DATE: January 17, 2014

TO: Presidents, Community Colleges

FROM: Office of the Chancellor

SUBJECT: Guidance: Non-Credit Remedial Courses Eligible for State Aid

This Memorandum provides guidance on the designation of non-credit remedial courses eligible for State aid as authorized under Section 602.5, Title 8 of the New York State Codes, Rules and Regulations (8 NYCRR) herein referred to as “the Code” and attached as Appendix A. Jointly developed by the Office of Community Colleges and the Office of the Provost, this Memorandum implements one component of the SUNY Board of Trustees’ Resolution, SUNY Path to Success Plan, adopted on June 11, 2013. Definitions of key terms may be found at the end of this document in Appendix C.

This guidance is grounded in the requirements set forth in the Code and the work of the SUNY Task Forces on Remediation and Non-Credit Remedial Education, assuring alignment of non-credit remedial courses to preparation for pathways leading to credit-bearing coursework. It is also consistent with The Power of SUNY strategic plan goals and SUNY’s system-wide commitment to student completion and success, as well as with SUNY policies on assessment and data transparency and reporting, which affirm SUNY’s longstanding commitment to transparency and accountability. Notably, 8 NYCRR 602.5 charges the Chancellor or his/her designee with the development, issuance and periodic review of guidelines for determining eligibility for State aid for non-credit remedial courses offered by community colleges. Included herein are a revised process for submission and review by the Office of the Provost of all proposed non-credit remedial courses that may be eligible for State aid and revised guidelines for determining the State aid eligibility of courses. This guidance and the related guidelines build upon and supersede previous guidance promulgated by way of Memoranda to Presidents in 1976, 1989, and 2003.

In accordance with this Memorandum, all SUNY community colleges shall review all non-credit courses currently receiving State aid to ensure appropriate alignment with the revised guidelines. Those courses deemed by the campus to be eligible for State aid under these regulations should be submitted for review to the SUNY Office of Academic Programs and Planning, System Administration, at: noncredit@sysadm.suny.edu prior to January 1, 2015. After that date, new courses must be submitted for review before they can be designated to receive aid and will be reviewed on a rolling basis.
The Office of Academic Programs and Planning will maintain a registry of approved courses to demonstrate compliance with appropriate rules and regulations. Questions about this Memorandum may be directed to the Office of Academic Programs and Planning at: noncredit@sysadm.suny.edu.

Attachments

Copy: Interim Provost Bringsjord
     Senior Vice Chancellor Duncan-Poitier
     Associate Provost Lane
     Assistant Provost Moeckel
     Assistant Vice Chancellor Quaintance
     Chief Academic Officers, Community Colleges
     Chief Financial Officers, Community Colleges
     Continuing Education Directors, Community Colleges
     President, Faculty Council of Community Colleges
     President, Student Assembly
Guidance: SUNY Non-Credit Remedial Courses Eligible for State Aid

The State University of New York has a long-established commitment to access, student completion and success. This historic commitment, strengthened by the development of The Power of SUNY strategic plan, is represented by targeted initiatives designed to: 1) reduce the need for remediation generally, through an enhanced partnership with K-12 to strengthen the education pipeline; and, 2) to improve the results of the remedial education SUNY does offer. This Memorandum addresses the latter. Specifically, it provides guidelines for the review and approval of non-credit remedial offerings eligible for State aid. It should be noted that the courses eligible for State aid under this program are courses which have been traditionally administered through Continuing Education departments and not as a regular, semester-based and financial aid-able part of a matriculated student program. Such courses already receive State aid through standard FTE submissions and are not addressed by this Memorandum.

The process and guideline revisions outlined in this Memorandum align with Education Law 6304(1)(a)(iv); 8 NYCRR part 602.5; and SUNY Path to Success Plan Board of Trustees’ Resolution, adopted on June 11, 2013. The process and revisions are grounded in the related recommendations of the SUNY Task Force on Remediation, the Non-Credit Remedial Task Force, and the Student Completion and Success Task Force. Importantly, these updated guidelines afford opportunity to strengthen the alignment of non-credit courses with academic offerings leading to a credential.

