HOW TO BECOME A PASSPORT INSTITUTION

INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Interstate Passport Initiative is to streamline students’ academic progress to graduation by eliminating unnecessary repetition of academic work after transferring. To accomplish this goal, the Passport Initiative focuses on what transfer students should learn in lower-division general education at their sending institution, and monitors the effectiveness of this experience by tracking students’ academic progress at their receiving institution after transfer.

Passport student learning is defined not by courses or credits completed, but rather by student Passport Learning Outcomes proficiency. Every Passport institution agrees that the Passport Learning Outcomes and Proficiency Criteria are adequate and acceptable expressions of transfer student learning in the lower-division general education core. A student is awarded a Passport upon completion of the courses that an individual Passport institution uses to impart proficiency with the PLOs. Importantly, there is no requirement or expectation that all Passport institutions use the same courses. When a student transfers with a Passport – which indicates the student is proficient in lower-division general education core academic areas – the receiving Passport institution has agreed that the Passport student will not be required to complete any of the courses in the receiving institution’s Passport Block in order to meet its lower-division general education core requirements. The academic progress of Passport students is tracked by a process agreed to in the Passport Agreement, and each sending institution periodically receives a report on the academic progress of its Passport students at all receiving institutions.

The Passport Initiative seeks to benefit students by this process that recognizes, honors and maintains institutional individuality. Passport institutions do have to agree that the PLOs are consistent with their own. Passport institutions are not requested to change any of their course offerings; they merely report the courses that impart transfer level proficiency of the PLOs. Passport institutions are not required to use a particular method of assessing student proficiency of the PLOs, but they are asked to make known to the other Passport institutions the proficiency assessments that they employ.

These instructions describe the process by which any institution can apply to participate in the Passport Initiative. This process and the Passport Learning Outcomes and the Proficiency Criteria were developed as part of Phase I of the Passport initiative by institutional representatives in five pilot states (California, Hawaii, North Dakota, Oregon, and Utah). The steps in the process for applying for Passport status are listed below, followed by a fuller description of each step.

PASSPORT INSTRUCTIONS

How to Become a Passport Institution
Steps for institutions applying for Passport Status:

1. Appoint an individual to the position of Campus Passport Coordinator.
2. Obtain agreement of the faculty that its department and/or institutional Learning Outcomes in each lower-division general education academic area are consistent with the Passport Learning Outcomes (PLOs).
3. Obtain agreement of the faculty that the Passport Proficiency Criteria are useful in gauging that a student is proficient at each PLO.
4. Generate a Passport Block, a list of courses (or other learning experiences) the institution will use to enable a student to attain proficiency of the PLOs and include a list of assessments typically used in these courses.
5. Obtain agreement by appropriate faculty at the institution that Passport students entering from any other Passport institution will not be required to repeat the courses in its Passport block to satisfy the Passport student’s lower-division general education core.
6. Secure agreement from the registrar to tag the courses that comprise the institution’s Passport Block and to adopt one of the methods of indicating on a student’s academic record that the student has completed the Passport.
7. Secure agreement with the institutional research department to adopt the Passport method of tracking the success of Passport students and submit data to the Passport Central Data Repository at Utah State University. (The Central Data Repository will compile this information from each receiving institution and deliver a report to each sending institution on the academic progress of Passport students at every Passport receiving institution.)
8. Obtain the signature of the appropriate institutional officer on the Passport application.
9. Submit the institution’s application to the Passport State Facilitator who will review the application, attach it with other institutions’ applications in the state, complete the State Application Set and submit the package for approval to the Passport Review Board.
10. Upon approval for Passport status, sign the Passport Agreement.
THE PASSPORT PROCESS

STEP 1: APPOINT A PERSON TO THE POSITION OF CAMPUS PASSPORT COORDINATOR

The Campus Passport Coordinator (CPC) is responsible for coordinating the activities at the institution that are required to apply for Passport Status. The CPC also will serve as the liaison with the Passport State Facilitator.

STEP 2: AGREE TO PASSPORT LEARNING OUTCOMES

STEP 3: AGREE TO PASSPORT PROFICIENCY CRITERIA

The Passport Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are what the student has learned. The Passport Proficiency Criteria (PPC) are the evidence of proficiency of the learning outcome appropriate at the transfer level. The PLOs and the PPC, based on the LEAP Learning Outcomes developed by the American Association of Colleges and Universities, were produced by faculty from the Passport pilot project institutions during the two-year Passport pilot project (2011-2013).

