

## Academic Advisors FAQs

### **What are the “starting” points for talking with *first-time enrolled* students about the Interstate Passport®?**

Earning a Passport can be an important milestone for all students on a pathway to a credential that requires lower-division general education whether they intend to transfer or not. Academic advisors and admissions officers at both two- and four-year institutions are encouraged to talk with all incoming students about the benefits of earning the Passport. Similarly, at the end of the term students should be informed of their progress toward completion of the Passport, particularly if the student has expressed interest or intent to transfer.

### **What are the “starting” points for talking with *incoming transfer* students about the Interstate Passport?**

For incoming transfer students, those responsible for evaluating and posting transcripts can determine if the student is entering with a completed Passport and, if so, ensure that the student understands that the new institution’s lower-division general education requirements have already been met. (The one exception would be a specific legislatively mandated course requirement, e.g., in that state’s history). For incoming transfer students with some lower-division general education learning from a prior institution, advisors and admissions officers should explain how that learning, if any, could be used toward earning a Passport at the current institution; students be kept informed of their progress toward that end.

### **How does Interstate Passport fit into my institution’s program/curriculum?**

Your institution’s Passport Block is a menu of lower-division general education courses selected by your faculty by which your students can achieve outcomes consistent with, similar to, and across the same range of learning as the Passport Learning Outcomes, thereby earning a Passport. The Block may be identical to your institution’s lower-division General Education requirements, a subset of them, or contain one or two additional courses. To earn a Passport, a student must earn a minimum grade of “C” or its equivalent in all courses completed as part of the Passport Block.

### **When a student transfers to my institution with a Passport, does my institution need to identify the Passport courses at the sending institution? Should those courses be listed on the student transcript?**

The Passport transfers as a block and cannot be unpacked, so examining individual courses for equivalency to meet lower-division general education requirements is unnecessary. However, it may be necessary to examine some of the courses to determine if prerequisites for major programs have been met. The Passport will also be listed on the transcript. A student transferring to your institution with a Passport may receive the number of credits earned in achieving the Passport at the sending institution with additional credits counting as electives as determined by the registrar. The specific courses the student took as part of the Block at the sending institution may or may not be identified on the transcript as having been taken for that purpose depending on regular campus procedures.

### **What are the benefits or implications of a Passport?**

Network member institutions—through academic advisors and marketing efforts—are encouraged to promote completion of the Passport as a milestone achievement. Students who earn a Passport, even if they do not earn a degree, have completed coursework covering recognized knowledge and skill areas valued by both universities and employers and have achieved numerous learning outcomes in those areas. Thus, the Passport can be marketed by the students as an indicator that they have achieved competency in key skills

and knowledge areas needed for advanced studies and valued in the labor market.

**Does Interstate Passport define a minimum performance level on all components of the Passport block?**

Yes. Students must earn a minimum grade of “C” or its equivalent in each course from an institution’s Passport Block to meet its lower-division general education requirements.

**What happens if a student transfers from one Network member institution to another prior to completing the Passport?**

The receiving institution will articulate the student’s previous learning using course-by-course or other equivalency methods to evaluate his/her transcript in the same way it evaluates students who transfer in without completing an AA or other credential. The student may go on to earn a Passport at the receiving institution by successfully completing the additional outcomes not yet achieved in that institution’s Passport Block.

**If dual credit students take a large number of courses at a Network member institution, can they earn a Passport as well?**

The home institution will articulate the student’s previous learning using course-by-course or other equivalency methods to evaluate his/her transcript in the same way it evaluates students who transfer in without completing an AA or other credential. The student may go on to earn a Passport at the home institution by successfully completing the additional outcomes not yet achieved in that institution’s Passport Block.

**If a current student at a Network member institution brings in credits from multiple institutions that they accumulated as a high school dual credit student, can they use those dual credits plus any credits they take at their home institution to earn a Passport at the home (Network member) institution?**

Yes. The home institution will articulate the student’s previous learning using course-by-course or other equivalency methods to evaluate his/her transcript in the same way it evaluates students who transfer in without completing an AA or other credential. The student may go on to earn a Passport at the home institution by successfully completing the additional outcomes not yet achieved in that institution’s Passport Block.