

## Utilizing Credit by Exam to Streamline Students' Programs of Study

Credit by Exam (CBE) is a District procedure designed to provide students with an opportunity to earn credit for demonstrating, through examination, their mastery of the course content/skills acquired through prior learning or experience. Students benefit from the opportunity to avoid redundant coursework and advance more quickly with units earned toward completion of a program of study. Exploring the expansion of Credit by Exam opportunities is an ongoing district initiative. The CBE procedure (3.16P) requires that student pay CBE fees equivalent to enrollment in the course. CBE fees are not covered by the BOG fee waiver. There is no requirement that a student taking CBE must also be currently enrolled at SRJC. After consultation with faculty, a department chair may initiative the process to have a course considered for CBE approval. Faculty members determine the content of the exams and are responsible for the academic integrity of the assessment.

### Frequently asked questions:

*Q: How do faculty members get compensated for their time proctoring and grading CBE?*

A PAF is generated after the fact by the department chair. It is load bearing and at the allied, non-instructional rate. The amount of time to conduct and grade CBE will vary depending upon the length and type of exam (e.g., project based; skills demonstration), as well as the number of students completing it.

*Q: Is it expected that each department fund its own CBE costs?*

No. A special district budget has been established to cover these costs.

*Q: How often should CBE be administered and when is the best time to offer CBE?*

It depends upon the program. Some departments offer CBE for their approved courses once a year, while others do so each semester. Timing is a consideration. CBE sections may be offered in the summer or at the end of spring semester so that passing students are cleared for enrollment into the higher lever course(s) for the fall semester.

*Q: If a student fails CBE, does his/her record show a poor grade?*

If the course outline of record allows the course to be taken "pass/no pass", then students may reduce risk to their GPAs by taking CBE as pass/no pass. If the course is offered "grade only" then students who must complete that assessment for a grade, and hence, assume greater risk of potentially earning a poor grade. Counselors recommend that CBE be taken for a grade when the course is a part of a students' certificate/degree/transfer program.

*Q: If a student fails to pass CBE, how many times may he/she re-take CBE for a particular course?*

The student may take CBE one more time for a total of two CBE attempts per course.

*Q: Is there a limit to the number of units which may be earned through CBE?*

Yes. The maximum number of units that may be earned via CBE is fifteen.

*Q: How does CBE credit appear on a student's transcript?*

State Education Code requires that credit recorded is clearly annotated as having been “earned through examination.” SRJC student records reference the code “09” for Credit by Exam.

Steps for Course Approval for Credit by Exam:

1. Faculty member(s) develop a comprehensive course assessment.
  - It may include written as well as skills demonstration, lab, and/or portfolio components. It may require that students complete a project. The assessment should measure students’ mastery of course content/skills.
2. Submit assessment instrument(s) to the Curriculum office, along with:
  - Letter of rationale for offering CBE addressed to the Curriculum Review Committee’s co-chairs.  
*(e.g., to provide opportunity for students coming from industry/with prior learning to both bypass an introductory course earn credit toward a degree/certificate/transfer)*
  - Grading Criteria for Exam  
*(should include: rubrics for assessment; information for determining passing grade; if multiple assessments: practicum/written/oral/lab explain the weight of each part and total score required for passing grade)*

Note: be mindful of CRC approval timelines. Allow additional time as the CRC chairs need to review and approve CBE prior to the CRC meeting deadlines.

Process to conduct Credit by Exam:

- Department must publicize exam *(e.g., on web site; in Bear Facts; post flyers; call announcements)*
- Work with department service center/administrative assistant staff to support process
- Complete “Request for Schedule CBE” form to department/service center w/3 signatures: Supervising faculty fills out and signs; department chair signs; supervising administrator (dean) sign
- Include section(s) for CBE on class schedule, or, fill out schedule change form (SCF) and submit it to Cheri Winter in the Scheduling office. Note that it is for a “Credit by Exam” section
- CBE sections are clearly identified as “Credit by Exam” sections in the schedule of classes
- Sections may be listed as “RESTRICTED.” This requires students to obtain an add card from the instructor in order to enroll. This provides an opportunity for faculty to screen students

Contact the Curriculum Office for further guidance.