CATALOGS, CREDITS & COMPLIANCE

Ensuring Compliance Through Program Approvals, Credit Evaluations, and Institutional Policies

Rose Marie C. Cobb

Veterans & Military Affairs Coordinator – Jefferson State CC

President– Alabama Veterans Affairs Association

Learning Objectives

- Identify essential catalog and policy requirements for VA/SAA compliance.
- Distinguish between VA regulations, SAA approvals, DoD MOU requirements, and institutional policies.
- Discuss evaluation and documentation of military and transfer credits.
- Build a repeatable compliance process across offices.

The Compliance Partnership

SCHOOL

- Publishes program requirements
- Implements policies
- Maintains records
- Evaluates credits
- Notifies the SAA

SAA

- Reviews and approves programs and applicable changes
- May impose additional approved criteria
- Conducts catalog reviews for compliance

VA

- Administers VA education benefit programs
- Establishes and enforces federal education benefit requirements
- Maintains approval information received from SAAs

An accreditor’s approval is not automatically the same as VA/SAA program approval.

Catalog Content: The Compliance Basics

- Program descriptions, requirements, length, and graduation standards
- Grading, testing requirements, satisfactory progress, probation, dismissal, and reentry
- Attendance policy, if the school maintains and enforces one
- Tuition, fees, refund provisions, and other applicable published policies
- Prior-learning / transfer-credit policies and institutional procedures

Institutional Policy: The Catalog Matters

- VA requirements establish the limits; institutional policies establish procedures within them.
- A school may request a COE or other acceptable verification of benefit eligibility.
- Published policies must be consistent with federal law, SAA approval, and applicable protections.
- A catalog requirement does not automatically authorize withholding certification or penalizing students.
- SCO takeaway: know the written policy, follow it consistently, and flag conflicts for review.

Program Approvals: Where Problems Begin

COMMON CHANGES

- New degree or certificate
- Revised curriculum or program length
- New delivery site or modality
- Program closure or discontinuation

SCO CONTROL POINT

- Check the current approval letter and attachments
- Route changes to the SAA
- Confirm the requirements and the effective date before treating the change as approved.
- Communicate with the Registrar for program/catalog updates that require an amendment/addendum

Do not assume a program is VA-approved because it appears in the new catalog.

Policy Approvals: Not Just Academic Programs

- Catalog addendum and changes to standards of progress
- Grading, attendance, withdrawal, or refund-policy revisions
- Tuition and fee updates and other approval-relevant changes
- Revised transfer-credit or military-credit provisions
- Relocations, ownership changes, new sites, or institutional name changes

Your registrar or curriculum committee may approve a change internally; ask what the SAA requires next.

Catalog Crosswalk: SAA Approval vs DoD MOU

SAA / VA approval review

- Program requirements, credits, and graduation standards
- Grading and satisfactory progress, probation, dismissal, and reentry
- Conduct and dismissal policies; attendance standards if enforced
- Transfer / military prior-credit evaluation policy and records
- Tuition, fees, refunds, and other state-specific renewal items

DoD Tuition Assistance MOU

- Public program costs, degree requirements, and charges
- Drop/add, withdrawal, readmission, grievance, and military-duty impacts
- Evaluated degree plan, including applicable transfer/military credit
- Return of unearned TA through at least 60% of the course
- Current tuition rates and required TA disclosures

Important: Some DoD MOU disclosures may be on public webpages or student materials, not necessarily in the catalog

Prior-Credit Evaluation

- Evaluate previous education when the student first enrolls and when changing programs.
- Grant applicable credit under the institution’s policies.
- Notify the student about the evaluation.
- Shorten the certified program as appropriate and retain evaluation records.
- VA no longer requires a separate prior-credit report, but can review the records.

Applicable credit must be reflected in what remains eligible for certification.

Transfer Credit is Not “One Size Fits All”

REQUEST

Collect available prior institutional and military transcripts.

EVALUATE

Determine institution-level acceptance and specific program applicability.

