

VIRGINIA PASSPORT AND UNIFORM CERTIFICATE OF GENERAL STUDIES GENERAL EDUCATION TRANSFER CREDIT AGREEMENT

(Updated 4/24/2023)

This document establishes a multi-institutional agreement to secure institutions' commitment to the application of the 16 Passport and 30-32 Uniform Certificate of General Studies (UCGS) credits to general education requirements for transfer students who have earned the Passport or UCGS and transfer prior to completing a transfer associate degree.

The institutions of higher education in Virginia recognize the importance of facilitating the transfer of students from one institution to the other in the most efficient and productive way possible. Senior institutions, Richard Bland College (RBC), and the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) enter into this agreement to provide all students an opportunity for transferability and applicability of course work completed at Virginia's two-year institutions to satisfy general education requirements.

Section 1: Definition of Passport and Uniform Certificate of General Studies

The Passport and UCGS are 16 and 30-32 credit hour programs in which all courses are transferable and shall satisfy lower-division general education requirements at any public institution of higher education.¹ The Passport shall be a component of the UCGS.

Students transfer through many different pathways; the Passport and UCGS are two mechanisms according to which transfer opportunities are maximized for students. The goal of both the Passport and UCGS is to maximize credit acceptance and application toward general education requirements for students transferring prior to earning a transfer associate degree. The Passport and UCGS offer a large number of courses to optimize the student's educational experience and increase the opportunity for students to earn the Passport or UCGS while also preparing for their program of study.

The Passport and UCGS do not guarantee students admission into an institution.

Section 2: Requirements for Passport and UCGS

A. Course Completion

Students earn the Passport or UCGS by completing the required credit hours as prescribed in section 2B. When a general education program exceeds 16 or 30-32 credits, completion of the Passport or UCGS guarantees satisfaction of the most applicable 16 or 30-32 credits of lower-division general education requirements or individual program requirements.

¹ Due to the inclusion of courses bearing more than 3 credits in the requirements of the Passport and UCGS, the credit hours in practice exceed the statutory requirements of 15 and 30 credit hours.

No distinction will be made by senior institutions regarding college courses applicable to the Passport and UCGS that are completed through dual enrollment arrangements with high schools. The courses completed through enrollment at multiple two-year public institutions in Virginia collectively apply to meeting Passport and UCGS requirements. A student’s transcript from a two-year institution will designate completion of the Passport or UCGS.

B. Passport/UCGS Curricular Requirements

Students complete the Passport and UCGS by satisfying the credit requirements within each general education block at the two-year institution, as described in the table below. Descriptions of blocks represent community college general education categories and do not designate which general education requirement is met at the senior institution.

General Education Area	Passport	UCGS (Includes Passport Credits)
Block I Written Communication ²	3 credit hours	6 credit hours
Block II Humanities, Arts, and Literature	3 credit hours (Complete Block II or VI)	6 credit hours from 2 different categories (Humanities, Arts, Literature)
Block III Social/Behavioral Sciences	3 credit hours	3 credit hours
Block IV Natural Sciences	4 credit hours	4 credit hours
Block V Mathematics	3 credit hours	3 credit hours
Block VI History	3 credit hours (Complete Block II or VI)	3 credit hours
Block VII Specialized General Education Requirements ³	Not applicable	5-7 credit hours
Total	16 credit hours	30-32 credit hours

C. Grade Requirements

All benefits that accrue to students as a result of this agreement are based on all Passport and UCGS courses being completed with a grade of C or above.

² Students transferring to UVA may need to submit a writing portfolio before being considered as having met the institution’s First Writing Requirement. If transferring credits do not satisfy the First Writing Requirement, UVA agrees to accept and apply credits toward student graduation requirements and students will be required to take an institutional writing course.

³ A Specialized General Education Requirement course will satisfy either general education or major requirement as part of the total credit hours needed to earn a bachelor’s degree.

