

Academic Information and Policies

The Skills Surveys and Placement Procedures

The purpose of the English, mathematics, and reading skills surveys is to assess students' entry-level academic skills and to provide options to strengthen them if appropriate. Students have a better chance for success in college if their basic skills are strong enough to meet the rigors of college-level classes. All courses in English and mathematics require that students have completed the appropriate skills surveys for placement prior to enrollment, as do many other courses in a variety of disciplines (for example, biology, chemistry, early childhood education, and information technology services). These requirements are listed under *prerequisites* in the course description section of this catalog. For all of these reasons, students should make it a priority to complete the skills surveys as early as possible after admission but no later than the point at which they have accumulated nine credits.

No student is denied admission as a result of performance on these; however, students whose scores indicate a need for skill development are required to complete the appropriate developmental courses. Students who place in developmental courses in two or more disciplines are: 1) limited to a maximum of 13 credits, or the equivalent, during their first full-time semester; and 2) required to take CSS 1010 - College Success Skills. During the first sessions of a developmental course, student performance is closely monitored and a change in placement may be initiated by the instructor.

Skills review materials are available from the Testing Centers to help students prepare for these skills surveys. For a fee, students may retake the skills surveys once (see Tuition and Fees section).

Any of the tests may be completed during the registration process. Students should contact the Testing Center on the La Plata, Prince Frederick, or Leonardtown campuses for information or to sign up for the test.

Please note: There are some courses/disciplines which, because of their content, are exempt from the skills survey requirement. Students may accumulate credits in these courses with no expectation of having to take the skills surveys. These are: WFS activities courses, ART lab activities, MUS and THE performance courses, OFT skills courses, COM 1040, COM 1050, COM 1060, and COM 1070.

Waiver of Skills Surveys

Students who can document work and/or academic experience that would suggest the ability to do college-level work can provide such **documentation** to the appropriate department chair for consideration of a waiver of the skills survey in English, math, and/or reading.

Automatic waivers are granted for math if a student has a score of 550 or above on the SAT Math; and for English and reading with a score of 550 or above on the SAT Verbal. Waivers are also granted in English with a score of 21 on the ACT English; for reading with a score of 21 on the ACT Reading; and for math with a score of 21 on ACT Math.

Placement of Transfer Students

Credits in most disciplines may be transferred regardless of how long ago the courses were taken. Transfer students who have not taken a college-level English or a college-level mathematics course in the last five years may be required to take the English and/or mathematics skills survey in order to validate their skills in those areas. (Students applying to the nursing programs should refer to the *Nursing Programs Admission Information* booklet.)

College and University Transfer Credits

- **Credit Transfer Policy** - Credits are transferred from regional and Maryland state accredited institutions provided they meet requirements of the curriculum which the student plans to enter. The regional accrediting bodies are: Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, New England Association of Schools and Colleges, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Credits are transferred from institutions found in the current edition of the *Transfer Credit Practices of Designated Educational Institutions* (AACRAO publication) as having an institutional accreditation, and from two-year and four-year independent colleges/universities found in the *Directory of Maryland Public and Private Higher Education Institutions, Agencies, and Boards* (MHEC publication). The college will transfer credit for courses in which a grade of *D* or better was obtained from accredited public two-year and four-year colleges within the state of Maryland, provided the student has earned a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.00 in the block of courses for which transfer is requested. (Otherwise, only credit for courses in which a grade of *C* or better was earned are transferred.) Credits earned at accredited institutions outside the state of Maryland will be transferred only for courses in which a grade of *C* or better was obtained.

Only the credits (not the grades) for courses completed at other institutions are transferred to a student's record at this college. Therefore, grades earned at other institutions may not be used to erase grades earned at this college or to improve a student's grade point average.

The college does not automatically honor course waivers or exemptions granted by other institutions. Students seeking such waivers from the College of Southern Maryland must provide the original basis for the exemption and request an official evaluation.

The Programs of Study section of this catalog indicates the number of credits allowable in transfer for each curriculum.

Students having questions regarding transfer policies should contact the Advising Office for further information, or refer to the Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Transfer Policies printed in Appendix III.

- **International College and University Transfer Policy** - Students seeking credit for course work completed at an international institution are responsible for having an official transcript evaluated by an accredited international transcript evaluation service. Credits may be granted based on the evaluation from such services. Suggested evaluation agencies are American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 520, Washington, DC 20036-1135; World Education Services, Inc., P.O. Box 745, Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY 10011; Credentials Evaluation Services, Inc., P.O. Box 66940, Los Angeles, CA 90066; and World Educational Credentials and College Planning, P.O. Box 726, Herndon, VA 22070.