RECORD

Retain evaluation and notify the student of results.

RECHECK

Repeat on a program change; adjust remaining requirements.

Accepted elective credit and applicable program credit are not always the same thing.

Military Training Credit: Evaluate, Don’t Guess

TRANSCRIPT SOURCES

- JST: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard
- Air Force / Space Force: Service college transcript through the applicable ordering process
- ACE recommendations: input, not automatic credit

INSTITUTIONAL DECISION

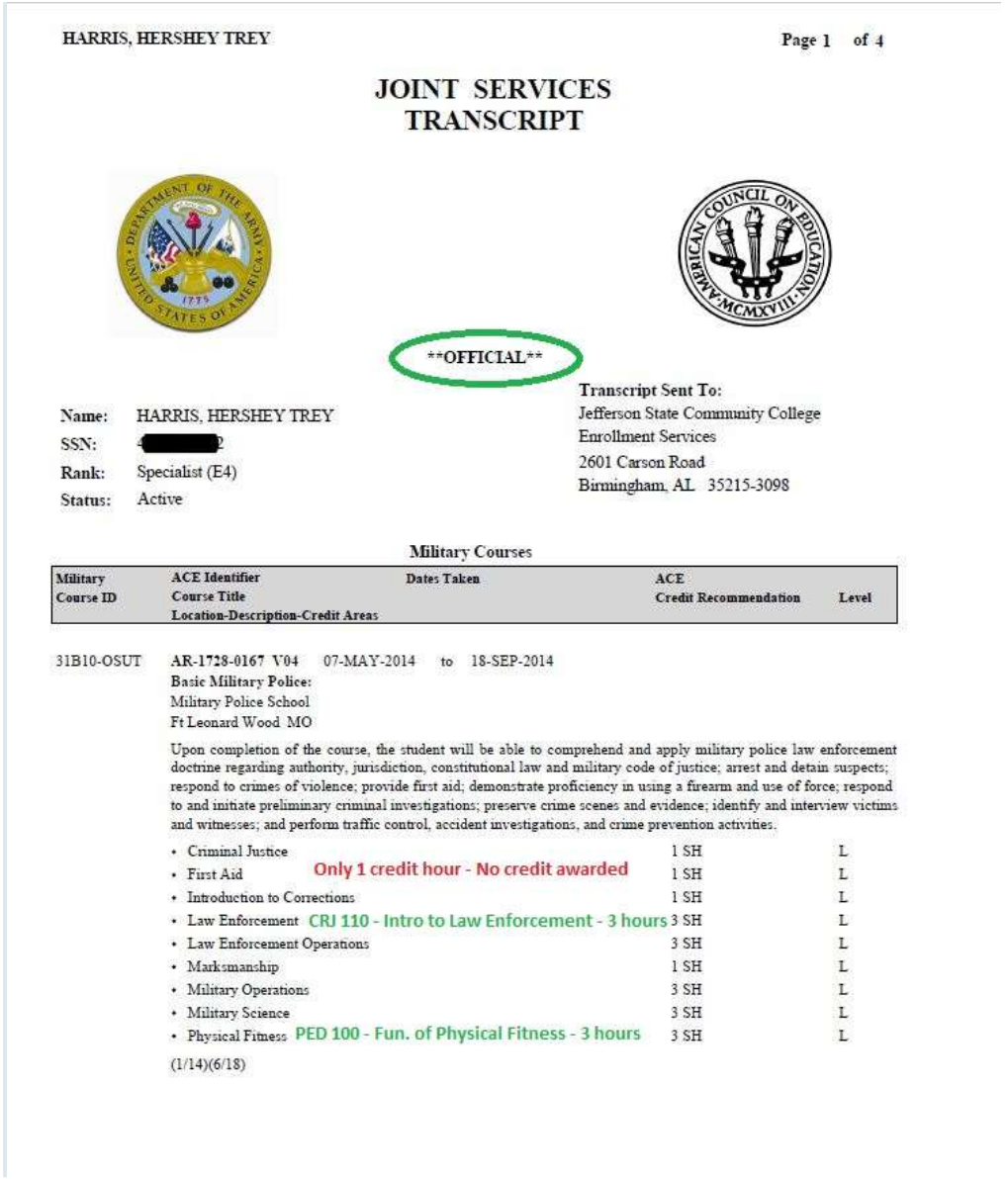
- Authorized evaluators decide equivalencies and degree applicability under published school policy.
- Document awarded credit and update the degree audit

An ACE credit recommendation is not itself a requirement to award that exact credit.