I. Key Components of the Updated Guidelines

Remediation Defined. Included in the Code is a definition of remediation wherein non-credit programs and courses are considered State aid eligible if they meet the following criterion: “Instruction concerned with diagnosing, correcting or improving such basic skills as oral and written communications, reading, analytical concepts and general study habits and patterns, to overcome in part or in whole any particular marked deficiency which interferes with a student’s ability to pursue an educational objective effectively.” The focus on academic preparation is a clarification of previous guidelines and specifically removes from eligibility courses focusing exclusively on computer skills. Previous revisions to this definition also removed from eligibility courses pertaining to vocational preparation (1991-92) and community service (1990-91). While offerings in these areas remain an important part of the community college mission, they are not eligible for State aid under this definition of non-credit remedial instruction.

Alignment to Educational Objectives. The revised guidelines provide campuses with the opportunity to more closely align their non-credit remedial courses and programs with academic offerings, thus defining “an educational objective” as pursuit of a post-secondary credential. Noting that stackable credentials often provide a pathway for students to enter into credit-bearing degree programs, this post-secondary credential may take the form of a program of academic activity leading to a degree or certificate. Any stackable credential must be externally recognized, and articulate into a credit-bearing degree or certificate program. This specification requires academic oversight of the non-credit remedial program implementation and assessment, and strengthens the partnership between the institution’s academic affairs and continuing education operations. An example of this type of structure is the National Association of Manufacturer (NAM) Skills Certification System which provides nationally recognized workplace skills and the needed remediation to prepare students for credit-bearing coursework.
Assessment. The revised guidelines take account of best practices for student completion and success, as well as evidence-based assessment of non-credit remedial courses or programs. In the interests of accountability, the guidelines also provide for assessment of student success, comprehensive data tracking, and program monitoring.

II. Process for Review and Approval

Consistent with SUNY policy and New York State law, this Memorandum defines a new process by which campuses must submit to System Administration non-credit remedial courses to be approved as eligible for State aid. The review and approval process is as follows:

1. Each campus will conduct a thorough review of all current and prospective non-credit remedial courses to be offered and determine those courses and programs that appear to be eligible for State aid according to the requirements listed in the revised guidelines (below). Prior approval under previous guidelines will no longer be valid after September 1, 2015.

2. Requests for approval should be prepared using the designated request form available at: http://www.suny.edu/provost/academic_affairs/AcaProPlan.cfm (see also Appendix B below).

3. To be eligible for State aid effective September 1, 2015, proposed non-credit remedial courses and programs must be submitted for review, under the authority of the campus’ Chief Academic Officer, to noncredit@sysadm.suny.edu. Review of proposals will begin immediately upon receipt, but initial submission of currently offered or prospective courses is due no later than January 1, 2015 for funding approval for fall 2015. Subsequent submissions of newly developed courses will be accepted on a rolling basis. A regular review period for these subsequent submissions will be determined through consultation with campus representatives.

4. The Non-Credit Remedial Review Committee, including staff from the Office of the Provost and the Office of Community Colleges, will review campus requests and determine State aid eligibility. Campuses will be notified no later than March 31, 2015 of the committee’s decisions regarding initial requests received by the January 1, 2015 deadline. (N.B. Campuses are encouraged to submit proposals prior to January 1, 2015, subsequent to completion of any local approvals.) A decision for denial of approval for State aid under this program may be appealed. Consideration of the appeal will be based on compelling evidence submitted by the campus chief academic officer that the proposed course or program meets the guidelines and should be approved. The Appeals Committee shall be composed of the original Non-credit Remedial Review Committee and two representatives from a community college other than the college making the appeal. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final.

5. All courses offered after September 1, 2015, must be approved for State aid via this process under the new guidelines.

6. SUNY System Administration will maintain a database of approved non-credit remedial courses and programs.

7. To receive State aid for approved courses and programs, campuses must submit course, term and student information, as part of standard SIRIS reporting.
III. Guidelines

Non-Credit Remedial Course Aid: Guidelines

8 NYCRR part 602.5 (“the Code”) authorizes the payment of State aid for non-credit remedial courses and programs. Courses and programs that develop the basic skills necessary to function effectively in a program of study leading to an academic credential are an important function of the community college. Non-credit remedial course aid is intended to provide support for this important function.