- CSM will accept credits from an institution that operates on a quarter system. These credits are multiplied by .667 to equate to semester hours.

Credit for Prior Learning

There are several ways in which students may receive college credit for subject matter or skills they have mastered, including the following:

1. Tech Prep articulated high school courses
2. Advanced Placement (AP) examinations
3. Credit for service schools and other noncollegiate-sponsored instruction
4. Credit by nationally standardized examinations
5. Credit by departmental assessment

Students may earn up to 30 credits toward a degree through prior learning assessment. No more than 15 of these credits may be earned through departmental assessments toward a degree. They should be aware of any restrictions on these credits imposed by the institution to which they intend to transfer.

Tech Prep Articulated High School Courses

Students from Charles, Calvert, or St. Mary's County public high schools may receive credit in certain college programs through Tech Prep articulation agreements. The student must complete the college application, Tech Prep application, and provide an official copy of the high school transcript. Generally, this must be completed within two years of graduation. Once it has been determined that all requirements of the Tech Prep articulation agreement have been met, college credit will be awarded in the appropriate curriculum and posted to the student's transcript.

For further information on Tech Prep articulation agreements, students should contact the Admissions Office.

Advanced Placement (AP) Examinations

Eligible students may take the Advanced Placement Examinations administered in the high schools. See Appendix IV for acceptable disciplines and scores with their college course credit equivalencies.

Credit for Service Schools and Other Noncollegiate-Sponsored Instruction

Credits granted for noncollegiate-sponsored instruction are limited to those courses that the college determines to be applicable to its degree and certificate programs. Transcripts from each school or agency attended must be submitted to the Advising Office. These credits will not be posted on the student's transcript until the student successfully completes at least six institutional credits, unless the courses are part of an articulated program.

The college grants credit for applicable noncollegiate-sponsored instruction, which has been evaluated by the American Council on Education (ACE). Formal military training evaluations are published in *The Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services*. The evaluation of other noncollegiate-sponsored instruction is published in *The National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs*. No credits are granted for instruction not recommended in the current editions of these ACE publications.

Credit by Nationally Standardized Examinations (CLEP and DANTES)

A student may attempt to earn college credit in some areas by examination. The credit-by-examination program is an option for those who have strong academic high school backgrounds or who have studied on their own. These comprehensive examinations are administered by appointment in the Testing Center. Prior to taking any one of these exams, students pay the required test registration/fees.

A passing grade on an examination is recorded with a grade of *P* on the permanent record. While the credits count toward graduation, neither the credits nor the grade is used in the calculation of the student's grade point average. Examinations which are attempted but not passed are not recorded on the student's permanent record.

To receive an up-to-date list of courses available through credit by examination, and to register to take an examination, contact the Testing Center. Course descriptions in this catalog also indicate if the course is available through credit by examination. Students who fail an examination may attempt most examinations again after six months. (See Appendix V for a list of the subject exams.)

Credit by Departmental Assessment

An academic department may award course credit to students who document learning comparable to that required in specific college courses. To be eligible for credit by departmental assessment, students must be admitted to the college and pay the tuition/fees. There are two ways learning can be evaluated: departmental examination and portfolio assessment/certification. No more than 15 credits may be earned through departmental assessments toward a degree.

Departmental Examination

A departmental examination is created by the appropriate college department and administered by appointment in the Testing Center. Prior to taking a departmental exam, the student pays the required tuition/fees.

A passing grade on an examination is recorded with a grade of *P* on the permanent record. While the credits count toward graduation, neither the credits nor the grade is used in the calculation of the student's grade point average. Examinations which are attempted but not passed are not recorded on the student's permanent record.

Credit for the following courses may be earned through credit-by-examination. Those courses listed with an asterisk after them are available to nursing students only. Contact the Testing Center for registration procedures and/or questions. Course descriptions in this catalog also indicate if the course is available through departmental examination. Students who fail an examination may attempt examinations again after six months. Tests may only be retaken once.