All transcripts must be official. Unofficial transcripts cannot be accepted.

Credit is awarded depending on the number of hours the military awards for the "class".

Department chairs are very helpful in reviewing, especially for AAS trade programs.



HARRIS, HERSHEY TREY Page 1 of 4

JOINT SERVICES TRANSCRIPT

OFFICIAL

Name: HARRIS, HERSHEY TREY
SSN: [redacted]
Rank: Specialist (E4)
Status: Active

Transcript Sent To:
Jefferson State Community College
Enrollment Services
2601 Carson Road
Birmingham, AL 35215-3098

Military Courses

Military Course ID	ACE Identifier / Course Title / Location-Description-Credit Areas	Dates Taken	ACE Credit Recommendation	Level
31B10-OSUT	AR-1728-0167 V04 **Basic Military Police:** Military Police School Ft Leonard Wood MO	07-MAY-2014 to 18-SEP-2014		

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to comprehend and apply military police law enforcement doctrine regarding authority, jurisdiction, constitutional law and military code of justice; arrest and detain suspects; respond to crimes of violence; provide first aid; demonstrate proficiency in using a firearm and use of force; respond to and initiate preliminary criminal investigations; preserve crime scenes and evidence; identify and interview victims and witnesses; and perform traffic control, accident investigations, and crime prevention activities.

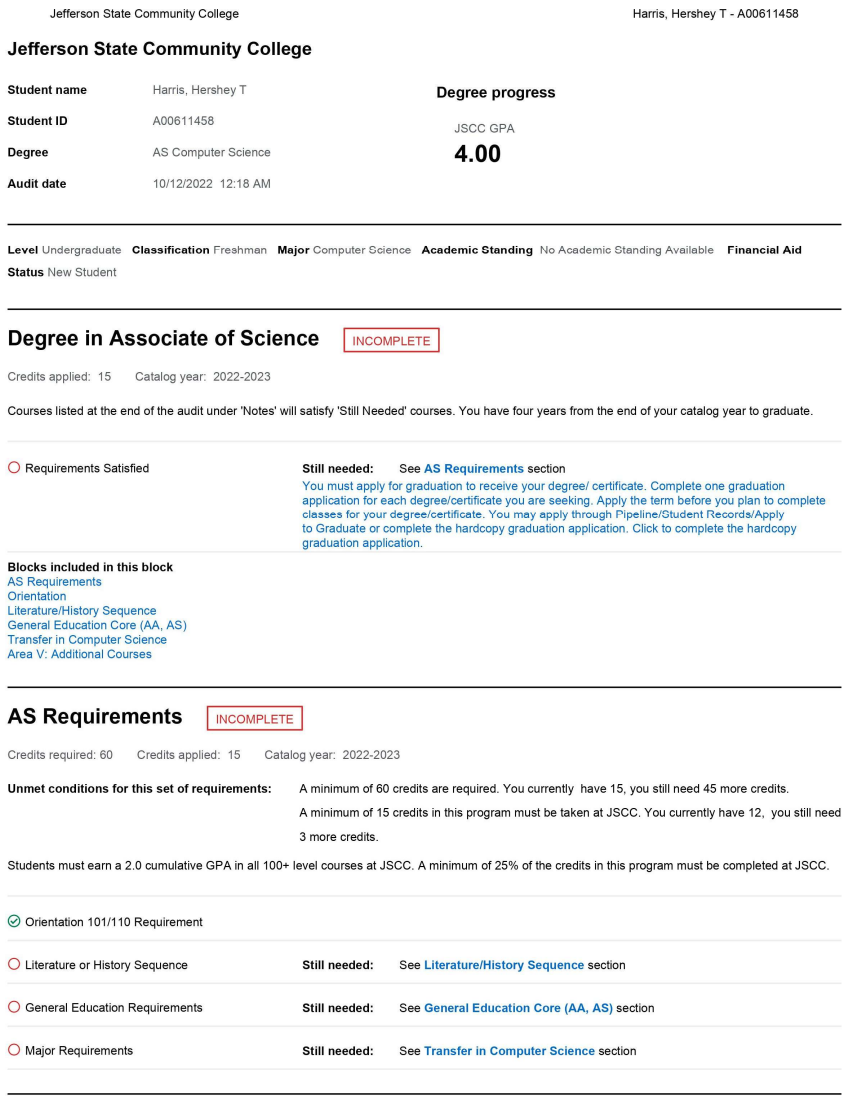
• Criminal Justice		1 SH	L
• First Aid	Only 1 credit hour - No credit awarded	1 SH	L
• Introduction to Corrections		1 SH	L
• Law Enforcement	CRJ 110 - Intro to Law Enforcement - 3 hours	3 SH	L
• Law Enforcement Operations		3 SH	L
• Marksmanship		1 SH	L
• Military Operations		3 SH	L
• Military Science		3 SH	L
• Physical Fitness	PED 100 - Fun. of Physical Fitness - 3 hours	3 SH	L

