ACADEMIC CREDITS FROM ANOTHER COLLEGE

How Does Credit Transfer?

By JoAnn Moseman, MA, Academic Transfer Coordinator
Office of Undergraduate Studies

It is increasingly common for students to take courses from more than one college. Students may take courses through distance learning or on-line, enroll at a community college or pick up a course over the summer. Whether it is a study abroad program, courses taken at another college for convenience, or a transfer from one college to another, students and parents often have questions about how credit transfers.

**Will the credit transfer?**

The answer is both simple and complex. Most credit can be transferred to UNL, but that is only part of the story. The real issue is whether the credit applies to the student’s degree requirements. Because requirements vary, this answer will vary by college and by major.

**How is credit evaluated?**

The academic college within the university will determine how credit is applied to a student’s particular degree requirements. Even if it doesn’t apply to a student’s degree, academic credit is never lost. It remains a part of the student’s academic record.

To transfer credit, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln requires official transcripts from all colleges attended, whether or not courses were completed. Keep in mind all financial obligations to a college must be met in order to obtain an official transcript.

One helpful tool for both students and parents is the transfer course equivalency table available on the UNL admissions web site (http://admissions.unl.edu/transferequiv.html). This enables students to see if a particular course has been evaluated and its equivalent designation at UNL. Courses which have not been evaluated will initially transfer as general credit and must be evaluated by the academic college. A course syllabus may be required for evaluation.

**What do transfer credit designations mean?**

- Many transfer courses have been evaluated by UNL faculty and are established to be equivalent to UNL courses. These courses act like the equivalent UNL course and fulfill college requirements.

- Other courses transfer as subject credit such as math or history, but are not equivalent to a specific course. In some cases, even though a course has no equivalent UNL course, it may be substituted for a required course.

- Some courses transfer only as general elective credit. They count toward the total number of hours a student must earn toward graduation, but usually do not fulfill a specific degree requirement. Some majors and degree plans are quite specific and leave little room for elective credit.

- A smaller number of courses are more technical or specialized in nature and transfer as vocational credit. This type of credit has limited application to a university degree.

UNL students are encouraged to work with an academic adviser prior to enrolling in courses, especially those outside of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Careful planning is essential in selecting courses to fulfill degree requirements.
NU DIRECTIONS CAMPAIGN

Help Students become Good Neighbors

By Tom Workman, Student Involvement

NU Directions, the campus-community coalition to reduce high-risk drinking among University of Nebraska–Lincoln students, has launched a new campaign for students who live in neighborhoods around campus. Titled, “Making UNL Students Great Neighbors,” the campaign utilizes a variety of messages and mediums to educate students about ways that they can develop positive relationships with local residents. The campaign is piloted in the North Bottoms neighborhood adjacent to the city campus throughout the 2005 – 2006 academic year.

Thousands of students from UNL and three other colleges and universities in Lincoln live in city neighborhoods. Although many Nebraska students are seen as valuable additions to the community, the actions of young adults from a variety of campuses in Lincoln have led to hard feelings from permanent residents. The campaign, planned by a special task force led by NU Directions Project Administrator Jane Reynolds, follows a series of “Resident Roundtables” where Nebraska students, residents, police, landlords, and other key stakeholders in five neighborhoods gathered to discuss issues, share perspectives, and recommend solutions to improve the quality of life for both residents and students. A final report of the five “roundtables” concluded that relationships between permanent residents and Nebraska students were strained by a variety of causes, including the perception that student actions were deteriorating the quality of life in neighborhoods surrounding campus.

Campaign materials will educate students about behaviors that lead to problems in the neighborhood, many of which occur when students host large parties. Billboard and newspaper ads, doorhangers, and other materials will direct students to a web-based “good neighbor guide” that provides information on trash removal, parking, noise ordinances, and other public health and safety issues. Students can also access information about affordable off-campus living, items to look for in a lease, ways to build relationships with neighbors, and tips on how to get landlords to make repairs. Also featured within advertisements and other materials are stories about strong relationships between area residents and UNL students, such as the relationship between the Alpha Gamma Sigma fraternity and their East Campus neighbors, who gather annually for a “pig...

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roast” hosted by the Nebraska students and benefit from students who shovel snow from neighboring driveways and sidewalks.

