YORKTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

GRADUATE CREDIT GUIDELINES
(Revised January 2009)

The teaching profession is one that requires the educator to continue study beyond the initial degree. The Board of Education provides additional compensation to the teacher for approved credits beyond the B.A. through M.A. + 60 to recognize the increased proficiency that these courses provide. The Board of Education and professional staff are responsible for assuring that the courses approved for this compensation do, in fact, add to the professional competence of the teacher, therefore improving the education available to the students.

Credits (graduate, undergraduate, or in-service) earned beyond the Bachelor’s degree are subject to review by a screening committee that makes recommendations to the Assistant Superintendent. The composition of the Graduate Credit Screening Committee includes one representative from each school, appointed by the Y.C.T. and representation from the administration.

The Screening Committee will approve courses based on the guidelines listed below:

1. courses in teaching methodology

2. courses directly related to the applicant’s teaching assignment
   Teachers who are assigned by the district to teach a course out of their subject area may submit courses relating to such assignment for approval.

3. courses prescribed by certification requirements in the teaching assignment currently held by the applicant

4. courses related to the applicant’s assignment for which the New York State Department of Education grants credit based on passing the appropriate state examination
   The following two courses apply: (1) Corrective and Remedial Instruction in Reading, and (2) Diagnosis and Remediation of Reading Problems.

5. courses not directly related to the applicant’s assignment but prescribed by a college for degree in the applicant’s assignment as determined by matriculation
   Credit for such courses is often not granted until a Master’s degree is attained.

6. courses requested by the school district for the improvement of the teacher
   If these courses are related to each other and total less than 15 hours, the applicant is responsible for holding the forms until 15 hours have been amassed to equal one credit.

7. online courses that are sponsored by an accredited institution
In addition to a detailed course description, a syllabus must be submitted which includes time requirements, and student requirements/assignments. Such assignments are considered to be homework, and cannot be counted as contact hours.

**EXCLUDED** for the purpose of granting credit are the following:

1. courses funded by the administration or the Professional Improvement Program
2. courses in continuing education unless they are acceptable for transfer for matriculation at an accredited college or university
3. courses in adult education
4. foreign travel
5. courses in administration, with the exception of School Law and Evaluation
6. courses in guidance, with the exception of Child and Adolescent Psychology (Guidance counselors are not affected by this exclusion.)
7. conferences and workshops
8. self-study courses
9. courses given during the district’s required workday

The guideline used by the Committee in approving course credits is that **approximately 15 hours of course meeting time is equivalent to one unit of credit**. If taking related courses that meet for less than 15 hours, the applicant is responsible for holding the forms until those 15 hours are completed. However, it is highly recommended that prior approval be sought for such courses. In **NO** event will the Committee approve credit in excess of that granted by the university.

**APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

1. Secure a course approval form from your front office.
2. Fill out the form and prepare **in triplicate**.
3. It is strongly recommended to obtain approval **prior** to taking the course. Post approval is not guaranteed.
4. Submit the three copies of your application to Greg Heald, Chair of the Graduate Credit Screening Committee at Yorktown High School. Requests need to be received by the Wednesday prior to the meeting in order to be placed on the agenda for that month.
5. Arrange to have an official transcript or course completion form forwarded to the District Office of the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

The Committee will act on your application and approve or disapprove the application based on the guidelines previously indicated. Procedures for notification are:

1. If the Screening Committee recommends NOT approving a course, the Chair of the Committee will notify the applicant via district email.

2. An applicant who has not received the recommendation of the Screening Committee may appeal the decision by submitting additional information to the committee.

3. If the Assistant Superintendent does not accept the recommendation of the Screening Committee, she/he will notify them of the reason via district email.

4. Approval for course credit will be granted only if 1) the applicant receives a passing grade in the course, or 2) the applicant receives a course completion form.
SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATING GRADUATE CREDIT APPROVAL

PRIOR APPROVAL – You do not need to get prior approval for a course, but it is strongly recommended. If you have questions about the application procedure, seek out your building representative.

RECORD KEEPING and PAYMENT – You should keep a file on courses taken, transcripts or course completion forms submitted, and courses approved. After all course requests and transcripts or course completion forms have been received by the secretary in the Assistant Superintendent’s office, and you have amassed a “block of ten” credits, your name and the titles of the specific courses you took will be listed on the Board of Education meeting agenda for formal approval. Courses completed between September 1 and January 30 need to have transcripts for approved courses delivered to the personnel office by June 1 in order to be paid retroactively to January 1. Courses completed after January 30 need to have transcripts for approved courses delivered to the personnel office by June 1 in order to be paid in the first September payroll, unless the actual completion date is after June 1. In such cases, a transcript needs to be in by June 30 and the board will act on it in September with a September 1 effective date, but it will not appear in the September payrolls. Transcripts for courses completed between July 1 and June 30, but not received until after June 30, will be credited for payment effective September 1.

PAID FOR OR NOT PAID FOR – You will be paid for approved courses in your area of teaching (i.e., science courses for science teachers; foreign language courses for foreign language teachers, elementary education courses for K-6 teachers).

You will not be granted credit for:

- courses funded by the administration or PIP
- courses that are not in your area or are only vaguely in your area (i.e., a course in the Physiology of Marsupials for a K-6 teacher who introduces a short unit on Australia into his or her curriculum)
- administration courses, except School Law and/or Evaluation
- courses in guidance, except Child/Adolescent Psychology, unless you are a guidance counselor
- continuing education courses, unless they can transfer to a matriculated program at an accredited college or university
- self-study courses
- courses given during the district’s required workday
- teaching a course, even if requested to do so by administration.
- conferences or workshops
HOW MANY CREDITS WILL I BE PAID FOR? – Do not assume that you will get the same number of credits for a course that are “advertised” by a college or university. Many colleges award more credit than the district will allow to be credited. The district guideline is that one credit requires 15 hours of teacher contact. The district does not give credit for the time you spend on research or homework; it is assumed that these are part of the course.

If you are taking a full semester course, that should be indicated on the application form. Full semester courses will be credited with the number of credits indicated in the college/university catalog. For courses that are shorter than a full semester, you must list the dates and specific hours of class meetings.

If your Master’s degree requires more than 30 credits, the district will credit you with credits earned beyond the 30.

You may take undergraduate courses for “graduate” credit, but be sure that you did not take a course with a similar title or substantially similar content as part of your undergraduate degree.

GETTING YOUR APPLICATION TO THE COMMITTEE – The Graduate Credit Screening Committee meets on the first Tuesday of the month. Sent your request for course approval (original plus two copies) to Greg Heald, Chairman, at Yorktown High School and attempt to have it arrive in his hands by the Wednesday preceding the meeting. (Please be aware that inter-school mail can take up to two days for delivery!)

Be sure the title of the course that you write on the application is the exact title in the university catalog.

Be sure to check for spelling, syntax, neatness, and clarity. Members of the administration review these forms.

I HAVE QUESTIONS – If you have questions concerning appropriate courses or application procedures, you may contact any Committee member.