ACC 2015	HTH 1100	MUS 1083
BAD 1330	HTH 1600	MUS 1091
BIO 2070	ITS 1015	MUS 1092
BIO 2070L	ITS 1020	MUS 1093
BIO 2080	ITS 1040	NUR 1071*
BIO 2080L	ITS 1110	NUR 1075*
BIO 2150/2150L	ITS 1120	OFT 1001
DFT 1200	ITS 2120	OFT 1002
EDU 1012	ITS 2250	OFT 1010
EDU 1013	ITS 2390	OFT 1051
EDU 1110	ITS 2430	PGL 1011
EDU 1160	ITS 2440	PGL 1012
EGT 1010	ITS 2490	WFS 1100
ELT 1015	ITS 2710	
ELT 1030	MTH 1100	
ELT 2010	MUS 1081	
ELT 2020	MUS 1082	

Portfolio Assessment/Certification

Credits may be awarded to students who document evidence that course objectives, as outlined in the course syllabus, have been mastered. Such evidence might include professional certificates, examinations, written materials, or other supporting documentation. Students interested in pursuing credit for prior learning should begin the process by speaking to an academic advisor. The advisor will assist the student in determining if credit for prior learning is appropriate to the student's needs. A one-credit course (STU 1201) is available to assist students in the development of a portfolio. Once the course is determined to be appropriate, the academic department will review the portfolio assessment/certification. Students must pay a fee for each credit assessed.

Course Selection

Courses are offered at times and locations considered most appropriate to their intended audiences. Since all programs are not offered during both day and evening hours, students should review their intended curriculum to ensure that it is available at acceptable times as well as at an accessible location. An annual schedule is available online. Students should use this information to plan the following academic year.

Schedule of Classes

The college distributes printed schedules of classes and lists class schedules on the Web (www.csmd.edu). Students should be aware that not all courses are offered every semester, nor are they offered at all locations. (Every effort has been made to indicate schedule restrictions in the appropriate course descriptions in this catalog.)

Some courses are offered irregularly due to inconsistent demand. Students interested in a course which is offered irregularly should inform the appropriate department chair of their interest.

Prerequisites

Many course descriptions contain statements of prerequisites. Prerequisites tell the student the criteria for admission to a course. The intent of prerequisites is to ensure that students have the level of skill and knowledge that will assure them a reasonable expectation of success in the course. Prerequisites may include specific college courses, certification from a particular organization or agency, employment in a certain field, etc. Students may take courses in any sequence as long as they meet the prerequisites.

Full and Cancelled Classes

Seats in classes are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Students should plan to register early to ensure that they are able to enroll in the course and section of their choice. Occasionally, seats will become available in a class that has been filled. Students can monitor seat openings through touch-tone or online processes. If a seat becomes available, students can add the class through touch-tone or online processes or in person.

In the event that a course or section is cancelled, all enrolled students are notified immediately. Those students may elect to enroll in another open course or section, or they may request a refund.

Change in Class Schedule

Students may make changes in their schedules by following the procedures in the schedule of classes. To make a change in their schedules, students can use online services, use touch-tone services, or file a Change in Class Schedule form available from the Express Services counter or from the main office at one of the branch campuses.

Waiver of Required Courses

There may be exceptional instances in which students are excused from taking a required course in their program of study. A program evaluation must be completed prior to the request for a course waiver. A course waiver must be initiated in the Advisement and Career Services Department. The form must be signed by the appropriate department chair and by the division dean prior to the student's enrollment in the substitute course. A waiver of a course does not reduce the number of credits needed to complete a program of study. Also, a course waiver is not automatically transferred to any other program of study. If the student chooses to change programs, all course waivers must be reevaluated for applicability. Nonrequired courses of comparable credit value must be substituted for the waived course credit.

Course Substitution Policy

Students who wish to petition for a course substitution based on the presence of a disability may do so through the Disability Support Office on the La Plata Campus. The course substitution policy, procedures, and request forms are available from the coordinator, Disability Support Office, on the La Plata Campus or the assistant, Disability Support Office, on the Leonardtown and Prince Frederick campuses or at the Waldorf Center.

Registration

Registration dates and schedule adjustment dates are listed in the college calendar in the schedule of classes. Students may take advantage of online, touch-tone, mail-in, on-site, or advanced registration as outlined in the schedule of classes.

Registration of Full-Time Students

All full-time students (students taking 12 or more credits) should meet with an advisor early on in their program of study.

Students may register for up to 19 credits of course work in the fall and spring semesters, or up to 10 credits in a summer session. Students wishing to register for course loads in excess of the above limits must have the approval of the instructional dean responsible for the program in which they are enrolled. Students not enrolled in an academic program must contact the Advisement and Career Services Department for approval.

