

**POLICY TITLE**

Workforce Certification in Curriculum

**POLICY NUMBER**

4.13 (Formerly APPM 8.2)

**PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY**

Office of Academic Affairs and the Workforce Certification Center

**CREATION / REVISION / EFFECTIVE DATES**

Created April 2003/Revised September 2010/Effective January 2011

**PURPOSE**

Workforce certification is of value to employers, to employees, and to the College. Employers benefit through:

- Simplification of the employee screening and selection process.
- Greater employee knowledge and improved productivity.
- Increased ROI by quantifying course outcomes.

Employees benefit through:

- Improved and validated skills.
- Improved employment/advancement opportunities and earning potential.  
Enhanced professional credibility.
- Earned college credit which can be applied toward a certificate or degree.
- Differentiated skills during hiring process.

Finally, workforce certification validates quality instruction and curriculum, and provides a third-party measure of students' technical skills.

**ORGANIZATIONAL SCOPE OR AUDIENCE**

Curricula areas with available workforce certifications.

**DEFINITIONS**

*Certification Crosswalk:* Document listing the credit courses that correspond to a particular license or certification.

**POLICY**

Academic Affairs and the Workforce Alignment personnel shall work together to provide students with opportunities for both training and testing for certifications. The following procedures reinforce the need to incorporate strategies into the certification-based credit courses that will be incentives for students to take certification examinations after they have completed training. Procedures vary based on whether certifications align with:

1. A single course in a curriculum,
2. A multiple-course sequence in a curriculum,
3. Program curriculum and recommended work experience beyond academic training,
4. Program curriculum and required work experience beyond academic training.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **The Academic Initiative**

The Campus Academic Officers Committee have endorsed the next step in incorporating more activity into certification-based courses. This next step includes several activities as follows:

- a. Strengthening current course objectives or adding new ones in courses that directly address preparation for taking the certification examination associated with that course. Ivy Tech course objectives would correspond with the published certification exam objectives.
- b. Using more vendor course materials that reinforce the certification objectives in these courses.
- c. Using certified faculty (or higher credentials as defined by regulatory or accrediting agencies) to teach certification-based courses,
- d. Requiring that students take the certification examination as a course activity as appropriate:

### **Certifications that align with learning objectives achieved through a single course:**

Program curriculum committees shall identify the course where a given certification exam aligns with course learning objectives. If no work experience is expected prior to sitting for the exam, it is appropriate to require a certification exam that will be used to evaluate the student's achievement of the course objectives. The committee shall further determine how the results of the certification exam will calculate into the student's final grade in the course (excluding the use of extra credit – certification results must account for a specified percentage of the course grade) and will communicate the grading procedure in the Course Outline of Record (COR).

In courses where the statewide curriculum committee has required a certification exam, the cost of the test shall be incorporated into the cost of the course as a consumable fee, (just as fees for consumable instructional items have been included in the course cost). Including costs in this manner will allow for financial aid to cover the cost of testing for eligible students.

### **Certifications that align with learning objectives achieved through a multiple-course sequence:**

Program curriculum committees shall identify certification exams that align with learning objectives achieved through a multiple-course sequence. If no work experience is expected prior to sitting for the exam, it is appropriate to require the certification exam in the final course of the required sequence. The committee shall further determine how the results of the certification exam will calculate into the student's final grade in the course (excluding the use of extra credit – certification results must account for a specified percentage of the course grade) and will communicate the grading procedure in the Course Outline of Record (COR).

In courses where the statewide curriculum committee has required a certification exam, the cost of the test shall be incorporated into the cost of the course as a consumable fee, (just as fees for consumable instructional items have been included in the course cost). Including costs in this manner will allow for financial aid to cover the cost of testing for eligible students.