Coordinated with information from ASUN Student Government, the North Bottoms Neighborhood Association, REOMA (a group of Lincoln landlords), and the Lincoln Health Department, the “Great Neighbor” campaign will culminate in a volunteer service project in the North Bottoms neighborhood.

“Making UNL Students Great Neighbors” is only one of several actions taken by the task force, which includes representatives from student groups, Nebraska administration, city government, and neighborhood associations. Other activities developed from the roundtable project include working with landlords and management companies to help create lease agreements and resources that assist in quality of life issues such as trash collection and yard improvement, working with police and other city departments to ensure adequate lighting, parking, and enforcement of city ordinances, and working with UNL departments and the Mediation Center to create mediation teams that resolve student/resident disputes in area neighborhoods.

For more information about the Resident Roundtable Project, visit the NU Directions website at http://www.nudirections.org.

PARENTING OFF-CAMPUS

How Can I Help Raise a Good Neighbor?
By Jane Reynolds

Moving into an apartment or rental unit is often considered one of the last indicators that our son or daughter has “graduated” into fully independent living. Each year hundreds of University of Nebraska—Lincoln students make the passage from the residence halls to local neighborhoods, indicating that they’ve joined the ranks of adulthood by setting up their own living space that is free of both parental and institutional guidance. Given the sheer number of options available to university students — from nearby single-family houses that have been converted into student apartments to the many area apartment complexes that offer pools, workout rooms, cable access and transportation to campus — the incentives for students to move off-campus are many.

Unfortunately, not every off-campus experience will be successful. Every year, a small percentage of UNL students living off-campus will face a host of difficulties ranging from absentee landlords and complaining neighbors to irresponsible roommates and police citations. Moving off-campus can be a cause for both celebration and worry for parents, as the experience can either enhance or destroy academic, social, and co-curricular success. Yet, there’s a tremendous opportunity for a student to learn about independence and civic engagement by living off-campus if we all make the most out of the situation.

Although we’ve prepared our college student for a wide variety of college experiences, off campus living can sometimes be a topic that gets left off the conversation list. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln, through activities like the Resident Roundtable Project and the “Making UNL Students Great Neighbors” campaign, is working to educate students about community standards and the importance of making good relationships within the community. What role can a parent play in that education?

One of the key questions a parent can ask is, “If I lived next door to my son or daughter, what kind of neighbor would I want him or her to be?” Sharing the answers to that question with your son or daughter is a good start and can lead to conversations about respecting a neighbor’s property, communicating with neighbors, and becoming sensitive to the needs and issues of the neighborhood. Staying involved with the daily affairs of your off-campus student is also important. When my son had complaints from neighbors after moving off-campus, we helped him realize that one of his roommates was doing more harm than good and the roommate needed to move out. (We learned that the roommate wasn’t on the lease!)

Learning how to live in a community with others is an important aspect of adult living. Parents, who are now part of a neighborhood and often help to shape the standards for that community, have a lot of lessons to share. Ask your son or daughter if they are aware of the fall “Great Neighbor” campaign at UNL. By asking this question, you will be initiating a discussion that can help them become the kind of citizens and neighbors we’d all like to have live next door. Let them know that most students respect and enjoy their neighbors, and have found rewarding friendships in neighbors from different generations. Steer them toward resources on campus and in the community, such as the Resident Roundtable Project, that can help them resolve problems with neighbors. Most importantly, let them know that their time in a neighborhood may be an important internship in “real world” living, reaping benefits that go way beyond their college years.

Jane Reynolds is the mother of two off-campus college students – a 23-year-old son and a 22-year-old daughter. She also has a 16-year-old son still living at home. Jane has worked at the Nebraska Council to Prevent Alcohol and Drug Abuse and the Asian Community Center before taking a position as Project Coordinator for NU Directions.
A few years ago, Rita Kean, Dean of Undergraduate Studies approached me and asked if I would be interested in serving as University of Nebraska–Lincoln’s Fellowship Advisor for the highly competitive national and international scholarships such as the Goldwater, Fulbright, Marshall, Rhodes, Truman, and Udall. I had overseen the UCArE program — UNL’s undergraduate research program—for several years, and therefore I was regularly coming into contact with highly successful and academically engaged students. Although scholarship advising had been going on at Nebraska for many years, it had never been centralized into a single office. With the creation of an Office of Undergraduate Studies, this seemed a good time to make the shift to a more centralized fellowship advising system.