In accordance with section 602.5, non-credit remedial courses must meet the following criteria in order to receive State aid:

1. LEGAL AND POLICY COMPLIANCE. The guidelines below are developed in accordance with Section 602.5, Title 8 of the New York State Codes, Rules and Regulations (8NYCRR) and are consistent with the SUNY Path to Success and The Power of SUNY Strategic Plan goals.

2. AUDIENCE SERVED. Non-credit remedial courses may serve any person in need of basic-skills instruction "to overcome in part or in whole any particular marked deficiency which interferes with a student's ability to pursue an educational objective effectively" (section 602.5(a)). Courses must be generally available to any person eligible for college-level study who needs additional instruction in order to participate in post-secondary level courses or the equivalent.

3. LEVEL OF STUDY. Non-credit remedial courses are not intended to act in an Adult Basic Education capacity. Students in these courses, with the exception of English as a Second Language (ESL) courses, should generally have a reasonable expectation of being able to enter college-level study upon completion of one, or at most, two sequential levels in any specific content area. Exceptions may be considered with sufficient evidence of compelling justification. Although the goals are similar to those of imputed credit developmental education courses, non-credit remedial courses are intended to supplement and not supplant an institution’s imputed credit developmental courses.

Due to the nature of second-language acquisition, more time may be needed for second-language learners to achieve the fluency needed for college level work. At all levels of ESL, students should be made aware of pathways leading to a college credential. Because of their more specific link to community service rather than academic proficiency, and because these types of courses are often provided through community agencies, funding through the non-credit remedial course aid program is not generally available for the very beginning levels of ESL which prepare students for vocational or community participation. Beginning levels of ESL will qualify only if they are closely linked to stackable credentials in the form of articulated pathways, certificates, and degree programs. Programs comprised of approvable courses that provide intensive English immersion for students of all levels and which provide a logical progression toward fluency in academic English are approvable. In all cases, criteria for student progress from one level to another must be clearly documented.
4. ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES. Non-credit remedial courses should address deficiencies in the basic skills that are expected of persons enrolling in an academic program at the college level. According to the Code, allowable activity is defined as “instruction concerned with diagnosing, correcting or improving such basic skills as oral and written communications, reading, analytical concepts and general study habits and patterns…” This specifically includes preparation for placement testing; High School Equivalency (formerly known as GED) preparation courses; mathematics and English courses including college preparatory reading, writing, and English as a Second Language (ESL) courses; and other types of academic literacy, such as study strategies. Instruction in analytical concepts is understood to mean courses in mathematics which prepare students for college-level work in that discipline. Non-credit courses or support programs, such as transitional bridge programs and Supplemental Instruction for gateway courses, are allowable. (Note: Distinct courses in computer literacy, critical thinking, and information literacy are not eligible for funding as they are elements of SUNY General Education requirements and are addressed and assessed in credit-bearing coursework in approved Associate and Baccalaureate degree programs, but these are important learning outcomes for students and incorporation of these elements into non-credit remedial courses is strongly encouraged.)

5. COURSE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT LEARNING. Course and program objectives must clearly delineate what students will be able to accomplish by the end of the course or program. Objectives must also clearly indicate the amount of time and/or imputed-credit expectations for the course or program, as well as identify for which gateway stackable credentials or credit-bearing courses or degree programs the proposed non-credit remedial courses or programs provide preparation. Ongoing assessment plans are key to ensuring successful evaluation of whether or not student learning objectives are being met and are required as part of the approval process.

6. QUALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY. Non-credit remedial courses and programs must be assessed regularly and results kept current and available on demand. Records of student attendance and course repetitions, as well as evidence of student learning and program assessment must be maintained. Periodic SUNY audits may be conducted to ascertain accuracy of State aid claims. Failure to maintain accurate records may result in disallowance of State aid eligibility. Chief Academic Officers must ensure that programs and courses submitted for approval are consistent with SUNY policy and adhere to Middle States Standards of Accreditation (Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education: http://www.msche.org/publications/CHX06_Aug08REVMarch09.pdf).

