



AP 4051 Evaluation of External Coursework and Course Substitutions

References: Title 5, Sections 55002, 55061, and 55062
 Education Code Sections 66720-66744
 Accreditation Standards II.A and II.C

Approved:

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Evaluation and Application of External Academic Coursework

The purpose of this procedure is to establish a consistent and equitable process for the evaluation and application of external academic coursework toward Butte College degrees, certificates, and transfer requirements.

This procedure applies to all students who submit official transcripts from institutions of higher education for evaluation by Butte College.

Acceptable Institutions and Coursework

Butte College will evaluate coursework completed at institutions of higher education that hold accreditation from an organization approved by the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates (ICAS).

ICAS approved accreditors currently include:

- Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) Western Association of Schools and Colleges
- Higher Learning Commission (HLC)
- Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)
- New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE)
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)
- WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC)

The College will consider degree applicable and baccalaureate level coursework from such institutions for potential application toward General Education (GE), major, graduation, or elective requirements, subject to the standards outlined in this procedure.

Coursework completed at institutions accredited by an agency other than one of the seven ICAS approved accreditors may be evaluated for elective credit only and will not be applied toward major, general education, Cal-GETC/IGETC, or CSU/UC transfer requirements, unless faculty-

level review establishes equivalency through the college's standard course-to-course articulation process (as per this [policy](#)) or Credit for Prior Learning process (as per AP 4235). Students are advised that credit accepted under this provision may not be recognized by CSU, UC, or other transfer institutions.

Authority for Transcript Evaluation

Authority to evaluate and apply external coursework is delegated to the following roles, within their respective areas of responsibility:

- Admissions and Records Evaluator
- Counseling faculty
- Articulation Officer
- Discipline faculty

All determinations must be made in accordance with College curriculum standards, District articulation agreements, and applicable state and regulatory requirements.

District Course Equivalency

A District Course Equivalency is when an external institution's course is articulated with a Butte College course. This means that the external course can be applied to the same GE, major, and other graduation requirements as the original Butte College course. Counselors, Evaluators, or the Articulation Officer may initiate a District Course Equivalency if it meets either of the criteria below. Once established, District Course Equivalencies apply to all students without the need for additional individual review. An external course may be established as a District equivalent to a Butte College course when at least one of the following conditions is met:

- The course is aligned to a C-ID (Course Identification) or CCN (Common Course Number) designation that corresponds to a Butte College course, and (if applicable) the GE area from the institution of origin matches Butte College's GE designation for that course
- The equivalency is supported by an approved articulation agreement on www.assist.org

The Articulation Officer may request a District Course Equivalency from the relevant department chair if a course falls outside of the criteria above. The department chair shall consult with faculty specializing in that subject matter if they are not the discipline expert for that particular course. If the department chair does not respond to the request within ten business days (during an academic year), the AO may consider the articulation approved and a District Course Equivalency will be created by an evaluator.

As a best practice, the Articulation department will review all District Course Equivalencies every five years to ensure they are still appropriate.

District General Education (GE) Equivalency

In the absence of a District Course Equivalency, an external course may be deemed applicable to a Butte College General Education area, Cal-GETC General Education area, or local graduation requirement. This is referred to in sum as a District GE Equivalency.

Evaluators may enter District GE Equivalencies when the institution of origin is a California Community College and the course is approved for the corresponding GE area.

Counselors or the Articulation Officer may authorize District GE Equivalencies when one or more of the following conditions are met:

- The course was applied to a comparable General Education area or graduation requirement at the institution of origin

- The course is comparable to a Butte College course that currently satisfies the same General Education area or comparable graduation requirement

All District Cal-GETC area equivalencies require approval from the Articulation Officer.

External Coursework Evaluation (GE and Major) for Local Butte College Programs

When external coursework is proposed for application toward a GE, major or certificate requirement, and no District equivalency exists, a counselor will review the course for possible application to the major.

If the counselor or the articulation officer determines that the course is comparable to (or demonstrates alignment with) a Butte College course required for a major or GE requirement, then they can authorize the use of that course.

A clearly aligned course must meet all of the following criteria:

- Closely matching course titles
- Same number of semester units (or greater) than the Butte College course
 - Quarter units will generally be converted to semester units.
 - A four quarter unit courses may be considered equivalent to a three unit Butte College course requirement
 - A five unit course may be considered equivalent to a four unit course requirement in the areas of math and science
- Matching GE/major applications in that institution's catalog
- Meets content and rigor expectations as evidenced by the student learning outcomes, course descriptions, or other available curriculum guidance.
- A lower-division course
- If the Butte College course contains a lab, then the external course must contain one as well

The department chair must sign off on any program course substitution if it is unclear that the above criteria have been met. The department chair shall consult with faculty specializing in that subject matter if they are not the discipline expert for that particular course. If the department chair does not respond to the request within five business days (during an academic year), the Counselor/Articulation Officer may consider the request approved. This is to ensure timely evaluation of coursework for students.

If it is unclear that the above criteria have been met, and if the course is used for a local degree with a transfer GE pattern, the Articulation Officer must approve the use of that course for a specific GE area.

Application of Courses to Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADTs)

External coursework may be applied to ADTs for GE or major requirements. If coursework is from another California Community College (CCC), the principal of reciprocity dictates how courses are applied. This means that Butte College will honor another CCC course for the same Cal-GETC (or CSU GE-Breadth/IGETC as appropriate) area that it was approved for at the time the student passed the course. Likewise, a course will be honored for a major requirement if it was on the other CCC's ADT in that same major. Counselors may authorize this application of courses without further consultation.

If the course is from a private or out-of-state institution, the Articulation Officer must confirm that the course meets Cal-GETC standards (or CSU GE-Breadth/IGETC for those students with prior catalog rights) before it can be applied to General Education. If the course is being applied

to an ADT major requirement, the department chair must approve it in consultation with discipline faculty.

If a student completes a Butte College course that is not an approved course for the ADT major, but fits the spirit of the TMC, a Counselor may determine that it is appropriate with the approval of the corresponding program department chair.

Upper-division Units

A Counselor may determine that an upper-division course is an appropriate substitution for a local GE requirement if it fits the spirit of the GE area and/or is comparable to a Butte College course in that area. The Articulation Officer must approve the use of any upper-division course to Cal-GETC. Discipline faculty may approve the use of upper-division units to major requirements. Students cannot apply more than a total of 12 semester units of upper-division credit to their Butte College certificate/degree goals. This cannot substitute the 60 lower-division units required to graduate with an associate degree, as per Title 5 §55061.

Documentation and Student Notification

All transcript evaluation determinations must be documented in the student record in accordance with Butte College procedures.

Students will be informed of evaluation outcomes and advised to consult Counseling regarding academic planning and the application of external coursework.

Review and Updates

This procedure is subject to periodic review to ensure alignment with changes in accreditation standards, articulation agreements, curriculum, and regulatory requirements.