



# North Idaho College

## Ad Hoc Report

Presented to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

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## Introduction

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In a letter dated July 18, 2013, the Commission reaffirmed North Idaho College's accreditation and asked the college to respond to five recommendations resulting from its spring 2013 Year Seven evaluation as follows: *Recommendation 1* as part of the Spring 2016 Year Three report; *Recommendation 2* as an updated response to Standard One in its Spring 2014 Year One report; *Recommendation 3* in a Spring 2018 Ad Hoc report; and *Recommendations 4 and 5* in a Spring 2014 Ad Hoc report.

This Spring 2014 Ad Hoc Report presents the progress that North Idaho College (NIC or the college) has made in response to Recommendations 4 and 5 of its spring 2013 Year Seven evaluation. The preparation of this report involved administrators, faculty and staff from the appropriate areas of responsibility in relation to the recommendations. In response to Recommendation 4 regarding concerns related to library resources, the vice president for instruction, the new library director, and library faculty and staff provided input to the response. In relation to Recommendation 5 regarding compliance with United States Department of Education transfer policy requirements, the registrar and director of admissions, the president's cabinet, the instructional leadership team, the faculty assembly and the college senate (made up of students, faculty and staff) provided input to the response. Additionally, the registrar and director of admissions worked with the registrars from the other community colleges in Idaho to write a transfer policy that contains common language.

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## Response to Recommendation 4

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### Recommendation 4: Library Resources

*It is recommended that the institution employ sufficient qualified personnel to maintain Library Services support and operations functions, insuring quality, adequacy, utilization, and security of library and information resources and services, including those provided through cooperative arrangements, wherever offered and however delivered. The institution, consistent with its mission and core themes, must provide access to library and information resources with an appropriate level of currency, depth, and breadth to support the institution's mission, core themes, programs, and services. (Standard 2.B.1 and Standard 2.E.1, Standard 2.E.4).*

**Accomplishments:** For several years the library director position has remained unfilled at NIC. While employees have maintained the library collection and participated in developing information literacy measures, the lack of designated leadership for this major contributor to core theme success was of concern to the accreditation evaluation team. Since 1999, the NIC library operated under a three-person “management team.” In 2010, one of the library management team members retired and that position was not filled. At that time, the acting vice president for instruction and the remaining team members chose to re-establish a director position for the library. After two failed attempts to hire a director, the remaining team was asked to continue in their leadership role as we transitioned to a new vice president for instruction and a hiring process could be re-initiated. At the time of the 2013 evaluation team visit, the new vice president for instruction had plans to hire a library director.

That hiring process has occurred and the college welcomed George McAlister, MSLS, on August 5, 2013, as the new library director for the Molstead Library at NIC. He has had over 25 years of experience as a librarian and manager in the academic, healthcare and for-profit environments. He recently served as the Director of Health Information Resources for the Spokane County Medical Society in eastern Washington, and was instrumental in developing an internet-based, region-wide medical library portal. In the academic environment, Mr. McAlister had nine years of progressive experience; first, as a branch librarian in the School of Dentistry at Loma Linda University, followed by a position as Associate Director of the University Library responsible for the operations of seven departments and 67 employees. He also held the faculty ranking of Associate Librarian. Mr. McAlister holds a Master of Science in Library Science from the University of Southern California.

In the short time he has served as director, Mr. McAlister has begun work on several key initiatives that will support NIC's mission, core themes, and strategic goals. During the first three months, he worked with library staff and faculty to establish several operational goals for the coming year. Those goals and the accomplishments to date follow:

#### ***Goal 1: Conduct a systematic review and assessment of library services, staffing and resources.***

The following accomplishments are the first steps in a year-long, systematic needs assessment that will evaluate the Molstead Library in relation to the demand for, and effectiveness of, library staffing, programs, resources and services:

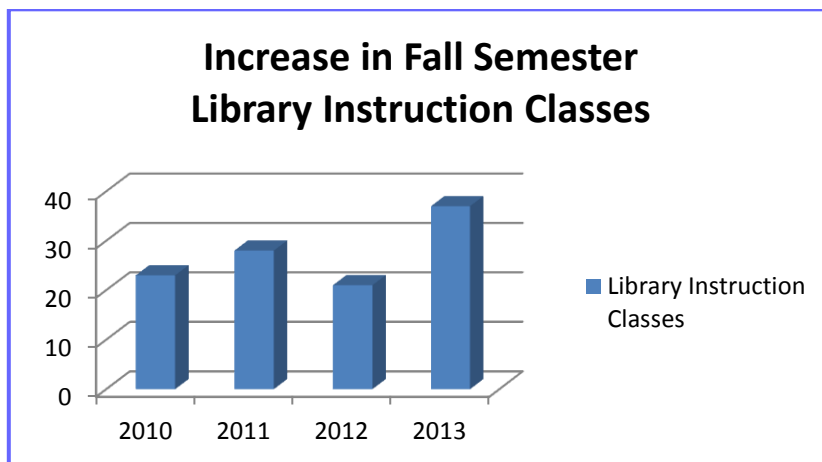
- To date, the library director has reviewed all job descriptions and met personally with faculty and staff to better understand responsibilities, interrelationships and library work flow, and to talk about a strategic vision for the library.

- The library director developed an organizational chart to illustrate work flow relationships and communication patterns, to make benchmarking comparisons to other organizations and use as a baseline for budgeting, and to use as a tool for later workforce development (*See Appendix 1 – Library Organizational Chart*).
- The library director completed a NIC-mandated, systematic performance appraisal of all classified library employees as well as library faculty (librarians). Beyond its intended purposes of employee development and performance improvement, the information gleaned from personal interviews and the evaluation results will also be used to assess departmental staffing needs and work flow.
- The director has future plans for an online survey to assess the effectiveness and demand for library services, resources and staffing that will be distributed to the college community sometime during FY2014.

***Goal 2: The Molstead Library will work closely with NIC faculty to deliver more library orientation, education and training classes; to help students develop and improve information-gathering skills, including accessing, evaluating, and using various information resources. Library faculty will also work with key subject specialists, who can help identify new additions to the library’s print and online collections.***

The following has occurred to support increased education, training, and use of the library by faculty, staff, and students:

- Through a campus-wide press release in September, faculty were encouraged to contact the library to schedule a customized library orientation to help students learn more about available library resources and research methods, and how to locate information specific to their discipline (*See Appendix 2 – Press Release*). To date, the library has already experienced a 76% increase in requests by NIC faculty for library instruction classes (37) over the prior fall 2012 semester (21). *See Figure 1, below.*



*Figure 1 – Library Instruction Classes*

- The library faculty planned a series of collaborative workshops with Career Services that were held in Molstead Library during February 2014. The workshops were designed to help students learn more about available career programs and services, complemented by both



classroom and hands-on instruction to assist students to identify and explore shelved and electronic career information available through the Molstead Library.

- Additionally, the collection development librarian met with the nursing department for a systematic review of the print and online resources necessary to support nursing program requirements and nursing program accreditation, and to begin plans for a library orientation class to be held in spring 2014.

***Goal 3: The Molstead Library will foster a collaborative, team-centered environment.***

The following has occurred to support a team-centered environment:

- The library leadership team, consisting of library faculty and department heads, meets weekly to discuss policies, solve issues, encourage communication and foster collegiality and cooperation.
- A quarterly all staff meeting was held in October 2013. This first meeting since the new library director was hired provided a review of library programs, projects and services and goals were established for the 2013-14 academic year.

***Goal 4: Establish a robust exhibit and display schedule that will engage North Idaho College students, employees and the greater college community and draw new visitors to the Molstead Library.***

The following has occurred to support increased engagement of the community with the library through exhibits and displays:

- For the month of September, 2013, an exhibit of books, DVDs and other resources on career planning, interviewing, job hunting skills, resume writing and much more was hosted.
- Working with the NIC Veterans Club during the month of November 2013, the library featured an exhibit of personal possessions and souvenirs on loan by students and NIC employees, as well as a display of more than 100 books, DVDs, and other information resources on U.S. military history and the many challenges veterans face when returning home.
- A series of engaging exhibits and displays have been planned for each month during the remainder of the 2014 academic year.

***Goal 5: Digitize key library collections and make these resources easily available to researchers.***

The following has occurred to increase the digital availability of library collections for researchers:

- The Molstead Library Director met with the Library Director of the Coeur d'Alene Public Library and the Library Director of the Community Library Network to plan the steps necessary to digitize back issues of the Coeur d'Alene Press (local newspaper) and make that collection available to students, faculty and community researchers.

- A library subcommittee has been formed to identify costs, staffing and other resources necessary to develop a program to digitize documents, photos and other significant materials held in the Molstead Library special collections area and to make these collections available over the Internet.