(1/14)(6/18)

There are several ways to double-check credit.

ACCS schools can check Degree Works and place holds on student accounts once students are registered and/or certified.

The STARS Guide is also an excellent tool for checking courses required for transfer (AA & AS) majors



Jefferson State Community College — Harris, Hershey T - A00611458

Jefferson State Community College

Student name Harris, Hershey T
Student ID A00611458
Degree AS Computer Science
Audit date 10/12/2022 12:18 AM

Degree progress
JSCC GPA
4.00

Level Undergraduate **Classification** Freshman **Major** Computer Science **Academic Standing** No Academic Standing Available **Financial Aid Status** New Student

Degree in Associate of Science INCOMPLETE

Credits applied: 15 Catalog year: 2022-2023

Courses listed at the end of the audit under 'Notes' will satisfy 'Still Needed' courses. You have four years from the end of your catalog year to graduate.

○ Requirements Satisfied — **Still needed:** See **AS Requirements** section
You must apply for graduation to receive your degree/ certificate. Complete one graduation application for each degree/certificate you are seeking. Apply the term before you plan to complete classes for your degree/certificate. You may apply through Pipeline/Student Records/Apply to Graduate or complete the hardcopy graduation application. Click to complete the hardcopy graduation application.

Blocks included in this block
AS Requirements
Orientation
Literature/History Sequence
General Education Core (AA, AS)
Transfer in Computer Science
Area V: Additional Courses

AS Requirements INCOMPLETE

Credits required: 60 Credits applied: 15 Catalog year: 2022-2023

Unmet conditions for this set of requirements: A minimum of 60 credits are required. You currently have 15, you still need 45 more credits.
A minimum of 15 credits in this program must be taken at JSCC. You currently have 12, you still need 3 more credits.

Students must earn a 2.0 cumulative GPA in all 100+ level courses at JSCC. A minimum of 25% of the credits in this program must be completed at JSCC.

✓ Orientation 101/110 Requirement

○ Literature or History Sequence — **Still needed:** See **Literature/History Sequence** section

○ General Education Requirements — **Still needed:** See **General Education Core (AA, AS)** section

○ Major Requirements — **Still needed:** See **Transfer in Computer Science** section

Orientation COMPLETE

Catalog year: 2022-2023

Orientation satisfied by Transfer work

Literature/History Sequence INCOMPLETE

Credits required: 6 Credits applied: 3 Catalog year: 2022-2023

Unmet conditions for this set of requirements: A minimum of 6 credits are required. You currently have 3, you still need 3 more credits.