An applicant whose high school or college record and skills survey results indicate a need for a reduced academic load may be restricted to a maximum of 13 or fewer credits per semester, and/or required to enroll in developmental courses. Such students are advised to supplement their progress by taking courses during the summer session.

Registration of Part-Time Students

Part-time students (students taking fewer than 12 credits) should be aware that it may be necessary to take one or more skills surveys during the registration process, depending upon the number or type of courses taken. (Refer to the Placement Procedures section of this catalog for complete information.)

Note to Students with Disabilities

The College of Southern Maryland is committed to making it possible for individuals with disabilities to be full participants in its programs, services, and activities in compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and all of their pertinent laws.

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to attend the college and take any courses desired, so long as the prerequisites are met. Services and reasonable accommodations such as interpreters, extended time for tests, etc. are provided for disabled students. Disabled students are encouraged, therefore, to telephone or visit the Learning Assistance Center well in advance of each registration to discuss reasonable accommodation needs.

See additional information under the Learning Assistance Center section of this catalog.

Audit

A student may request to audit any class other than a science lab. Students receive no credit for an audited class. One may change from credit to audit or audit to credit, with the instructor's permission, at any time before the end of the withdrawal period. Failure to complete the instructor's outlined requirements will result in a grade of WD for the course.

Audited courses require the same tuition and fees as regular courses. Audited courses do not meet prerequisite requirements. Audited courses are noted on the transcript as having a grade of *AU*. The *AU* grade is not calculated in the GPA.

12/36 Advising Requirement

It is important that all students seeking a degree or certificate from CSM, or planning to transfer from CSM to another college, consult (e-mail, phone, or in person) an advisor concerning their career and educational goals. The college recommends that students meet with an advisor prior to beginning a program of study and at least twice during their program to ensure that their courses are appropriate for their career and educational goals. These meetings must take place prior to a student registering for more than 12 credits and again by 36 credits. In addition, all students must consult an advisor if they are considering changing their programs of study or are applying for graduation.

Changing a Program

Students who wish to change their program of study at any time during their enrollment must speak with an academic advisor to make the appropriate adjustments. All course waivers and previous credits are reevaluated at this time.

Student Progress and Academic Records

Credits

By completing a course successfully, a student earns the number of credits assigned to the course. In the section of this catalog entitled Course Descriptions, the number of credits awarded for each course appears in parenthesis following each course title. Credit is not awarded for many of the classes offered by the college; these courses are referred to as continuing education courses.

Grades

Grades are the means by which students assess their progress in course work. Students can expect to be graded frequently and in a variety of ways in each course. Grades are not assigned in many continuing education classes.

Final grades will be available through online Express Services and by touch-tone processes within one week of the completion of the semester. Students who need a written grade report may request a transcript through the Registrar's Office.

Grading System and Reporting

The following grading system is used:

CREDIT COURSES

Grade	Evaluation	Grade Point Value
A	Excellent	4
B	Good	3
C	Average	2
D	Below Average	1
F	Failure	0
I	Incomplete	0
AU	Audit	0
WD	Withdrawn	0
P	Average or Above	0
NG	No grade given by instructor	0

DEVELOPMENTAL, SKILL-BUILDING COURSES

Grade	Evaluation	Grade Point Value
P	Passed	0
IP	In progress	0
F	Failure	0
I	Incomplete	0
AU	Audit	0
WD	Withdrawn	0
NG	No grade given by instructor	0

In-Progress Grade

The in-progress grade, or *IP*, designates a student's status in a developmental course when the objectives are not completed in the semester for which the *IP* grade is given. The student must reregister for the course and repay all tuition and fees. Ordinarily, the *IP* grade may be given only once for any one course, so the student must complete the course the second time he or she registers.

Incomplete Grade

The grade of incomplete, or *I*, is exceptional and must be arranged by the student with the instructor before the end of the course. It is given only for work which has been qualitatively satisfactory, but which because of circumstances beyond the student's control, does not satisfy the full requirements of the course. If the request is granted, the student and instructor must then fill out a contract no later than the end of the course stipulating the work remaining to be done before a grade will be issued and credit earned for the course. A copy of this contract must then be submitted by the instructor to the department chair for approval. A student's financial assistance eligibility may be jeopardized by an incomplete grade. Refer to the Satisfactory Academic Progress Guidelines for Financial Assistance Recipients in Appendix II of this catalog.

Grades of incomplete must be made up by the date negotiated with faculty. Grades of incomplete remaining after the deadlines will automatically become *F* grades.