D. Course Rosters

Courses included in the VCCS and RBC Passport and UCGS course rosters have been developed under the guidance of TransferVA and identified as meeting general education learning outcomes at institutions in Virginia. UCGS and Passport course roster modifications are subject to the provisions of the [Virginia Public Higher Education Policy on Passport and Uniform Certificate of General Studies Programs](#).

SCHEV shall document the removal or addition of courses and maintain historical records of courses on the roster. SCHEV and the Transfer Virginia portal will also provide the current Passport and UCGS rosters. (Link to SCHEV site.)

SCHEV shall administer ongoing updates to the Passport/UCGS course roster via annual notifications to institutions through the State Committee on Transfer.

E. Application to Receiving Institution General Education Requirements

Determination of specific general education requirements met by Passport and UCGS coursework is at the discretion of the receiving institution as long as the practice is in accordance with the following policy: [Virginia Public Higher Education Policy on Passport and Uniform Certificate of General Studies Programs](#).

Institutions requiring credits beyond the Passport or UCGS must determine which requirements are satisfied by the Passport or UCGS and which need to be completed. This practice of applying the Passport or UCGS courses to the most appropriate general education requirement aligns with the current practice of senior institutions waiving lower-division general education requirements for the completion of a transfer associate degree. Because the Passport and UCGS directly align with the core general education requirements of all two-year colleges in Virginia, this practice also supports and encourages students to align their general education with associate degree completion and more specifically with program-specific requirements.

Block VII, Specialized General Education Requirement, provides students the opportunity to meet general education requirements that are unique to the senior institution (e.g., public speaking, foreign language, skills-based classes, program specific requirements, etc.) The courses taken in this block will satisfy either general education or major requirements as part of the total credit hours needed to earn a bachelor's degree at all institutions participating in this agreement.

Section 3: Acceptance of Courses Without Equivalencies

UCGS courses may satisfy a general education requirement at the senior institution without having a specific course equivalent at the receiving institution. All courses included on the roster shall be applied to a student's general education requirements as required by policy. Senior institutions will communicate to students how their course work has been applied as part of their degree audit. These courses may also meet program requirements.

As outlined in the Passport policy:

MTH 161/162 and 167 should only be taken by students preparing for calculus or for four-year degree programs that specifically require study in College Algebra/PreCalc.

Receiving institutions will determine the applicability of pre-calculus courses to the general education or major programs requirements and award appropriate credit. Additional math courses may be required to meet these requirements.

Section 4: Credit for Prior Learning

Credit awarded for prior learning assessment may be included in both the Passport and UCGS for the purpose of satisfying general education requirements upon transfer. Four-year review of prior learning (CPL) is in accordance with the [Virginia Public Higher Education Policy on Course Credit for AP, Cambridge, CLEP, and IB](#). Prior learning includes, but is not limited to, course credit for Advanced Placement, Cambridge, CLEP, IB, military training, or industry certifications. *Transfer* credit awarded for prior learning is not guaranteed and subject to review by the four-year institution.

Institutions will award credit for prior learning in the Passport and UCGS as defined below, aligning with the treatment of such when an associate degree is earned:

1. The credits awarded at the 2-year institution for the CPL will satisfy the appropriate general education requirement at the receiving institution. This does not necessarily result in credits being awarded.
2. Credits awarded for courses post transfer that apply towards meeting prerequisite or degree requirements will be determined by the receiving institution based on the CPL score requirements or criteria at that institution.

Section 5: Administration of Agreement

The Chief Academic Officer of each four-year institution, Richard Bland College, and the Virginia Community College System is the official responsible for all aspects of this Passport and Uniform Certificate of General Studies Programs agreement.

A private college may request SCHEV approval to join this agreement. Termination may be made by the four-year private institution upon written notice to SCHEV. Such notice should be given one year in advance of the date of termination.

