

May 4, 2006

MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Layton R. McCurdy, Chairman, and Members, Commission on Higher Education

From: Dr. Vermelle J. Johnson, Chairman, and Members, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

**Consideration of Annual Report on Advanced Placement
Course Acceptance Policies, FY 2005-06**

The Education Improvement Act (1984) requires the Commission to monitor the awarding of AP credit by the State's public higher education institutions. The Education Improvement Act specified that:

Students successfully completing the Advanced Placement requirements shall receive Advanced Placement credit in postsecondary public colleges in South Carolina in the manner specified by the Commission on Higher Education in conjunction with the State Board of Education.

In July 1985, the Commission adopted the following policy:

Effective not later than Fall 1986, each public institution shall give credit in appropriate courses for scores of three or better on pertinent Advanced Placement examinations, except that specific exemptions for not awarding credit for scores of three or better on particular tests at any institution may be approved by the Committee on Academic Affairs. (As used above, the phrase "appropriate courses" means those courses offered by the institutions which parallel the content covered by the AP exam. The phrase "pertinent examination" means those examinations whose content parallels that of the institutional course.)

Annually, the Commission updates its list of Advanced Placement (AP) examinations for which credit for comparable courses is awarded for scores of three or

higher. The two- and four-year public institutions in the State review the current list of AP examinations for which credit is given by their institution, and then report any revisions (e.g., additions, deletions).

The 1996-97 Appropriations Bill included a proviso (section 18A.21) that mandated that all postsecondary institutions in South Carolina award AP credit to students receiving a score of three or above on an AP examination. All institutions evaluated their AP policies based on this approved legislation. The proviso reads as follows:

Section 18A.21 (CHE: Advanced Placement) Students successfully completing advanced placement courses and receiving a score of three or above on the exam shall receive advanced placement credit for each course in all postsecondary public colleges in South Carolina.

In compliance with the approved legislation, each public two- and four-year institution shall award AP credit for each course if a student scores three or higher on an Advanced Placement examination. Although the proviso does not address maximum limits on the number of AP credit hours in any one discipline area, exemption from courses, or specific conditions imposed on the award of college credit for a minimum score of three, the intent of the new law is to remove all institutional exemptions or conditions for awarding AP credit for minimum scores of three. However, the new law does not require that AP credit be awarded for courses that are not offered by the institution unless the institution desires to do so. Customarily, institutions have not awarded credit for courses not available in their curricula.

The following two charts (see **Attachments 1 and 2**) show the acceptance status for all current AP tests at each public two-and four-year institution.

May 2006, the Italian Language and Culture AP exam will be administered for the first time. Beginning in the 2006-07 academic year, the College Board will add new foreign-language AP courses in Japanese Language and Culture and Chinese Language and Culture. The Advanced Placement Course Descriptions for the Japanese and Chinese courses are currently in draft form and can be found online along with current course descriptions and other information regarding AP courses and exams at <http://www.collegeboard.com/ap>. Planning is underway for an AP course in Russian.

Recommendation

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing recommends that the Commission on Higher Education approve this report and disseminate it appropriately.

/jb

cc: Excel Attachments (2)