Grade Point Average

The grade point average (GPA) is computed by multiplying the number of credits for a course by the grade point value of the grade received for that course (see grade point values under the Grading System and Reporting section of this catalog). All grade points for all courses taken at the college are then added together and divided by the total number of credits attempted.

An example follows:

Course	Credits	Grade	Grade Point Value	Grade Points
ENG 1010	3	B	(3)	9
MTH 2100	4	C	(2)	8
BIO 1010	4	C	(2)	8
WFS 1100	1	B	(3)	3
Totals	12			28

GPA = 28 divided by 12 = 2.33

Continuing education courses, transfer courses, credit for prior learning, articulated credit from high schools, and the grades of *W*, *IP*, *P*, and *AU* are not included in the computation. (See Appendix II for *Satisfactory Academic Progress Example*.)

Requesting a Grade Review

A student wishing to protest a grade given in a course may do so according to the procedures set forth in the Reevaluation of Academic Work section published in the *Student Handbook*. Students must request a reevaluation of academic work within 30 days of receipt of a course grade.

Withdrawing from Classes

Withdrawal from a course is, for the student, as important as registering for a course, for it can affect academic standing, financial assistance eligibility, and program completion dates. Students should speak to the instructor of the course and an advisor prior to withdrawing from a course.

You may withdraw by using touch-tone or online services. If you are withdrawing at a campus, complete and submit a withdrawal form at the Express Services location by the last day for withdrawing from classes (published in the schedule of classes). If a course is dropped before the withdrawal date, a grade of WD will be recorded for the final grade. After that date, students will receive the earned grade of A through F for all courses in which they are enrolled.

In the event of medical or personal emergencies, the student may telephone or write the Registrar's Office for assistance in the process. However, the withdrawal form must be processed by the specified date. (See the schedules of classes for withdrawal dates.)

A student who receives a failing grade for a course as a result of academic dishonesty may not subsequently withdraw from the course.

Involuntary Withdrawal

Policy

An involuntary withdrawal may qualify a student for a partial refund or credit of tuition and course fees after the normal refund deadline. In order to be eligible for a refund or tuition credit, the student, or next of kin, must submit a written request and appropriate substantiating documentation to support such a withdrawal request prior to the end of the course. (All fees must be paid prior to receiving a refund or tuition credit). A withdrawal is considered involuntary if it results from one of the reasons described below:

Military Duty

1. Student must have entered active duty involuntarily, or have been transferred involuntarily.
2. Student must provide a copy of military orders signed by the individual's commanding officer or other appropriate official.

Hospitalization

1. Student must have certification from a physician stating that the student's medical condition required hospitalization for 72 hours or longer, and that the medical condition requires the student's withdrawal.

2. Required certification:
 - a. must be an original letter on official letterhead (no photocopies), and
 - b. must specifically state that the student's medical condition required hospitalization for 72 hours or longer, and that the medical condition requires the student's withdrawal from class, and
 - c. must give the date on which the hospitalization began.

Death

1. Withdrawal is considered involuntary if the death of the student or immediate family member of the student has occurred. Immediate family members include the following: spouse, parent, child, sister, or brother.
2. Appropriate required documentation:
 - a. an official death certificate, or
 - b. a copy of a newspaper obituary notice, and
 - c. a letter from a physician (or other appropriate medical professional) verifying the student's relationship to the deceased. (If relationship is not evident, additional documentation may be required.)

Other Extreme Situations

Requests for an involuntary withdrawal based on other extreme situations will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Procedure

Requests for an involuntary withdrawal must be made in writing to the senior director of Enrollment Management. The letter must explain in detail the nature of the appeal and list any specific circumstances (e.g., illness, death in the family, military transfer, etc.) that may support the appeal.

The following is the procedure for appeals for other than military duty, hospitalization, or death:

1. The student's letter must explain in detail the nature of the request, list any specific circumstances that may support the request, and provide available documentation.
2. If the request involves academic concerns, then a copy of the letter is forwarded to the appropriate academic dean for investigation.
3. If the request involves situations other than academic concerns, then the senior director of Enrollment Management investigates the situation.
4. Upon completion of the investigation, the request is forwarded to the Student Services Appeals Committee for consideration. If the committee determines that a refund is justified, then it may authorize, as appropriate, a full or partial refund. The senior director of Enrollment Management will inform the student in writing of the decision.
5. A student may appeal the decision, in writing, to the dean of Student and Instructional Support Services. The student's letter must explain the nature of the appeal and include any supporting evidence. The appeal must be initiated within 14 calendar days of notification to the student.
6. A written response shall be given to the student within 14 calendar days. The decision of the dean is final.

