

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 23, 2014

TO: Deans, Directors, Department Heads, and Advisors

FROM: George Gehrels, Chair, Undergraduate Council (UGC)
Celeste F. Pardee, Assistant Director for Academic Policies and Organizations

RE: **College Level Examination Program (CLEP) Policy Revision**

Junior and senior undergraduates may now earn CLEP exam credit without their college dean's permission. The stipulation that CLEP exams must be taken prior to completing 55 units (for native students) and before the completion of 55 units or two UA semesters (for transfer students) has been eliminated. The request to remove this class standing restriction was initiated by the University Academic Advising Council (UAAC) in October 2013. The proposal was approved by Undergraduate Council on 2/22/14 and by the Faculty Senate on 4/7/14. Effective in Summer/Fall 2014, this CLEP Policy revision applies to all undergraduates, regardless of catalog year.

Revised [CLEP Policy](#):

The examinations offered through the CLEP test students' mastery of college-level material acquired in ways other than formal course work, such as self-study, extracurricular activities, or living abroad. CLEP examinations may be utilized by nontraditional learners, military service members and veterans, as well as traditional students. The examinations are increasingly valuable to degree-seeking students as a means of satisfying certain course or subject area requirements, or for earning elective credits without enrolling in those courses.

~~CLEP exams must be taken by UA students prior to the completion of 55 units. Transfer students must take CLEP exams before finishing 55 units or before completing two regular semesters at the University.~~ Prospective and currently enrolled students utilizing these examinations cannot earn credit through CLEP for subjects or courses equivalent to, or at a lower level than, other courses for which they have already earned credit through formal course work. Students should consult with their [academic advisor](#) to make sure they are eligible to take a specific subject exam.

*The University of Arizona accepts CLEP for college credit, provided satisfactory scores are attained. Passing scores for subjects credited through the CLEP are recorded simply as CR (credit), and may not necessarily be stated in terms of a specific course equivalent. No record is made of failing scores. **Units earned by CLEP and other exams (i.e., AP, IB, department competency/proficiency exams, and special exams) cannot exceed 60 units for a baccalaureate degree.***

Rationale for removing the restriction:

- The 55-unit limit on student eligibility has been confusing, especially for transfer students.
- The policy has been inconsistently enforced. Juniors and seniors have been required to obtain a letter of exception from their dean's representative waiving the 55-unit limit if they were otherwise eligible for a CLEP exam. Colleges had different criteria for determining a student's eligibility. Some students were given college waivers, but others were denied.
- It wasn't appropriate to limit CLEP exams to lower division students, even though the exams are for lower division credit. Upper division students may enroll in 100-200 courses, so they should be able to earn CLEP credit for a 100-200 level course, provided they have not completed courses in that discipline equivalent to, or at a higher level than, the course for which they are testing.
- Research on CLEP policies at peer institutions revealed that the UA's 55-unit restriction was unusual, although a unit-maximum for exam credits in a degree (e.g., 60 units) is common.

Management of the Policy:

- Eligibility for a specific CLEP exam will be based on the student's prior course work in that subject or discipline, not the student's class standing. When a student expresses interest in taking a specific CLEP subject exam, the college advisor should check the student's transcript to make sure the student hasn't earned credit for a course at the same level or at a higher level. For example, before a student invests in taking the CLEP exam for General Chemistry (i.e., CHEM 151), the advisor should make sure the student hasn't previously earned credit for CHEM 152 or a more advanced CHEM course; if so, the student is not eligible to take the CLEP General Chemistry exam.
- No more than 60 credits earned through exams (i.e., AP, IB, CLEP, department competency/proficiency exams, and special exams) will count toward a student's baccalaureate degree. The 60-unit maximum applies to total units and to specific course requirements.

Questions about the revised CLEP Policy may be addressed to Celeste Pardee, Curricular Affairs, at 621-5375, or at cpardee@u.arizona.edu.