	Course	Title	Grade	Credits	Term	Repeated
LITERATURE OR HISTORY SEQUENCE	**Still needed:**	Choose from 1 of the following:				
American Literature I and II		**2** Classes in **ENG** 251 and 252				
English Literature I and II		**2** Classes in **ENG** 261 and 262				
World Literature I and II		**2** Classes in **ENG** 271 and 272				
Western Civilization I and II		**2** Classes in **HIS** 101 and 102				
World History I and II	HIS 121	World History I **1** Class in **HIS** 122	A	3	Fall 2022	
United States History I and II		**2** Classes in **HIS** 201 and 202				

General Education Core (AA, AS) INCOMPLETE

Credits required: 41 Credits applied: 9 Catalog year: 2022-2023

Unmet conditions for this set of requirements: 41 credits are required. You currently have 9, you still need 32 more credits.

	Course	Title	Grade	Credits	Term	Repeated
AREA I: WRITTEN COMPOSITION						
English Composition I	ENG 101	English Composition I	REG	(3)	Fall 2022	
English Composition II	**Still needed:**	**1** Class in **ENG** 102				
AREA II: HUMANITIES AND FINE ARTS						
Literature	**Still needed:**	**1** Class in **ENG** 251 or 252 or 261 or 262 or 271 or 272				
Fine Arts	**Still needed:**	**1** Class in **ART** 100 or 203 or 204 or **MUS** 101 or **THR** 120				
Fund. of Oral Communication/Fund. of Public Speaking	**Still needed:**	**1** Class in **SPH** 106 or 107				

