



**Alcorn**  
State University

DA: November 8, 2016 (updated November 18, 2016)  
FR: Donzell Lee, Ph.D., Provost & EVPAA *DL*  
TO Deans  
RE: **Provost Guidance | “Advanced” Credit-by-Exam**

I write this Provost communication to give guidance on the use of credit-by-exam (or more correctly stated: “advanced” credit-by-exam). Specifically, advanced credit-by-exam courses is subject to approval; and, only students who demonstrate extraordinary proficiency in a subject area can earn “advanced” credit-by-exam on the basis of achievement on a departmental proficiency examinations.

#### LIMITATIONS ON ADVANCED CREDIT-BY-EXAM

- At Alcorn the credit-by-exam should be given only for well-documented, scholarly achievement which compels a faculty member to recommend the student to earn advanced credit through a comprehensive local exam. A student may not establish credit for auditing purposes. Similarly, the student may not take a course for credit if the student has established advanced credit by examination already for that course.
- A student may not establish credit by examination for any course in which the student is currently enrolled or has been previously enrolled.
- Under no circumstance should a student be considered for credit-by-exam after receiving a grade for a course, **especially after earning a failing grade (F), subpar grade (D), W, or I for a course** [Emphasis added]. It should not be a remedial measure.
- Credit-by-exam for advanced intellectual expertise should not be granted students who are unsuccessful in meeting benchmarks and cutlines for standardized exams (i.e. CLEP).
- The decision on whether the exam credit is transferable remains with the receiving institution where the student intends to apply said credit. Thus, advisors should take care to notify students that such “advanced credit” may not transfer to another institution or be acceptable to meet graduate (i.e., USM does not accept) & professional school admission (e.g., MCAT) and licensure requirements.
- As credit-by-exam is for the benefit of the student, the university may not be held liable for adverse admission/progression/graduation decisions that may attach. Thus, the \$50 assessment fee--payable by the currently enrolled student to Alcorn State University prior to exam administration--is non-refundable, regardless of credit outcome.
- In those instances where assessments are not passed, no transcription of the credit-by-exam attempt will be added to the student record; however, the assessment fee will be added to the student bill.

## PROCESS

Given the numerous opportunities to garner credit (i.e. CLEP, Advanced Placement, Dual Enrollment, International Baccalaureate (IB), dual credit, Reverse Credit, transfer-course equivalency, course-based credit, internship, externship, cooperative education, study abroad, military experience, athletics participation, band participation, etc.), student requests for advanced knowledge credit should be reserved for exceptional, well-documented, and compelling instances in support of a student's advanced subject matter knowledge, skill, or ability.

The student should write a petition to the department chair noting specifically the education, expertise, work experience(s), specialized training, preparations and/or deliberative self-study by which the student amassed an unusual corpus of knowledge, unique skill base, or acumen to sufficiently and adequately demonstrate the learning outcomes of an Alcorn course without ever having had instruction.

Upon successful completion of any examination, the student will be offered credit for the equivalent course(s). A letter grade will not be assigned; therefore, the credit will not affect the student's grade point average.

The exam and results become a part of the student's academic records and copies should be retained for auditing (SACS, accreditation, NCAA Data Review, Internal Audit, IHL, etc.) purposes. Copies of exam artifacts and student records should be forwarded to the Office of Academic Affairs for sign-off and the Office of the Registrar for recording.

After credit is granted to a student through any one of the Credit by Examination programs, there is no additional charge to the student. Earned credit is recorded automatically on the student's transcript.

Because the implications of not passing an advanced credit-by-exam is far-reaching (e.g., loss of opportunity to participate in commencement; requirement to enroll in the next-scheduled course; etc.) advanced credit-by-exam should be offered/taken no later than one semester prior to commencement. Each department will determine which of its courses may receive credit by local examination, and if this will be applied towards particular degree requirements.