



## History

In 1973, the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York initiated a pilot study to assess the potential of a college credit advisory service. This project was a direct outcome of recommendations made by the Commission on Non-Traditional Study, a two-year venture supported by the Carnegie Corporation, to provide a national perspective on the future of higher education, including recognizing and granting credit for postsecondary learning undertaken in non-collegiate settings. The Commission called for a system to establish college credit equivalencies for courses offered by government, industry, and other non-collegiate sponsors.

During this preliminary stage, evaluations were made of 102 courses and programs sponsored by eight organizations, including AT&T, General Electric Company, Eastman Kodak Company, New York Telephone (now Verizon Communications), the New York City and New York State police academies, Literacy Volunteers of America and the American Institute of Banking of Greater New York. Credit recommendations were established when the learning experiences were found to be at the college level. In the process, the components of a model for a reliable and workable review system were identified. The results of the pilot study were published in December 1974 in the Program's first volume of course descriptions and credit recommendations under the title, *A Guide to Educational Programs in Non-collegiate Organizations* (subsequent volumes of credit recommendations also used this title until 1985, when it was replaced by *College Credit Recommendations*.)

The 2002 edition of *College Credit Recommendations* represented the 22nd volume of descriptions of evaluated non-collegiate sponsored instruction published by National PONS (now called NCCRS-National College Credit Recommendation Service) before being made available online. Updates are now made available through *CCRS Online*. Since the first edition of the Directory, NCCRS has served more than 500 organizations across the U.S. and has evaluated and recommended for college credit approximately 5,200 courses, exams, and educational programs.

## Review Process

Credit recommendations are established through a thorough and objective evaluation process. Click [program policies](#) for more details.

Non-collegiate organizations participate in NCCRS on a voluntary basis. Each sponsoring organization selects courses and programs for review with the assistance of Program staff. Only educational programs and courses conducted on a formal basis and with official approval of the sponsoring organization are considered for review. Informal training or job experience is not reviewed.

Courses and programs must present what is thought to be college-level material, must have a prescribed program of instruction and be taught or facilitated by qualified individuals, and must include an appropriate method of evaluating student performance. In the case of on-line learning and proficiency examination programs, there must be evidence of security measures established to ensure student identity.

Organizations supply information for each course or program submitted for review. For a list of required documentation, [click here](#).

Each organization also supplies information on the administration of its educational activities, including an explanation of procedures for curriculum and examination development and revision, procedures for record keeping and reporting, and controls to ensure uniformity of quality and content when a course or program is taught at more than one location or by more than one instructor.

Review teams are generally composed of three persons selected on the basis of their knowledge and experience in the subject area of the courses or programs to be reviewed. Evaluators are suggested by postsecondary institutions, professional and educational associations, and non-collegiate organizations. [Click here](#) for a list of NCCRS evaluators.

Evaluations are usually conducted at the location of the organization sponsoring the learning experiences and are supervised by a member of the NCCRS staff. Organizational staff members familiar with the curriculum must be available to answer questions that may arise during the review of the instructional materials. After a thorough assessment of all the information and materials supplied by the organization, the team members first decide if the learning experience is at the college level. If it is, they then determine whether the method to assess student performance is adequate to judge that students have achieved the stated learning objectives and mastered the subject matter. When the team determines that a credit recommendation is warranted, they determine the level of credit, the number of credit hours, and the appropriate subject area or areas where credit may be assigned.

In some cases, the team may evaluate together a group of two or more related courses or programs which individually are too short to be eligible for review. If appropriate, a single credit recommendation is established for the group, and it applies only when a student has completed the entire course grouping.

In other cases, the team may not recommend that academic credit be granted. Reasons for declining to extend a credit recommendation include:

1. the limited scope or organization-specific nature of a learning experience compared to college courses;
2. the lack of comparability of instructional materials to those found in college-level courses;
3. the absence of adequate measurement of student mastery; and
4. failure to present sufficient materials on which to make a judgment.

Courses or programs that have been evaluated but for which credit recommendations were not extended are not listed in the NCCRS online directory [CCRS Online](#).

## Evaluation Eligibility Checklist

If you can answer yes to the following questions, then your *organization* is eligible for evaluation:

1. Does your organization offer documentable, formalized learning experiences without granting regionally accredited college degrees?
2. Has your organization been operating for at least one year? Do you have authorization to operate and serve students in your home state, if applicable?
3. Does your organization have administrative control over the courses you want evaluated?
4. Can your organization demonstrate that it has retained official student records in a secure manner for at least the period potentially covered by the credit recommendations? Can your organization retrieve those records and send official documentation of them (e.g., transcripts) to colleges upon request?

If you can answer yes to the following questions, your *courses or exams* can be evaluated:

1. Is this a formalized learning experience conducted consistently from one administration to the next? Eligible learning experiences include traditional classroom courses, laboratory or shop courses, distance learning or on-line courses, subject-matter proficiency examinations, and examinations for professional certification or licensure.
2. Do you believe the experience is at college level in terms of subject matter and treatment of instructional topics?
3. Does the experience include a means of assessing students' performance and/or the extent to which they have achieved the learning objectives?
4. Can the subject matter included in the learning experience be documented through instructional materials, and a detailed outline, lesson plans, or instructor's manual that shows how materials are organized and presented?
5. Do the instructors hold advanced degrees in the subject matter and/or have a college degree with considerable work experience in the field of study?
6. Has the course been offered at least once within the past two years?

If you are still unsure of your eligibility, please contact the NCCRS office to explore your options. You will be required to submit a Self-Study Report before final eligibility is determined. You may also request a complete [Information/Application Package](#). Once approved for evaluation, you will need to complete a Request for Evaluation Form for EACH course or exam that will be submitted for evaluation.