**Certifications that align with learning objectives achieved through course/s and certification body *recommends* work experience:**

When work experience is recommended by the certification body prior to taking a certification exam, it is not appropriate to require the certification exam as a course activity or assessment. Rather, practice exams should be administered as a course activity and calculated into the student's final course grade (excluding the use of extra credit – practice exam results must account for a specified percentage of the course grade). In cases where no practice exam exists, practice materials should be included as a course activity and calculated into the student's final course grade (excluding the use of extra credit – results from the course activity must account for a specified percentage of the course grade). Cost for the certification practice exam or materials will be embedded into the cost of the course as a consumable fee and completed before the certification practice exam voucher expires.

**Certifications that align with learning objectives achieved through course/s and certification body *requires* work experience:**

When work experience is required by the certification body prior to taking a certification exam, it is not appropriate to require the certification exam as a course activity or assessment. Cost for the exam shall not be embedded into the cost of the course as a consumable fee.

**Certification Crosswalk**

The Certification Crosswalk is used to link specific certifications and licenses to the Ivy Tech course or courses that provide education or training in the same subject matter. The crosswalk provides a consistent process for awarding credit for prior learning experiences.

Program curriculum committees compare certifications and licenses with the statewide course objectives for the class(es) to ensure that certification and/or licensure is an effective measure of the objectives of the course(s). Certifications and/or licenses are added to or removed from the crosswalk by the program curriculum members. The Certification Crosswalk will be updated annually as part of the curriculum review process (See 6.8 Program Curriculum Development and Maintenance).

It is the responsibility of the student to provide Ivy Tech with documentation of his/her certification or licensure. Students receive credit per the College policy on awarding transfer credit. There are no fees charged for this credit. The transcript will show a status of "V" for verified competency.

Each campus shall designate a staff member to serve as the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) coordinator to assist students in the use of the certification crosswalk. (1.8 Prior Learning Crosswalk Development)

**Relationships/Partnerships with vendors, academics, and other external initiatives**

Workforce Alignment participates in partnerships with companies and organizations that offer or promote activities and services that supplement or provide benefit to certification services offered at the college.

Whenever possible, agreements with vendors shall be established by the statewide Center for Workforce Alignment and the benefits made available to each campus center.

Workforce Alignment staff will be responsible for adhering to the policies and rules established by the partnership agreement.

### **Workforce Alignment Examinations**

The Workforce Alignment staff contracts with several vendors to provide testing services to the public. Sponsoring vendors determine the objectives and the content of the examinations.

The sponsoring vendors also establish retail test prices and fees. Prices charged by Ivy Tech Community College are reviewed by the Workforce Alignment Operations Committee and uniform prices are published periodically.

The Statewide Center staff and/or the Workforce Alignment Operations Committee must approve any deviation from established prices. Periodically, discounted or promotional prices are offered.

### **Disclaimer Statement**

A disclaimer statement has been approved that describes the responsibilities of Ivy Tech Community College and certification test candidates as they relate to certification exam preparation.

This disclaimer is to be attached to the course outlines or program information of all certification- related or licensing courses and posted prominently in facilities used for certification/licensing training and testing.

The following is the approved text for the disclaimer statement:

#### **Long Version**

Ivy Tech cannot guarantee that any student will pass a certification or licensing exam. Your success will be determined by several factors beyond the instruction you are given in the classroom including your test-taking skills, your willingness to study outside of class, and your satisfactory completion of appropriate practice exams. Certification and licensure exam questions are drawn from databases of hundreds of possible questions; therefore, a thorough understanding of the subject matter is required. Ivy Tech's coursework is designed to assist you in understanding the material sufficiently to provide a firm foundation for your studies as you prepare for the exam.

#### **Short Version**

Ivy Tech cannot guarantee that any student will pass a certification or licensing exam. Our requisite coursework is designed to assist you in understanding the material sufficiently to provide a firm foundation for your studies as you prepare for the exam.

**REFERENCES**

1.8 Prior Learning Crosswalk Development <http://www.ivytech.edu/policies/prior-learning-assessment.pdf>

4.16 Grading Student Learning <http://www.ivytech.edu/policies/grading-student-learning.pdf>

Course Outline of Record <http://www.ivytech.edu/academics/courses-curriculum.html>

**RESOURCE PERSON**

Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Program Chairs