Repeated Courses

When a student repeats a course, only the latter grade, even if it is a lower grade, is used in the computation of the grade point average. Students should note that *IP* grades may be received only once for any developmental studies course.

Freshman/Sophomore Class Standing

A student who has earned from 0-29 credits is a freshman. A student achieves sophomore class standing after successfully completing 30 credits.

Academic Standing

A student's academic standing is determined by his or her cumulative grade point average. All full- and part-time students are governed by the academic standards below.

Total Credits Attempted	CUMULATIVE GPA	
	Academic Dismissal	Academic Probation
1-15		below 1.00
16-20	below 0.80	below 1.20
21-35	below 1.20	below 1.50
36-50	below 1.50	below 1.80
51-60+	below 1.80	below 2.00

Probation/Dismissal

The academic standing of each student whose GPA falls below these cutoffs is reviewed at the end of each semester by the Academic Review Committee (deans of Arts and Sciences, Career and Technical Education, and Student and Instructional Support Services). As a result of this review, the student is placed on either academic probation or dismissal.

Students placed on academic probation will have credit limitations. The student will remain so restricted until the GPA is above the probation cutoff. STU 1010 or STU 1030 is required for students with academic probation limitations of three or six credits. Students who have previously taken STU 1010, 1015, or 1020 must take STU 1030.

Students placed on academic dismissal may not register for any credit or credit-equivalent course at the college for a minimum period of one fall or spring semester and must apply for reinstatement. Students wishing to appeal academic dismissal should contact the instructional dean responsible for the program in which they are enrolled.

Note: Students receiving federally backed financial assistance may be required to meet stricter academic standards to maintain their financial assistance. These guidelines appear in Appendix II. Students in the Nursing and Physical Therapist Assistant

programs are required to maintain higher academic standards and must meet specific criteria in clinical practice. See the programs handbooks for complete information.

Reinstatement

A student who has been dismissed from the college for academic reasons may request permission from the director of the Admissions and Orientation Department for reinstatement after one semester (fall or spring semester). This request shall be submitted in writing at least two weeks prior to the beginning of the semester for which the student wishes to enroll. If reinstated, the student may be placed on probation and have specific credit restrictions. In addition, students who are reinstated are required to take either STU 1010 or STU 1030. Students who have previously taken STU 1010, 1015, or 1020 must take STU 1030.

Students who are reinstated may be required to retake the college's skills surveys. Students whose scores indicate a need for basic skill development will be required to successfully complete skill-building courses in the appropriate areas before enrolling in higher-level courses, which require those skills, regardless of the level of course work attempted previously.

Academic Clemency

Students may request to have up to 16 previously earned credits in which grades of *D* or *F* were received designated *AC* next to the section on their transcripts. Such credits must have been earned at least five years prior to the date of the request. Students may not request academic clemency more than once.

A student must be currently registered, and the request for academic clemency must be approved prior to the submission of the application for graduation. The student, with the assistance and approval of an academic advisor, determines which courses are most appropriate for this request. Students are encouraged to consider among these 16 credits courses which can not be repeated because they are no longer in the college catalog. Upon approval of the academic dean, the Registrar's Office will mark *AC* by the courses on the student's transcript and recalculate the grade point average. The registrar will forward a copy of the revised transcript to the student. It is anticipated that this process will be completed within six weeks.

Permanent Record Information Policy

The College of Southern Maryland maintains records for each student who attends the college. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as amended, affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. For more information on these rights, see Appendix VI, Disclosure of Student Information and Rights of Students under FERPA. A complete copy of the current college policy on students' rights under FERPA can be found on the college's Web site at www.csmd.edu.

All students have the right to see their own records and to challenge any documentation which they feel is erroneous. A copy of the college's procedures for challenging file or record contents is available, upon request, from the Registrar's Office. Records cannot be released without the student's written authorization, with certain exceptions permitted by FERPA. (Some student information is designated as public or directory information. The institution may disclose such information for any purpose, at its discretion. For more information, see Appendix VI, Disclosure of Student Information and Rights of Students Under FERPA.)

Students who wish to have their records forwarded to other colleges or to prospective employers must complete a written release form before the college can honor the request.