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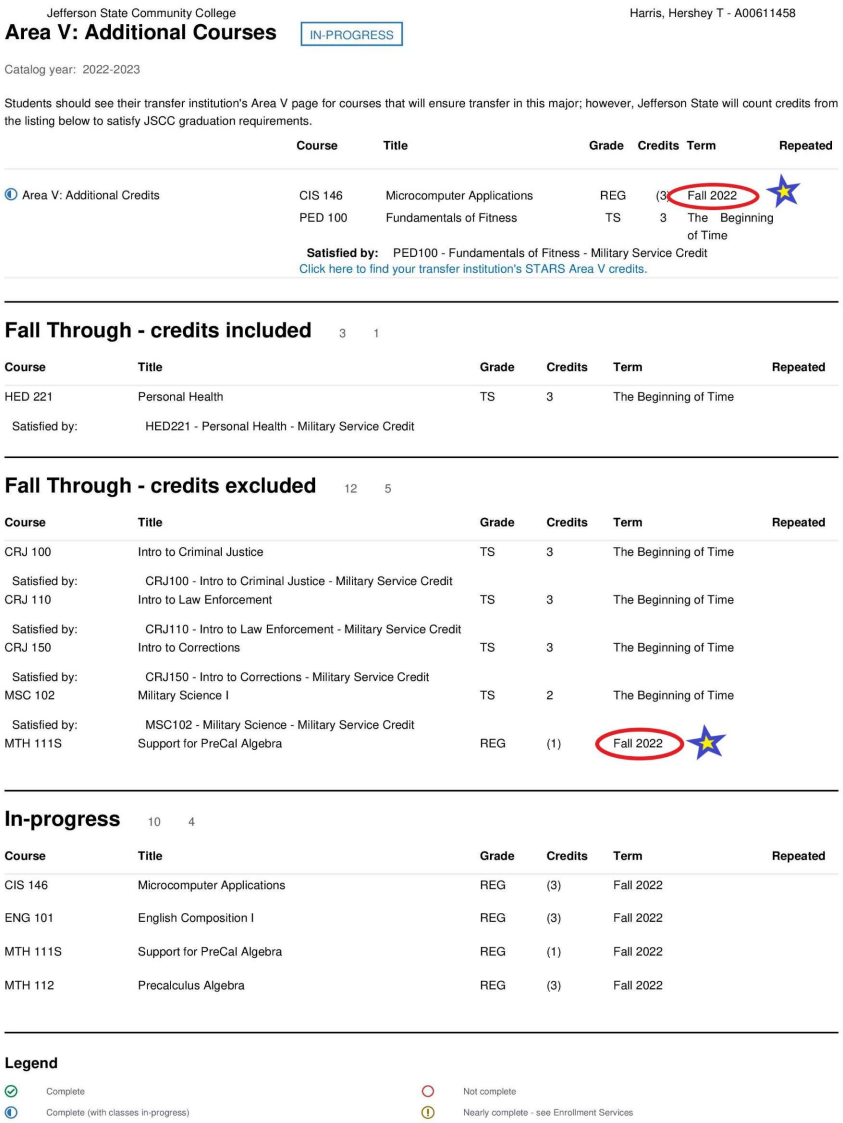
Humanities and/or Fine Arts	**Still needed:**	3 credits are required. You currently have 0, you still need 3 more credits. Choose credits in ART 100 or 203 or 204, ENG 251 or 252 or 261 or 262 or 271 or 272, HUM 299L and 299P and 299S, MUS 101, PHL 106 or 206, REL 151 or 152, SPA 101 or 102 or 201 or 202, SPH 107, THR 120.				
AREA III: NATURAL SCIENCES AND MATHEMATICS						
Precalculus Algebra or Higher	MTH 112	Precalculus Algebra	REG	(3)	Fall 2022	
Natural Sciences Sequence	**Still needed:**	Choose from 1 of the following:				
Biology Sequence		**2** Classes in **BIO** 101 and 102				
Biology Sequence		**2** Classes in **BIO** 103 and 104S				
Chemistry Sequence		**2** Classes in **CHM** 104 and 105				
Chemistry Sequence		**2** Classes in **CHM** 111 and 112				
General Physics Sequence		**2** Classes in **PHY** 201 and 202				
General Physics with Calculus Sequence		**2** Classes in **PHY** 213S and 214S				
AREA IV: HISTORY, SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES						
History	HIS 121	World History I	A	3	Fall 2022	
History or Behavioral Sciences	**Still needed:**	3 classes are required. You currently have 0, you still need 3 more classes. Choose classes in ANT 200 or 220 or 230 or ECO 231 or 232 or GEO 100 or HIS 101 or 102 or 121 or 122 or 201 or 202 or POL 211 or PSY 200 or 210 or SOC 200 or 210 or SPH 116. Only 2 HIS classes are allowed in Area IV.				

Transfer in Computer Science INCOMPLETE

Credits required: 19 Credits applied: 6 Catalog year: 2022-2023

Unmet conditions for this set of requirements: 19 credits are required in Area V. You still need 13 more credits.

AREA V: PRE-PROFESSIONAL, MAJOR & ELECTIVE COURSES		
Precalculus Trigonometry	**Still needed:**	**1** Class in **MTH** 113
Calculus I	**Still needed:**	**1** Class in **MTH** 125S
Calculus II	**Still needed:**	**1** Class in **MTH** 126S
C++ Programming or Object Oriented Programming	**Still needed:**	**1** Class in **CIS** 251 or 285
Area V: Additional Credits		



Jefferson State Community College

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Area V: Additional Courses

IN-PROGRESS

Catalog year: 2022-2023

Students should see their transfer institution's Area V page for courses that will ensure transfer in this major; however, Jefferson State will count credits from the listing below to satisfy JSCC graduation requirements.

	Course	Title	Grade	Credits	Term	Repeated
Area V: Additional Credits	CIS 146	Microcomputer Applications	REG	(3)	Fall 2022	
	PED 100	Fundamentals of Fitness	TS	3	The Beginning of Time	

Satisfied by: PED100 - Fundamentals of Fitness - Military Service Credit

Click here to find your transfer institution's STARS Area V credits.