7. FACULTY. Hiring and evaluation of faculty must be supervised and approved by the college and not by any other entity, however closely affiliated. Instruction must be delivered by faculty approved and evaluated according to the college’s requirements and specifications in compliance with Middle States Standards on Contract Relationships (Standard 13).
8. CREDIT/CONTACT HOUR CALCULATIONS. Credit/contact hour calculations must be performed in accordance with existing SUNY Credit/Contact Hour Policy (see http://www.suny.edu/sunypp/documents.cfm?doc_id=168).

9. ATTENDANCE. State aid may be claimed only for students who have attended the class at least through the census date, which should take place no earlier than when 20% of the scheduled classes have been completed, a proportion similar to that for determining the census date for credit bearing coursework. **State aid may not be claimed on the basis of scheduled course hours.** Attendance records must be kept and produced upon request. Institutional policies on attendance and course repetition for credit-bearing courses should be applied equally to non-credit remedial courses. Applications for approval of non-credit remedial course aid funding must include the college’s attendance and course repetition policies for credit-bearing courses and demonstration of the proposal’s alignment with those institutional policies. Additional course repetitions above and beyond local credit-bearing course policy may not be claimed for State aid. SIRIS procedures are to be used for reporting of non-credit remedial course aid data.

10. STUDENT TUITION. Section 602.10(g) of the NYCRR community college regulations provides that: “Tuition payments are to be recorded for all students except citizens 60 years of age or over who are auditing courses on a space-available basis.” Tuition must be recorded for all courses that are being claimed for State-operating aid. In addition, section 602.5(b) further states that Tuition and Fees for non-credit courses shall not exceed the tuition for credit-bearing courses having an equivalent number of credit hours. No minimum level of tuition is mandated, but some tuition must be charged. Recognizing that payment of tuition may provide an incentive for student course completion, institutions are encouraged to establish tuition amounts which are proportionate and appropriate to the activity, but which may be sufficient to inspire student commitment.

11. SPONSOR SUPPORT. Section 602.5(a) of the NYCRR community college regulations states: “Non-credit remedial programs operated by community colleges can be included for State aid if the sponsor contributes its share of operating costs…” The college must receive adequate local support for its operating costs, consistent with Maintenance of Effort regulations, although it is not necessary that the support be directed to specific non-credit remedial courses. In addition, State aidable non-credit remedial courses are eligible for New York State non-resident sponsor operating and capital chargebacks.

12. EXCLUSIONS.

- Academic support services, such as open labs, tutoring, advisement, and orientations, are not allowable as they are not structured courses or programs and not specifically remedial. This type of support is an obligation associated with offering for-credit courses and is funded through the credit-course aid process. Some activity, such as instruction provided by formal learning centers, may be eligible to be reported in the college’s for-credit FTE on the
supplementary enrollment report (form 24) which is regularly submitted to the Institutional Research Office at SUNY System Administration.

- All avocational, recreational, and social group courses, community service and vocational courses, personal development and life skills courses, career exploration, and computer courses are not basic skills remedial as defined and are not allowable.

- Employer-specific/contract courses are the responsibility of the employer and are not eligible for State aid. All aidable courses should be open to the public.
Appendix A

CURRENT CODE SECTION 602.5
§602.5 State aid for non-credit remedial programs.

(a) Non-credit remedial programs operated by community colleges are eligible for State aid if the sponsor contributes its share of operating costs and each program meets the following criterion: Instruction concerned with diagnosing, correcting or improving such basic skills as oral and written communications, reading, analytical concepts and general study habits and patterns, to overcome in part or in whole any particular marked deficiency which interferes with a student's ability to pursue an educational objective effectively. State financial assistance shall be allowed for all non-credit remedial requirements heretofore or presently undertaken by community colleges.

(b) Fees for non-credit courses shall not exceed the tuition for credit-bearing courses having an equivalent number of credit hours.

(c) The following courses are specifically not eligible for State aid: avocational, recreational, and social group courses.

(d) The local operating budget shall indicate whether such non-credit courses are offered. Additional procedures for periodic review of all non-credit courses to determine eligibility for State aid shall be in accord with guidelines developed and issued by the Chancellor or designee.

(e) All courses and programs not eligible for State aid shall be in the aggregate self-sustaining. The revenues collectively received for such courses and programs must be adequate to cover the direct costs of all the courses and programs including faculty salaries and fringe benefits, the costs of supplies and materials consumed in the courses and programs, the costs of equipment used only for the programs and other expenses directly incurred by the courses and programs. Each individual course of program need not be operated on a self-sustaining basis.

