

# ADVISING GUIDELINES FOR DETERMINING APPLICABILITY OF TRANSFER CREDIT TO ACE OUTCOMES

## Principles for Determining Course Equivalencies

- *Academic integrity* – Academic standards should be maintained when granting course equivalencies. Faculty have authority for curriculum. Determining equivalencies, they make a judgment if the course is equal in value, worth, and meaning. Determining that course is equivalent does not necessarily mean courses are identical. The guiding question for making such decisions is this: *Having successfully completed the course at the external institution, is the student prepared to continue studies in the discipline?*
- *Reasonable and transparent decisions* – The reasons behind decisions are made available. Students should be given credit for college level courses they have taken and passed. Policies should enable and encourage access for students and should not disadvantage students who began at other regionally accredited institutions or unnecessarily prolong their time to degree.
- *Efficient process* – Transfer credit evaluation should be completed in a reasonable amount of time so student may enroll in courses at UNL as appropriate. Processes should not unduly burden departments, advisors, admissions staff, registrar's office staff or transfer credit evaluators.
- *Equity* – UNL will not place additional restrictions, such as grade restrictions, on transfer courses that do not also apply to the UNL course.
- *Parity of esteem* – Institutions respect one another and their individual missions.

Follow the conventions established in your college for consideration of transfer credit.

- Run DARS to identify where courses with direct equivalencies have already been placed and identify which outcomes a student has remaining.
- Review courses for possible applicability to outcomes (see “[ACE Outcome Decision-making Guide](#)”). If you have any doubt about whether a course meets the outcomes, do not place it into ACE. Student Learning Outcome/Curriculum match should override individual student need.
- If the course is highly similar to a UNL course, but has not been evaluated for equivalency, consult with the transfer credit evaluation team to determine if the course should be placed in ACE.
- Courses presented on transfer with a direct equivalency, which is not approved for ACE, *should not* be applied to ACE. This also applies to courses that are highly similar to UNL courses but have not been officially evaluated as a direct equivalent.
- For courses with titles that don’t reasonably match any UNL course – add a comment in the MyPlan advising notes to allow other units to understand the decision reached, if the student changes colleges after arriving at UNL.
- Audits are programmed to look for a course and 3 credit hours. When dealing with courses on transfer that carry *more* than 2 hours but fewer than 3 hours of semester equivalent credits, the course can be used to meet an ACE outcome. Each college can make arrangements with the Associate Registrar to determine if it wants to use a prearranged agreement or notations on CHP forms to have these courses count. Note, courses carrying 2 credit hours or fewer can apply to the outcome, but will not be considered sufficient to meet the outcome, and students will need additional coursework in that outcome.
- Full syllabus review is ideal; however it may not be realistic. Individual judgment will be necessary and is likely to be based upon limited information. The “ACE Outcome Decision-making Guide” provides criteria to help make those judgments. (For courses of which you are uncertain or for which you need additional information, seek advice from the UNL college or department with which the course most closely aligns.)
- Courses that are part of ACE are listed in the undergraduate bulletin as ACE 1, ACE 2, etc. This is also the language that is programmed in DARS. To avoid confusion and to maintain consistency across campus, it is encouraged that all references to ACE Student Learning Outcomes follow the same format.

## ACE Outcome Decision-making Guide

Key points to consider for each [ACE Student Learning Outcome](#) – always focus first on whether the course appears to clearly address the learning outcome. The ACE Outcome/Curriculum match should override individual student need.

**ACE 1** Write texts, in various forms, with an identified purpose, that respond to specific audience needs, integrate research or existing knowledge, and use applicable documentation and appropriate conventions of format and structure.

- Is teaching of writing clearly the *main* purpose of the course?
- Does the course clearly provide students with opportunities to (all of the following): write multiple texts, in various forms, with an identified purpose, that respond to specific audience needs, and incorporate research or existing knowledge?
- Does the course provide students with opportunities to reflect on *and* revise their writing?

**ACE 2** Demonstrate competence in communication skills in one or more of the following ways:

- a. by making oral presentations with supporting materials,
  - b. by leading and participating in problem-solving teams,
  - c. by employing communication skills for developing and maintaining professional and personal relationships, or
  - d. by producing and/or interpreting visual information.
- Is the teaching of communication competence clearly the *main* purpose of the course?
  - Does the course provide students with opportunities to (one or more of the following): (a) make oral presentations, (b) lead and participate in problem solving teams, (c) employ a repertoire of communication skills for developing and maintaining professional and personal relations, or (d) create and/or interpret visual information?

**ACE 3** Use mathematical, computational, statistical, logical, or other formal reasoning to solve problems, draw inferences, justify conclusions, and determine reasonableness.

- Is the teaching of mathematical, computation, statistical or formal reasoning the *main* purpose of the course – rather than simply using them as tools for learning?

[**NOTE on math courses and ACE 3:** Mathematics courses equivalent to **pre-calculus or below** should **NOT** be used for meeting ACE 3.]

**ACE 4** Use scientific methods and knowledge to pose questions, frame hypotheses, interpret data, and evaluate whether conclusions about the natural and physical world are reasonable.

- Is the clear purpose of the class the use of scientific methods *and* knowledge of the natural and physical world to address problems?

**ACE 5** Use knowledge, historical perspectives, analysis, interpretation, critical evaluation, and the standards of evidence appropriate to the humanities to address problems and issues.

- Is it clear the course is in the humanities *and* has the purpose of using knowledge, historical perspectives, analysis, interpretation, critical evaluation, and standards of evidence to address problems and issues?

**ACE 6** Use knowledge, theories, and research methods appropriate to the social sciences to understand and evaluate social systems or human behaviors.

- Is it clear the course is in social sciences *and* has the purpose of using knowledge, theories, methods and historical perspectives to understand and evaluate human behavior?

**ACE 7** Use knowledge, theories, or methods appropriate to the arts to understand their context and significance.

- Is it clear the course is in the arts *and* has the purpose of using knowledge, theories or methods appropriate to the arts to understand their context and significance?
- Please review approved UNL courses when considering applied courses for this outcome.

**ACE 8** Use knowledge, theories, and analysis to explain ethical principles and their importance in society.

- Does the course clearly have the purpose of explaining *ethics* (including ethical principles, civics, stewardship) *and* their importance to society?

[NOTE: Ethics is an overarching ethical dimension, encompassing principles, civics and stewardship. All three components are related. ACE 8 does not require that courses consider all of these as distinct areas.

**ACE 9** Exhibit global awareness or knowledge of human diversity through analysis of an issue.

- Is the clear purpose of the course exhibiting global awareness *or* knowledge of human diversity *through analysis of an issue*?

**ACE 10** Generate a creative or scholarly product that requires broad knowledge, appropriate technical proficiency, information collection, synthesis, interpretation, presentation, and reflection.

- Is the clear purpose of the course generating a scholarly product and how the product is important to the discipline?
- Does the course require broad knowledge, appropriate technical proficiency, information collection, synthesis, interpretation, presentation, and reflection?
- Unless the course is a direct equivalent to a UNL course, a syllabus review is likely to be considered integral in determining if a transfer course is appropriate for this outcome.

**[NOTE on transfer credit and ACE 10:** Transfer credit should **rarely, if ever**, be used to fulfill ACE 10.]