

DATE: August 24, 2006
TO: Douglas Estry, Acting Assoc Provost for Undergraduate Education
FROM: Linda Trevarthen, Manager, Testing Services
SUBJ: Request to Review and Revise MSU's CLEP Policy

This is a request to discontinue MSU's restriction regarding "when" a CLEP test may be taken, thereby allowing the granting of CLEP credit at any point during a student's undergraduate tenure.

Currently, MSU's policy reads: "No credit will be awarded for CLEP examinations after the student's first enrollment at Michigan State University."

Issue #1: Past practice for at least the last 30 years has allowed the taking of exams right up until the first day of classes. (an inconsistency with published policy)

Issue #2: Moreover, there is research to indicate that CLEP test-takers tend to:

- 1) tend to have relatively high GPAs
- 2) tend to take more challenging courses
- 3) and tend to pay for as many or more credits as non-CLEP

and this is why I would like to see the test-taking deadline lifted.

MSU is one of a handful of schools with a test-taking deadline/restriction. It is my understanding that the vast majority of schools which grant CLEP credit allow testing at any time.

Here are several pertinent links:

Information about CLEP in the Testing Office website <http://testingoffice.msu.edu/test.htm>

MSU's CLEP Policy from the OAS website

http://admissions.msu.edu/admission/freshmen_AP-IB-CLEP.asp

2 CLEP Research Reports which speak to this topic

<http://www.collegeboard.com/highered/clep/notable.html>

Other CLEP information designed for faculty and staff

<http://www.collegeboard.com/highered/clep/>

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Dear University committee on Academic Policy,

I write to you as a concerned Michigan State University student with regard to the following CLEP policy:

- As the policy states, "Individuals desiring recognition of CLEP examinations for credit at Michigan State University must present official CLEP Exam reports for all exams taken PRIOR to matriculation (enrollment) at Michigan State University. No credit will be awarded for CLEP examinations taken after the student's first enrollment at Michigan State University."

It is my concern to raise discussion about how the policy affects all MSU students and I feel that when the policy was established it did not fully take into account the negative consequences part of the student population was going to have to face. I feel that the policy does not treat the student body fairly for the following reasons:

1. A first time Michigan State University student is eligible for credit for taking CLEP before they enroll, but an enrolled student regardless of his or her student class level cannot.
2. A transfer student is eligible for credit for taking CLEP prior to enrollment, but a re-admitted student cannot be eligible to receive for his or her CLEP examination results.

My understanding of standardized CLEP exams is that the exams are designed to test the knowledge of all college students and no criterion is set. Therefore I feel that there should be no criteria for any MSU students to be eligible for credit. I feel that CLEP test results should be used throughout the academic career and not just in beginning. I feel that if CLEP exams are going to be accepted by the university, then all students regardless of circumstance should be eligible. I therefore urge the committee to reconsider the policy and to establish a more reasonable policy.

If not, I have two important questions that I wish to have answered, clarified and directed to the student population. I seek valid answers that justify to why only certain students can receive credit.

1. What is the difference between a first time entering student who can receive CLEP credit and a 2nd, 3rd or even a 4th year student who seeks credit for his or her education but cannot?
2. What is the difference between a transfer student who can have his or her CLEP results accepted, yet a re-admitted student who has taken CLEP elsewhere cannot?

Faculty and advisement have encouraged me and I would really appreciate a response or hopefully a change.

Thanks, Alexis Rodriguez

11 April 2006

Dear University Committee on Academic Policy,

Before a decision is made on the CLEP examination policy, I had more information to share with the committee in hope to positively influence the final stance on the policy. I would like to share with you my personal college experience regarding the policy.

I am a re-admitted student and also a student-parent trying to finish my education so that I can provide more for my family. The last couple of years of my life have required lots of transition. Recently, I had my first child and based on my situation, I moved back home to Texas. I had family support and attended the University of Texas Pan American to continue my college education and while I attended there, I was offered the opportunity to take the CLEP standardized test. Based on my scores, I was granted Spanish credit at the local university. And after a semester in Texas, I decided to transfer back here to Michigan State University to finish where I started and because of its national recognized criminal justice program, which brought me here in the first place. After my arrival, my transcripts were evaluated and all but my Spanish credits were accepted. They were not accepted because of this policy. After researching more about the CLEP Policy, the more I learned about its inconsistency.

As you know, CLEP is a national standardized test and colleges across the country accept the scores and grant students credits as does Michigan State University, but with limited opportunity. Only prior to first time enrollment are students able to have their CLEP scores accepted and evaluated. I researched the policies of two other Big – 10 universities, Ohio State and Penn State regarding CLEP and discovered their policies gave to all of their student body an equal opportunity to earn credits with their CLEP scores. It further motivated me to discuss with advisors and faculty to share this information and they encouraged me to voice a change. The direction I was pointed to has brought me to UCAP to share this with you.

I truly feel that this policy is inconsistent and unfair because not all students get their CLEP scores accepted. While some students get the opportunity to move ahead, graduating is delayed for others. Thank you for your time and consideration and I hope the best decision is reached soon.

Sincerely,

Alexis Rodriguez