Two-Year Institutional Responsibilities

- 2-Year institutions track the completion of Passport and UCGS programs and submit completion data annually to SCHEV.
- Ensure quality of coursework.
- Advise students on Passport and UCGS courses that best align with the student's program of study.

- Notify SCHEV of changes in course content that may affect the courses' applicability to these programs or discontinuance through the process outlined in the Passport and UCGS policy.

Four-Year Institutional Responsibilities

- 4-year institutions receive Passport and UCGS courses in satisfaction toward general education requirements in accordance with Passport and UCGS policy.
- Assess success of students enrolling with Passport/UCGS related to degree completion.
- Articulate and publish program specific course waivers in accordance with the Passport and UCGS policy.

Section 6: Review Clause

SCHEV will present this agreement for IPAC review every three years (or sooner if circumstances dictate) to consider adjustments as appropriate to maintain the integrity of the agreement and its value and for the improvement of the transfer process.

VIRGINIA PASSPORT AND UNIFORM CERTIFICATE OF GENERAL STUDIES GENERAL EDUCATION TRANSFER CREDIT AGREEMENT

Signatures

Dr. Tyler Hart 11.11.21
Chief Academic Officer Date
Richard Bland College

Dr. Sharon Morrissey 11.4.21
Chief Academic Officer Date
Virginia Community College System

Dr. Dave Doughty 10.7.21
Chief Academic Officer Date
Christopher Newport University

Dr. Mark Ginsberg 11.11.21
Chief Academic Officer Date
George Mason University

Dr. Cynthia Bauerle 9.30.21
Chief Academic Officer Date
James Madison University

Dr. Larissa Smith 9.17.21
Chief Academic Officer Date
Longwood University

Dr. Ebenezer Kolajo 11.11.21
Chief Academic Officer Date
Norfolk State University

Dr. Austin Agho 10.1.21
Chief Academic Officer Date
Old Dominion University

Dr. J. Orion Rogers 11.12.21
Chief Academic Officer Date
Radford University

Dr. Timothy O'Donnell 10.1.21
Chief Academic Officer Date
University of Mary Washington

Dr. Trisha Folds-Bennett 11.9.21
Chief Academic Officer Date

Dr. Fotis Sotiropoulos 10.6.21
Chief Academic Officer Date

University of Virginia – Wise

Donald E. Palm, III **11.17.21**
Chief Academic Officer **Date**
Virginia State University

Dr. Peggy Agouris **10.1.21**
Chief Academic Officer **Date**
College of William & Mary

Dr. Fred Kniss **9.22.21**
Chief Academic Officer **Date**
Eastern Mennonite University

Dr. Hesham El-Rewini **9.20.21**
Chief Academic Officer **Date**
Marymount University

Dr. Teresa Garrett **10.4.21**
Chief Academic Officer **Date**
Sweet Briar College

Dr. Ian Baucom **5.12.22**
Chief Academic Officer
University of Virginia

Dr. Alisa J. Rosenthal **3.2.23**
Chief Academic Officer
Randolph-Macon College

Virginia Commonwealth University

Dr. Cyril Clarke **9.30.21**
Chief Academic Officer **Date**
Virginia Tech

Dr. Leona Sevick **9.24.21**
Chief Academic Officer **Date**
Bridgewater College

Dr. Tynisha Willingham **9.7.21**
Chief Academic Officer **Date**
Mary Baldwin University

Dr. Cameron McCoy **9.20.21**
Chief Academic Officer **Date**
Shenandoah University

Dr. Maynard Schaus **9.13.21**
Chief Academic Officer **Date**
Virginia Wesleyan University

Dr. Allison B. Jablonski **1.11.23**
Chief Academic Officer
University of Lynchburg

Dr. Kathy J. Wolfe **4.21.23**
Chief Academic Officer
Roanoke College

Review Documentation

Review Date	Completed By	Agreement Extension
4/24/23	Dr. Paul Smith, SCHEV	