Every Passport institution awards a Passport to students who have attained transfer-level proficiency with learning outcomes in each of the academic areas in the Passport block; the Passport block, without being unpacked, is accepted by every Passport institution. To participate in the Passport initiative, the institution’s faculty responsible for each academic area in the Passport block must be in agreement that the Passport Learning Outcomes and Proficiency Criteria are consistent with their perception of expected transfer-level student achievement in each academic area. This process requires that faculty with knowledge and understanding of the institutional and departmental learning outcomes become familiar with the PLOs and PPC, and judge them to be consistent with their own learning outcomes.
The Passport Learning Outcomes for the three academic areas of Phase I are presented below. Please note that the wording of the institution’s set of learning outcomes does not have to be identical to the PLOs, but there should be consistency and a lack of conflict between the two sets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORAL COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>WRITTEN COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>QUANTITATIVE LITERACY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Develop a central message and supporting details by applying ethics, critical</td>
<td>1. Demonstrate rhetorical knowledge: address issues of audience, purpose, genre,</td>
<td>1. Demonstrate proficiency with arithmetic and algebraic computational skills, and extends them, for example, to geometric and statistical computations.</td>
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<td>thinking and information literacy skills.</td>
<td>syntax, structure, format and knowledge appropriate to the task.</td>
<td>2. Express quantitative information symbolically, graphically, and in written or oral language.</td>
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<td>2. Organize content for a particular audience, occasion and purpose.</td>
<td>2. Evaluate, apply, and ethically synthesize sources in support of a claim,</td>
<td>3. Select and use appropriate numeric, symbolic, graphical and statistical reasoning to interpret, analyze and critique information or line of reasoning presented by others.</td>
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<td>3. Demonstrate performance skills that include organizing and delivering content</td>
<td>following an appropriate documentation system.</td>
<td>4. Recognize, evaluate, and use quantitative information, quantitative reasoning and technology to support a position or line of reasoning.</td>
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<td>for a particular audience, occasion and purpose, and using technology as</td>
<td>3. Develop flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and</td>
<td>5. Design and follow a multi-step mathematical process through to a logical conclusion and critically evaluate the reasonableness of the result.</td>
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<td>appropriate.</td>
<td>proofreading.</td>
<td>6. Create, analyze and apply appropriate quantitative models to solve quantitative theoretical and real-world problems.</td>
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<td>4. Monitor and adjust for audience feedback.</td>
<td>4. Demonstrate proficiency with conventions, including spelling, grammar,</td>
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<td>5. Listen and critically evaluate the speaker’s central message and use of</td>
<td>mechanics, word choice, and format appropriate to the writing task.</td>
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<td>supporting materials.</td>
<td>5. Reflect on one’s inquiry and composing processes to critique and improve</td>
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<td></td>
<td>one’s own and other’s writing.</td>
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Next, the Campus Passport Coordinator should facilitate a review by faculty of the Passport Proficiency Criteria, also developed by the pilot project faculty. The proficiency criteria list observable student capabilities that demonstrate the Passport student’s transfer-level proficiency with each learning outcome. No single student is expected to display all of the proficiency criteria for any one learning outcome, but each student is expected to display at least one criterion for each learning outcome. The list of proficiency criteria, unlike the PLOs, is considered to be dynamic and readily expanded as additional institutions and their faculty participate in the Passport.
STEP 4: GENERATE A PASSPORT BLOCK OF COURSES

Once faculty agree that learning outcomes of the institution are consistent with the PLOs, and that the Passport Proficiency Criteria describe student capabilities appropriate at the transfer level, the faculty will construct a list of the courses or other learning experiences it uses to provide students the opportunity to achieve this level of proficiency. As examples, see the course lists compiled by Passport pilot institutions, available on the Passport website: www.wiche.edu/passport/learningOutcomesCriteria/oral; www.wiche.edu/passport/learningOutcomesCriteria/written; www.wiche.edu/passport/learningOutcomesCriteria/literacy.

The pilot project experience suggests some considerations that need emphasis as the course list is constructed.

a. In any one academic area, the course list may consist of a single course, more than one course, and/or alternative courses to accomplish coverage of all of the PLOs in the academic area.

b. Since the Passport is confined to lower-division general education proficiency, courses in the list need to be limited to those used to impart this level of learning.

c. Passport students who transfer will not be required to take courses in the receiving institution’s Passport Block in order to satisfy this institution’s lower-division general education core. It is possible, however, that a Passport student may be required to take a Passport Block course as part of a minor or major.

d. Courses in the institution’s Passport Block are to be credited to the Passport student as a block. The Passport Block is not to be unpacked.

e. Credit hour discrepancies between the Passport Block of sending and receiving institution are to be resolved outside of the Passport student’s lower-division general education core, and the Passport student is not to be penalized or privileged. If a sending institution’s Passport Block contains fewer credit hours than that of the receiving institution, the receiving institution may require the Passport student to acquire additional credits, but not to satisfy the lower-division general education core. If a sending institution’s Passport Block has more credit hours than the receiving institution’s Passport Block, the receiving institution will apply the additional credits to the Passport student’s academic progress, most likely in the area of elective credits.

The Passport Block course lists will be included in the institution’s application for Passport Status, and, to inform other Passport institutions, will include a list of the assessments typically used in the Passport Block courses. If approved for that status, the lists will be posted on the Passport website as part of the institution’s profile.
STEP 5: SECURE AGREEMENT THAT PASSPORT STUDENTS WILL NOT BE REQUIRED TO REPEAT ANY COURSE IN THE INSTITUTION’S PASSPORT BLOCK AS PART OF THE STUDENT’S LOWER-DIVISION GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

The courses in any Passport institution’s Passport Block are those that the institution’s faculty identify as the courses that provide students the opportunity to achieve success at attaining transfer-level proficiency with the PLOs. A student who earns a Passport has successfully completed the Passport Block at a Passport institution, so there is no reason for the student to repeat courses with the same PLOs at a receiving institution. Requiring the Passport student to repeat courses is counter to the goal of the Passport Initiative, which is to eliminate unnecessary repetition of academic work by transfer students.

