



MEMORANDUM

TO: Chief Academic Officers

FROM: Kimberly van Noort, 
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Chief Academic Officer

DATE: April 5, 2019

SUBJECT: Implementation of Policy 700.10.1 Governing Credit for Advanced Placement

As you know, the Board of Governors passed a new policy governing the awarding of credit based on Advanced Placement (AP) exam scores. The policy calls on institutions to grant appropriate course credit to students who score a three or higher on any AP exams that the institution accepts for credit. Universities with a compelling reason why a score higher than three must be required can petition for an exception to this policy from their Boards of Trustees. Compelling reasons must be based on analyses of academic outcomes as discussed in the regulation 700.10.1[R].

This policy will take effect at the start of the 2019-20 academic year. **Exceptions to the policy that are granted by boards of trustees must be reported to the President by July 1, 2019 using the web form here:** <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/0dfcd2cc222543d8888bd6b0c1f0f0c8>

Based on some discussions we have had, I want to share a few reminders about the implementation of the policy:

- **“Appropriate credit” means credit that contributes to progress toward a degree.** The regulation states in two places that course credits granted on the basis of AP exam scores shall “contribute to a student’s progress toward an undergraduate degree.” Institutions can award credit for elective courses, credit toward General Education requirements, or credit toward the requirements of a potential major provided the credit awarded corresponds with analogous credit that fits into degree requirements. These credits should not be remedial in nature and should be aligned with existing required credits where possible.
- **Evidence for compelling reasons must include quantitative data on student outcomes.** The regulation provides guidance on the standard of evidence expected for “compelling reasons.” In general, evidence for a compelling reason should address whether or not students who earn a qualified AP exam score of 3 are prepared to succeed in the subsequent course within the relevant discipline. For example, constituent institutions may demonstrate that students who, despite having earned a qualified AP exam score of 3, were required to take the equivalent course at the institution performed significantly better in the subsequent course (according to one or more student learning outcomes) than those students who were given credit for said course solely on the basis of the AP score. To generate this sort of evidence, institutions should endeavor to



compare the student learning outcomes of their enrolled students through a quantitative study at a conventional level of statistical significance.

- **Institutions may use data and research from peer institutions under certain conditions.** Institutions may use existing research and data from peer institutions as evidence of a compelling reason provided that data available are timely and practicable, are from the undergraduate discipline most analogous or relevant to the content area of the AP exam in question, and are drawn from Board of Governors approved peer institutions.
- **Resources and technical assistance are available for universities that wish to study their own data to assess their AP credit policies.** System Office staff are available to answer questions and assist institutional leaders as they collect and analyze data related to AP credit acceptance policies. The College Board provides a free research service to institutions as part of their ACES program that enables universities to study the effectiveness of current policies and to evaluate the effect of policy changes (<https://aces.collegeboard.org/aces-studies/ap-placement-validity-study>)
- **Current students should be allowed to move to the new catalog and attendant AP credit award provided they accept all requirements of the new catalog.**

Please keep these key points in mind as you prepare to present proposed exceptions to your Board of Trustees and to report any exceptions to the System Office by **July 1**. As with the 120 credit hour policy, we ask that you report on any exceptions to the AP policy via a form found here: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/0dfcd2cc222543d8888bd6b0c1f0f0c8>

Please let me know if you have any questions,

Kim