I was excited to take on this new project, but I knew that I had a lot to learn. There are many competitive national and international scholarships available to undergraduates, and each has its own application process, deadline, and criteria. Most of these scholarships provide financial support to students after they graduate from UNL; only a handful will help underwrite their junior or senior years. I underwent a virtual “vertical learning curve” as I searched websites, gathered information, and got a handle on each scholarship. What was particularly helpful was a new national organization called NAFA (National Association of Fellowship Advisors). Through conversations with my NAFA colleagues, I have been able to learn a great deal about “the process” of guiding students through the difficult maze of preparation for prestigious fellowships.

It is never too early for a student to come by and visit with me about scholarship opportunities. Ongoing involvement in service activities, internships, research, and study abroad, as well as careful course selection, are significant components in the student’s preparation. Initiating these activities early, and sustaining these activities over their time here at Nebraska, are important.

What I would like parents to know is that I do the kind of fellowship advising that not only helps to generate student successes, but also generates an opportunity for students to self-reflect about their career goals and future plans. Because of the level of competition, even students who do not win one of these prestigious scholarships benefit greatly from the application process. It helps them clarify their career goals and it also helps them in future applications, when applying to graduate school, medical school, or law school.

In a nutshell, I am the applicant’s coach. I help them through all stages of the process. When students first visit we discuss many aspects of the scholarship process. Most significantly we discuss whether we have found the right scholarship for each student. If so, together we navigate the application process and I assist students with their personal statements, help them prepare their academic résumé, and request strong letters of support from faculty. Together we prepare for any interviews or social occasions associated with the scholarship. We focus on a timetable to be sure the applications are sent in on time!

In the few years since beginning my work as fellowship advisor, we have made some additions to the Nebraska scholarship process. Not only can students come and visit with me individually, but I also offer a workshop to students on the scholarship process, both in the fall and in the spring.

All of this cannot be done alone. I rely on an active and committed faculty who write and fine-tune letters of recommendation, read applications, make suggestions for revisions and serve on mock interview panels. The faculty are truly key components in this scholarship process, and have provided many hours of support to both the students and to me.

Just this past year, Nebraska students have been fortunate to receive scholarships for graduate study or for study abroad. For example, Kyle Wyatt received the prestigious Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship to study English (Great Plains Studies) at the University of Toronto. The scholarship covers all tuition, fees and living expenses for up to $50,000 for 5 years — a total package of a quarter of a million dollars.

Four Nebraska undergraduates also received Fulbrights to study abroad during the next academic year. David Crockett, from Davenport, Nebraska, will be working in the lab of Dr. Xavier Belles at the Institut de Biologia Molecular de Barcelona, Spain.

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studying the reproductive cycle of the German cockroach. Shannon Cummins, from Waco, Nebraska, will be working with Dr. Marzena A. Weresa at the Warsaw School of Economics, studying the Polish hog industry. Jonathan Jones, from Fremont, Nebraska, who was also a 2004 Truman Scholar, will pursue a Masters in Human Rights at the University of Manchester in the United Kingdom. Erica Peterson, from Gothenburg, Nebraska, will be going to the Center for Investigation and Advanced Studies of the National Polytechnic Institute in Merida, Mexico to look for parasitic infection of native and nonnative shrimp in the Gulf of Mexico.

If these opportunities sound like the kind of challenge your undergraduate son or daughter is seeking, tell your student to set up an appointment to visit with me in the Office of Undergraduate Studies (201 Seaton Hall). My door is always open!

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**RELIEVES STRESS**

**Massage Therapy**

The everyday life of a college student can be stressful and tension-filled. Classes, projects, exams, jobs, activities, volunteering, roommates and inadequate sleep can all create tension and negatively impact a student’s physical and emotional well-being. As parents, you know that students don’t always take adequate time to relax, de-stress, and take care of themselves. Parents may not be able to reduce their student’s homework or job schedule, but they can help de-stress (and pamper) students by scheduling a massage therapy session at the UNL Campus Rec Center. Massage therapy is an excellent choice for relaxation, relieving muscle tension, or assisting injury recovery. All Campus Rec massage therapists are allied health care professionals licensed by the state of Nebraska. Student sessions include 30-minute ($25), 45-minute ($35), and 60-minute ($45) sessions. To find out more about this great on-campus service or to schedule an appointment for your student, call the Campus Rec Center at (402)472-3467. Gift certificates are also available.

Parents Weekend 2005