Fall Through - credits included 3 1

Course	Title	Grade	Credits	Term	Repeated
HED 221	Personal Health	TS	3	The Beginning of Time	
Satisfied by:	HED221 - Personal Health - Military Service Credit				

Fall Through - credits excluded 12 5

Course	Title	Grade	Credits	Term	Repeated
CRJ 100	Intro to Criminal Justice	TS	3	The Beginning of Time	
Satisfied by:	CRJ100 - Intro to Criminal Justice - Military Service Credit				
CRJ 110	Intro to Law Enforcement	TS	3	The Beginning of Time	
Satisfied by:	CRJ110 - Intro to Law Enforcement - Military Service Credit				
CRJ 150	Intro to Corrections	TS	3	The Beginning of Time	
Satisfied by:	CRJ150 - Intro to Corrections - Military Service Credit				
MSC 102	Military Science I	TS	2	The Beginning of Time	
Satisfied by:	MSC102 - Military Science - Military Service Credit				
MTH 111S	Support for PreCal Algebra	REG	(1)	Fall 2022	

In-progress 10 4

Course	Title	Grade	Credits	Term	Repeated
CIS 146	Microcomputer Applications	REG	(3)	Fall 2022	
ENG 101	English Composition I	REG	(3)	Fall 2022	
MTH 111S	Support for PreCal Algebra	REG	(1)	Fall 2022	
MTH 112	Precalculus Algebra	REG	(3)	Fall 2022	

Legend

Complete

Complete (with classes in-progress)

Not complete

Nearly complete - see Enrollment Services

Your degree planning software should show you where the classes fall on a student's degree plan, as well as show you the credits that your institution was able to accept.

This is important to ensure that your student is not repeating courses already passed or taking a class that is not needed for their major.

Scenario 1 | The Late Transcript

A student completes two semesters but is missing a transcript. The transcript arrives and is evaluated before semester three, awarding credit toward a completed course and another upcoming requirement.

DISCUSS

What must be documented?

What does the SCO review before the next certification?

What does this mean for the student?

KEY TAKEAWAY

Record the official evaluation, review remaining program requirements, and investigate whether any prior certification needs correction.

Certifying before a full transcript review can cause tuition & housing debts.

Best Practice: Do not certify until all prior credit has been received and reviewed.

Prior Credit Update: Not Every Transcript Is Required

- VA does not require schools to obtain every prior transcript.
- Students are responsible for providing transcripts; an unavailable transcript alone is not a violation.
- Review transcripts received and follow your SAA-approved prior-credit policy.
- Grant applicable credit, document the evaluation, and shorten the program when appropriate.
- No log of transcript-request attempts or signed student refusal is required by VA.

Before changing transcript requirements, remember the prior credit statute 38 U.S.C. § 3675(b)(2).

Scenario 2 | The Catalog Revision

A college launches a revised certificate in September. Admissions is recruiting for the program, and the catalog is updated via an addendum. The SCO has submitted the addendum to the SAA but has not received SAA approval.

DISCUSS

Can the SCO certify students in the revised program solely on that basis?

Does the type of change impact this decision?

KEY TAKEAWAY

No assumption of approval. Compare approval records and contact the SAA about the revised program and effective date.

Scenario 3 | Changing majors

A Chapter 33 student changed from Business to Cybersecurity. Their transfer evaluation was completed two years ago for the original major.

DISCUSS

Is the original transfer evaluation sufficient to certify the new program?

Does the SCO need to adjust prior certifications after the updated review?

KEY TAKEAWAY

Reevaluate credits for their applicability to the new program and update the degree audit before certifying requirements.

Ongoing Compliance: A Workable Rhythm

EACH TERM

Verify current approved programs, degree audits, enrollments, and policy application

WHEN CHANGES OCCUR

Route catalog, program, site, tuition, or policy changes through an SAA review workflow

ANNUALLY

Reconcile catalog editions, approval letters, forms, student-facing sites and procedures

BEFORE A SURVEY

Sample files: prior-credit records, program applicability, change documentation, and certifications