(f) Fees for non-credit courses which are not eligible for State aid and which have no practical credit equivalency shall be determined by policy of the local trustees or their designee.

(g) In order to receive State financial assistance for non-credit courses, each community college must submit to the Chancellor, or designee, a request for funding which, at a minimum, shall contain the name of any co-sponsoring institutional group or agency, a description of the college's control of operation of the course in the areas of fiscal administration, selection of faculty and course development, a description of the course or program to be offered, the major purpose of the course or program as it relates to the mission of the college, the projected full-time equivalent student or headcount enrollment of the proposed course or program, and such other data as required by the chancellor, or designee, on forms designated for this purpose.

(h) Each community college shall maintain a record of costs and revenues, and other descriptive data in accordance with guidelines issued by the chancellor, or designee, for its total non-credit program in order to be eligible for State financial assistance for such courses. Each community college shall submit such records to the Chancellor, or designee, at the time and in the manner established by the Chancellor, or designee.
### Appendix B

**Request Form: Approval of State Aid for a Non-Credit Remedial Course**

Available online at: [http://www.suny.edu/provost/academic_affairs/AcaProPlan.cfm](http://www.suny.edu/provost/academic_affairs/AcaProPlan.cfm)

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<tr>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>1. Name: <em>(If course is to be offered at a branch campus, please specify.)</em></th>
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<tr>
<td>Program Contact</td>
<td>2. Name:</td>
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<td>Chief Academic Officer</td>
<td>5. Name:</td>
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<td>7. Signature:</td>
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**Note:** Signature of the Chief Academic Officer assures that the proposed course or program is consistent with SUNY policy and affirms full academic oversight by the campus. Signature also verifies that quality controls, including assessment and reporting requirements are in place and satisfy §602.5 and MSCHE accreditation standards. The signature also affirms that the proposal has met all applicable campus administrative and shared governance procedures for consultation.

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<tr>
<th>About the Course</th>
<th>9. Designation &amp; no. <em>(eg. CTE 151):</em></th>
<th>10. Course title:</th>
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<td>11. Course Description:</td>
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**12. Please separately attach to this form a course syllabus.** Documentation must include:

- Course goals, objectives and expectations for student learning. Please specify all, i.e., by the end of the course, what will students be able to do?
- Attendance Policy. Note that State aid may be claimed only for students who have attended the class at least through the census date, which shall be established as consistent with credit-bearing classes, and which should take place no earlier than when 20% of the scheduled classes have been completed.
- Course repetition and attendance policies must be included and their consistency with equivalent policies for credit-bearing courses must be demonstrated.

**Alignment with Credit-Bearing**

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<th>13. Identify the credit-bearing course and/or program for which the proposed non-remedial course or program is designed to prepare students.</th>
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<td><strong>Coursework</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>a. Designation &amp; no. (eg. CTE 151):</td>
<td>b. Course title:</td>
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14. Is this course equivalent to any financial aid-eligible course offered on a semester basis—for imputed credit or equivalent credit? If so, identify course designation, number and title in the boxes below

| a. Designation & no. (eg. CTE 151): | b. Course title: |  |

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<th><strong>Alignment with Guidelines/ Campus/SUNY Priorities</strong></th>
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<td>15. Describe how the course or program is consistent with the <em>Non-credit Remedial Course Aid: Program Guidelines</em> as well as with campus and SUNY mission/priorities:</td>
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<th><strong>Faculty</strong></th>
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<td>16. Describe requirements for faculty credentials and experience.</td>
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<th><strong>Course Schedule</strong></th>
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<td>17. No. of meetings per week:</td>
<td>18. How many hours:</td>
<td>19. How many weeks:</td>
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<th><strong>Course Location</strong></th>
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<td>20. On campus, community site, extension center, online etc.?</td>
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<th><strong>Enrollment/Fees</strong></th>
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<td>21. Confirm that course is open admission (y/n):</td>
<td>22. Estimated semester / annual enrollment (headcount):</td>
<td>23. Estimated annual avg. course FTE:</td>
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<tr>
<td>25. Course fees per student:</td>
<td>26. Co-sponsor, if any:</td>
<td>27. Funding sources other than non-credit remedial State aid if applicable:</td>
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<th><strong>Assessment</strong></th>
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| 28. Please separately attach to this form an Assessment Plan.  
  • Describe the assessment plan for the course/program, including methodology, frequency, and how results will be used to improve student success (Note: Regular assessments must be conducted for each State-aidable non-credit remedial course to gauge its effectiveness in preparing students for credit-bearing academic study). |  |  |