Understanding and agreeing to this feature of the Passport Initiative is of paramount importance and central to the Passport goal, concepts and process. For this reason, the CPC will confirm with faculty in the Passport Block academic areas that the Passport Block will not be unpacked, and that Passport students will not be required to repeat any course in the institution’s Passport Block in order to complete lower-division general education requirements.

STEP 6: SECURE AGREEMENT TO IDENTIFY PASSPORT STUDENTS AND PASSPORT BLOCK COURSES IN STUDENT RECORD SYSTEMS

The previous five steps in applying for participation in the Passport have all involved faculty, who confirm institutional consistency with the PLOs and PPC, construct the Passport Block for the institution and agree to the use of the Passport Block. For Step 6, with facilitation by the CPC, the institution’s registrar will be advised of the courses that faculty have placed in the Passport Block. The registrar will agree to “flag” these courses as Passport courses and adapt institutional certificate audit processes to identify students who complete the Passport Block courses and note the achievement on the Passport student’s academic record. This process was developed by registrars from the pilot institutions (see “Guidelines for Registrars: Recording and Tracking Passport Students” at http://www.wiche.edu/passport/pilot/registrars). The registrar guidelines offer three different methods of indicating on a student’s academic record that the student is a Passport student:

• Adding a comment on the transcript using a standard format
• Posting a pseudo course on the transcript
• Creating an additional record to accompany a transcript.
The registrar will determine which of these methods is most appropriate for the institution, and agree to implement the chosen method to indicate on a student’s academic record that the Passport has been achieved.

STEP 7: GENERATE AGREEMENT TO TRACK AND REPORT PASSPORT STUDENT ACADEMIC PROGRESS

The Passport Initiative measures the academic progress of Passport students at receiving institutions to monitor the sending institutions’ preparation of Passport students. “Academic progress” is defined as Passport student performance relative to non-Passport transfer students soon after the Passport student transfers to the receiving institution. As part of the pilot phase of the Passport Initiative, institutional research representatives developed a monitoring process and template for recording transfer student performance and progress, and for reporting this information to each Passport sending institution.

1. Receiving Institution data collection and reporting:

Each Passport institution that receives a Passport transfer student(s) will collect the following data for each of the first two terms after the Passport student(s) transfer, and report this data to the Central Data Repository:

   a. Number of credits of A, B, C, D, Did Not Finish, and F earned at the receiving institution in each of the first two terms after the student transfers by Passport students and by non-Passport transfer students from each institution that sends a Passport student.

   b. Mean GPA – Weighted for number of credits each student completed – calculation -----

   \[
   \frac{(each \ students' \ GPA) \times (# \ of \ credits \ the \ student \ completed)}{(total \ credits \ completed \ by \ all \ students)}
   \]

   c. Mean number of credits enrolled in at the receiving institution

Detailed instructions and templates for collection of this data are in the document “Passport Tracking System,” available at www.wiche.edu/passport/registrars.

2. CDR Reports Passport student performance/progress to sending institutions.

The CDR sorts this information on the basis of each Passport sending institution, aggregates the data into an individual summary for each sending institution, and transmits the summary to each sending institution. Sending institutions may decide to use this information in their self-improvement process. The CDR also makes these reports available to the Passport Review Board for its use in monitoring the success of Passport students from each sending institution.
STEP 8: COMPLETE AND SIGN THE INSTITUTION’S APPLICATION FOR PASSPORT STATUS

The CPC should complete the institution’s application for Passport Status and have it signed by the appropriate officer with the authority to sign on behalf of the institution. As noted above, the application will include the institution’s list of courses that ensure proficiency of the PLOs and the list of assessments used by the institution to ensure proficiency.

STEP 9: SUBMIT THE INSTITUTION’S SIGNED APPLICATION TO THE PASSPORT STATE FACILITATOR

The Passport State Facilitator will review the institution’s application for completeness and attach it with other applications from institutions in the state to the State Set Application and submit the package to the Passport Review Board.

STEP 10: UPON APPROVAL OF PASSPORT STATUS, SIGN THE PASSPORT AGREEMENT

If approved for Passport Status, the PSF will send to the authorized officer at the institution the Passport Agreement (see www.wlche.edu/passport/agreement). The officer must sign the agreement and return it to the Passport State Facilitator, who will arrange for copies signed by the PRB to be returned to the institution. Once signed by both parties, the institution’s Passport Status becomes active for a five-year term.

The newly approved Passport institution will be added to the Passport website, with a link to the CPC – the individual at the institution who will serve as the liaison to the Passport Initiative.

Congratulations on demonstrating your institution’s commitment to student success through your interest in participating in the Passport Initiative!