The following is a list of the types of educational records maintained by the college:

Type of Records	Location/Office	Title of Responsible Official
Permanent academic	Registrar's Office	<i>Registrar</i>
Admission Application	Admissions	<i>Director, Admissions and Orientation Department</i>
Skills Survey	Admissions	<i>Director, Admissions and Orientation Department</i>
Veterans	Financial Assistance	<i>Director, Financial Assistance</i>
Financial assistance	Financial Assistance	<i>Director, Financial Assistance</i>
Continuing Education	Registrar's Office	<i>Registrar</i>
Certificates	Registrar's Office	<i>Registrar</i>
Disciplinary	Student and Instructional Support Services	<i>Dean, Student and Instructional Support Services</i>
Continuing Education Record	Registrar's Office	<i>Registrar</i>

Transcripts, Diplomas, Certificates, and Letters of Recognition Documents

Students and former students may request academic record transcripts from the Registrar's Office.

No transcripts will be released if any financial obligations to the college have not been met. Transcripts will not be issued to a third party without the written authorization of the student.

The cost of a diploma or certificate for the completion of a credit program is included in the graduation fee.

Student Conduct

A community of higher learning can make its maximum contribution only if high standards of integrity, courtesy, and accomplishment are maintained by every member of the college. Responsibility for achieving this goal falls upon students, faculty, and administration alike.

The college reserves the right to discipline any student for any behavior, on college premises or in connection with college-sponsored activities, which is judged as detrimental to the aim and objectives of the college. The individual student is responsible for understanding specific regulations set forth in the Student Code of Conduct appearing in the *Student Handbook*.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to perform their own academic work. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are considered extremely serious offenses. Students are personally responsible for understanding the various forms of academic dishonesty as they are explained in the Student Code of Conduct in the *Student Handbook*. Ignorance of any requirement for academic honesty will not constitute an excuse from disciplinary proceedings.

Requirements for Graduation

Each program description in this catalog lists the requirements for graduation in that curriculum. At the time of application for graduation, students will declare the catalog under which they intend to graduate. (The program of study should be declared at the time of admission to the college.) They will follow the requirements of a catalog of one academic year during which they were registered and attended classes at the college.

Should a student's enrollment at the College of Southern Maryland be interrupted by a break of five years, the catalog in effect when the student re-enters the college will be considered the year-of-entry catalog. If a student changes his/her academic program during the course of study, he/she must choose the current catalog for the newly selected academic program.

Unless required courses have been officially waived, all students must meet the course requirements of their program to graduate. They must also meet the grade requirements for a degree, certificate, or letter of recognition stated below, and must make an appointment with an advisor to complete the application for graduation.

Associate's Degrees

To qualify for graduation with an associate's degree, all students must pass all courses required in their curriculum and must have a grade point average (GPA) of 2.00 for all work at the college.

Certificates

To qualify for graduation with a certificate, students must pass all required courses and must have a 2.00 average for all courses required by the certificate program.

Letters of Recognition

Letters of recognition are credit course sequences designed with discrete goals and objectives for a specific population. At the completion of the sequence, the student is awarded an official letter of recognition by the college.

A letter of recognition credit course sequence consists of 6 to 11 credits. Currently available letters of recognition are included in this catalog. Students must follow the requirements of the letter of recognition in the catalog of a year during which they were registered and attended classes at the college. To be eligible for the letter of recognition, students must earn a *C* or better in each credit course in the sequence. The maximum number of credits accepted in transfer from other institutions is determined by the academic department and specified in the description. At least 25 percent of the credits must be earned at this college.

Students must apply with an advisor for a letter of recognition by the end of one month to receive a letter of recognition by the middle of the next month.

Application for Graduation

Students must make an appointment with an advisor to complete the graduation application and pay a graduation fee. The graduation fees are listed in the tuition and fee schedule. The last date to apply for graduation to ensure participation in the winter or spring ceremony is stated in the calendar section of this catalog as well as in each credit schedule of classes. Graduation applications are accepted at anytime if the student only wishes to receive a diploma. The processing of these applications will take one month. The college holds two graduation ceremonies a year, one in January, and one in May.

Academic Achievement

Deans' List

A deans' list recognizes those students, part-time or full-time on all campuses, who achieve a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher in college-level courses. To be eligible, students must complete at least 15 credits of college-level courses at the College of Southern Maryland. At that point and in increments of 15 credits thereafter (30, 45, 60), student transcripts are assessed for the deans' list honor. This achievement is noted on student transcripts in the appropriate semester.