**Please submit form and required attachments via e-mail to:** noncredit@sysadm.suny.edu.
Non-credit Remedial Course Aid Program
Glossary of Important Terms:

**Ability-to-Benefit (ATB):** Prior to July 1, 2012, students who had neither a high school diploma nor a GED were allowed to take a federally designated general skills test (e.g. Compass or Accuplacer) for placement. If they scored high enough, they were deemed to have the “ability to benefit” from college level work and were eligible for financial aid. Federal financial aid, however, is no longer available to this population, though these students may still be admitted to a community college under the “24 hour” program if they pay the full tuition out of pocket.

**Adult Basic Education (ABE):** Instruction in basic skills, such as reading, writing, arithmetic, and other skills required to function in society, offered to persons 16 years of age or older. Adult basic education may include any subject normally offered in the basic curricula of an accredited elementary or secondary school in the state. If grade level measures are used, adult basic education includes grades 0 through 8.9.

**College-ready:** Demonstration of the appropriate academic skills and attitudes sufficient to attempt first-semester college-level (gateway) coursework without the need for remediation.

**Continuing Education:** Educational services provided by colleges that are outside of the normal academic program degree offerings, including, but not limited to, workforce related training programs often under contract to local businesses; instruction in preparation for high school equivalency testing; avocational courses offered as a service to the local community (computer literacy, photography, local history, dance, etc); instruction in various languages (English and others) intended to meet students’ personal, academic, or workforce goals;

**Developmental Education:** Developmental education supports the academic and personal growth of underprepared college students through instruction, counseling, advising, and tutoring. The participants in developmental education programs are traditional and non-traditional students who have been assessed as needing to develop their skills in order to be successful in credit-bearing college coursework. Such courses offered to students matriculated at community colleges by the division of academic affairs are typically called “developmental” as opposed to “remedial.” These courses do not require approval from SUNY System Administration, and are approved through the college’s normal academic course approval process.

**Reporting Requirements:** These courses contribute toward (AA)FTE in the form of equivalent credit hours not creditable to the degree and are hence state-aidable. These courses are reported in SIRIS submissions as: Remedial – Non-Continuing Ed. Data definition distinction: Courses which combine pre-college and college level material and result in some credit awarded toward a degree would be reported in SIRIS submissions as Developmental for data collection purposes. This use of the term “developmental” is mainly specific to state operated campuses and should not be confused with “developmental” courses as defined in this document.
Educational objective: A post-secondary program of study leading to a recognized credential, credit-bearing certificate or degree. Success in such programs normally requires academic skills at or above the level generally provided by completion of high school or documented equivalency.

“Gateway” course: First college-level credit-bearing course offered in a specific content area or discipline.

Imputed Credit/Credit equivalent: The equivalent of credit hours assigned to courses based on workload for the purposes of calculating faculty load and student financial aid. Imputed-credit courses count for these purposes, but carry no actual academic credit toward certificates or degrees.

Non-credit remedial course(s): These types of courses contain material exclusively at the pre-college level that is not creditable toward a degree and is intended to help prepare a student to be successful with college-level material. They are designed for students deficient in the general competencies necessary for a regular postsecondary curriculum. These courses have been offered through the Community College’s Office of Continuing Education and must have received formal approval from System Administration. Once approved, these courses contribute toward (AA)FTE in the form of equivalent credit hours and are hence state-aidable for community colleges. These courses are reported in SIRIS submissions as: Remedial – Continuing Ed.

Stackable Credential: Part of a sequence of credentials that can be accumulated over time to build up an individual’s qualifications in order to move along an academic or career pathway to more advanced credentials or degrees. Stackable credentials can often be articulated into credit-bearing programs of study.