off-Campus Study, has the following statement which is not accurate since the limit on the number credits that can be transferred in from a Community College is a side effect of the number of credits that must be completed at a four-year college. In majority of the cases students may transfer in a maximum of 60 credits since their degree requires 120 credits; but, we have multiple degree programs that require more than 120 credits (e.g., Electrical and Computer Engineering requires 123 credits). In such cases, the maximum number credits that can be transferred in may be higher than 60. Here is the current statement that needs to be changed:

A maximum of 60 credit hours of lower division credit from two-year schools may be applied toward the Oswego bachelor's degree.

Proposed new statement:

Community college courses which are equivalent in content to SUNY Oswego upper-division courses (course numbers 300-499) will be transferable as equivalents, but with lower-division credit. Lower division courses at four-year colleges may be deemed as equivalent to upper division courses at Oswego, but they will only transfer in as lower division courses. In any instance where the equivalent Oswego course is lower division, an upper division course at another institution will be treated as lower division.

Students may not exceed the maximum number of credits that can be transferred in; as explained elsewhere in the catalog, students must earn a minimum of 30 credits at Oswego and a minimum of 60 credits at a four-year institution when earning a baccalaureate. Students may complete a graduation requirement with approval elsewhere, but, they may not exceed the maximum number of credits that can be transferred in for the degree.

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<td>Courses from community colleges will be accepted for lower division credit only. A maximum of 60 credit hours of lower division credit from two-year schools may be applied toward the Oswego bachelor's degree. Credit only is transferred for work taken at other institutions. Off-campus study does not become a part of a student’s record unless an Off-Campus Study Approval Form, signed by the student, the student’s advisor, and if required, chairperson of the department in which the equivalent campus course is taught, or where applicable, the Director of General Education, and is submitted to the Registrar’s Office in advance of completing the coursework. If the course is being transferred from another SUNY institution and has been articulated as equivalent to an Oswego course, only the student and advisors’ signature is needed. For a listing of equivalencies, please refer to the SUNY Oswego Registrar’s webpage for links to the SUNY Gen Ed Approved Listings and links to equivalencies from various SUNY Institutions.</td>
<td>Community college courses which are equivalent in content to SUNY Oswego upper-division courses (course numbers 300-499) will be transferable as equivalents, but with lower-division credit. Lower division courses at four-year colleges may also be deemed as equivalent to upper division courses at Oswego, but they too will only transfer in as lower division courses. In any instance where the equivalent Oswego course is lower division, an upper division course at another institution will be treated as lower division. Students may not exceed the maximum number of credits that can be transferred in; as explained elsewhere in the catalog, students must earn a minimum of 30 credits at Oswego and a minimum of 60 credits at a four-year institution when earning a baccalaureate. Students may complete a graduation requirement after approval elsewhere, but, they may not exceed the maximum number of credits that can be transferred in for the degree. In most cases, a maximum of 60 credit hours of lower division credit from two-year schools may be applied toward the Oswego bachelor's degree. Credit only is transferred for work taken at other institutions. Off-campus study does not become a part of a student’s record unless an Off-Campus Study Approval Form, signed by the student, the student’s advisor, and if required, chairperson of the department in which the equivalent campus course is taught, or where applicable, the Director of General Education, and is submitted to the Registrar’s Office in advance of completing the coursework. If the course is being transferred from another SUNY institution and has been articulated as equivalent to an Oswego course, only the student and advisors’ signature is needed. For a listing of equivalencies, please refer to the SUNY Oswego Registrar’s webpage for links to the SUNY Gen Ed Approved Listings and links to equivalencies from various SUNY Institutions.</td>
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