Phi Theta Kappa

In recognition of their academic achievement, currently enrolled students who were on the deans' list the previous semester will be invited to join the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society of the Two-Year College. The college's chapter of Phi Theta Kappa sponsors activities involving scholarship, service, leadership, and fellowship on all three campuses. Each year, the Phi Theta Kappa national organization selects a topic for honors study, and the college offers a seminar for honors students on the topic. Membership in Phi Theta Kappa enhances students' opportunities for receiving scholarships when transferring to four-year colleges.

Honors Program

The Honors Program provides challenging learning experiences for academically talented students whose curiosity transcends a single intellectual or artistic interest.

Working with selected faculty members on a contract basis, honors students design and carry out projects in designated sections. Cocurricular seminars afford opportunity for meaningful contact with others in the Honors Program. Courses taken for honors credit are designated on honors students' transcripts.

Students must be admitted to the Honors Program prior to the start of the semester in which they begin honors projects. This process includes submitting an application form and two faculty recommendations. To be eligible, students must have completed a minimum of nine credits in general education courses at the college with a grade point average of at least 3.5. In addition, their applications should give evidence of good writing skills and of the ability to do independent study. Provisional acceptance may be granted to those who expect to meet admission requirements by the end of the semester.

Honors Convocation

An annual Honors Convocation and reception (held prior to graduation in May) honor those students whose academic work in specific areas of study is meritorious. Each academic department views this convocation as an opportunity to recognize promising students.

To be eligible for an Academic Excellence Award, students must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher and have earned at least one-half of their degree or certificate credits at CSM. This award, as well as honors recognition at the graduation ceremony, are based upon grades received up to the semester prior to the graduation date.

Students must have earned at least one-half of their degree or certificate credits at CSM in order to be eligible for honors. The honors designation is recorded on the transcript, based on all CSM courses included in the degree or certificate.

Graduation Honors

There are three levels of honors awarded at the completion of degrees or certificates: highest honors—a cumulative grade point average of 3.9 to 4.0; high honors—a cumulative grade point average of 3.75 to 3.89; and honors—a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 to 3.74.

Students must have earned at least one-half of their degree or certificate credits at CSM in order to be eligible for honors. The honors designation is recorded on the transcript, based on all CSM courses included in the degree or certificate.

Graduation Ceremonies

Two graduation ceremonies are held each year on the La Plata Campus for students attending classes at all sites. These ceremonies take place in January and May of each year. All degree and certificate recipients in attendance are recognized.

Student and Community Support Services

Orientation

The College of Southern Maryland offers several orientation options for students. Each is outlined below.

For more information about orientation, please contact the Admissions and Orientation Department.

Open House/Information Sessions

College Open House/Information Sessions are held monthly and provide prospective students with information about the college's credit and continuing education programs, financial assistance, how to transfer to a bachelor's degree program, and how to get started at CSM.

Student Orientation and Registration (SOAR)

The College of Southern Maryland offers new students a comprehensive orientation and registration opportunity. During the Student Orientation and Registration (SOAR) program, new students are given information about academic programs, campus resources and services, and college regulations. SOAR also allows students to meet with an academic advisor and register early for classes. SOAR sessions are offered May through July for the fall semester and October through January for the spring semester. How to register for SOAR sessions are included in each student's college admission acceptance letter or can be obtained from the Admissions and Orientation Department.

College Preview

The College Preview is an orientation and information session for first-time college students and their families. This program gives students general information about college services, campus facilities, academic requirements, and student life. Participants are given a chance to tour the campus and to talk one-on-one with college staff members.

College Success Skills (STU 1010)

One of the college's courses, College Success Skills (STU 1010), is a three-credit orientation course that offers the student a semester-long orientation to the college. Please refer to the Course Descriptions section of this catalog for a description of this course.

Student Handbook

Students who are unable to attend any of the orientation programs provided by the college can get an overview of campus services and facilities by reading the *Student Handbook*. The handbook is available on literature racks on all campuses.

Returning Adult's Program

The Returning Adult's Program (RAP) recognizes that adults entering college often have special needs and concerns. The Returning Adult's Program offers a network of support and a structured re-entry program.

Students over 25 years of age who are returning to the classroom are eligible for the program. The program offers academic advisement, registration assistance, special workshops, and a three-credit College Success Skills course focusing on the concerns of returning adult students. Contact the Admissions and Orientation Department for more information on this program.