Finally, the following three goals are intended to specifically address NIC's overall online presence and availability of library resources at all locations in NIC's service region.

***Goal 6: Improve library presence in the Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS) and identify opportunities to improve library support of specific Internet, Hybrid and Web-enhanced classes; and***

***Goal 7: Improve the functionality and appearance of the library's website and infrastructure, creating a more user-friendly environment in which to access digital resources and learn more about library programs and services.***

***Goal 8: Identify needs and provide additional library support to satellite campus programs and outreach centers.***

The following has occurred to improve the NIC library's online presence and availability of resources at all NIC locations:

- A library subcommittee has been formed to work with the e-Learning Department to improve online accessibility of library resources and services.
- A library subcommittee has been formed to develop a project plan and timeline to improve the appearance, accessibility and functionality of the library's website and infrastructure, that will include a chronological list of plan tasks, individuals responsible for completing each deliverable, and target due dates.
- The library director met with the Coordinator of NIC at Sandpoint and the Bonners Ferry Center.
- The library director met with the Director for Workforce & Community Education in Post Falls, Idaho.

In summary, in the short span of time since NIC's spring 2013, Year Seven evaluation, the college has hired a new director for the library and several initiatives have been identified and implemented to ensure the quality, adequacy, utilization, and security of NIC's library and information resources and services, wherever offered and however delivered. Although the new library director has indicated it is still too early in his tenure to recognize and evaluate the necessary criteria to design an effective instrument to measure the value of library resources and services, he does have plans to do so in the near future. As the college determines expectations and identifies needs and best practices, the library plan of service will continue to evolve to more effectively support the mission of North Idaho College.

## Response to Recommendation 5

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### Recommendation 5

*It is recommended that the institution develop, publish widely, and follow an effective and clearly stated transfer-of-credit policy that maintains the integrity of programs while facilitating efficient mobility of students between institutions when completing their educational programs. Such a policy will ensure that adopted admission and placement policies guide student enrollment in courses and programs through an evaluation of prerequisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to assure a reasonable probability of student success (Standards 2.A.14 and Standard 2.A.16).*

**Accomplishments:** Upon receipt of Recommendation 5, and subsequent to the Commission's notification that NIC was out of compliance with United States Department of Education requirements to establish and widely publish a transfer-of-credit policy, the college has worked attentively to create a transfer policy and procedure. To accomplish this, NIC's registrar and director of admissions researched transfer policies at other institutions and collaborated with the other community college registrars in the State of Idaho to develop common language for each institution's policy and procedure. NIC's new transfer-of-credit policy and procedure were reviewed by the President's Cabinet and the instructional leadership team. After careful evaluation by these groups, the policy and procedure were submitted to the faculty assembly for review, and to the College Senate for review and approval. The policy and procedure are now before the NIC Board of Trustees with an anticipated approval date of April 2014. (*See Exhibit 1 – Draft Transfer-of-Credit Policy, and Exhibit 2 – Draft Transfer-of-Credit Procedure*)

NIC honors the terms of a statewide articulation policy with all Idaho public institutions, and specific articulation agreements with other four-year colleges and universities. Under the statewide articulation policy, students who complete the State Board of Education's general education core for an associate's degree will be considered as satisfying the lower division general education core requirements; however, the articulation policy is not intended to meet specific course requirements of unique or professional programs. Other articulation takes the form of specific preparation for a major or general education and course-to-course agreements.

The College's current degree audit system provides students and advisors with an evaluation of transfer credits and also allows them to evaluate coursework needed to complete any degree or certificate offered through NIC. The registrar and director of admissions is working with the Idaho State Board of Education and public colleges and universities to provide transfer information in a state-wide portal system that will allow students to evaluate how their completed credits will transfer within the State of Idaho. Transfer evaluations for incoming credits are completed through the Admissions Office; the Registrar's Office provides the final evaluation of course work ensuring graduation requirements have been met.

NIC has worked hard to meet Recommendation 5 by writing a comprehensive transfer policy and procedure. Additionally, NIC took the initiative to collaborate with the registrars in Idaho to find common language for a policy and procedure that can be used by all of the community colleges. Once the policy and procedure are approved by NIC's board, the information will be incorporated into the college catalog and website. NIC has always carefully evaluated transcripts and successfully accepted credit and transferred credit to other institutions. The articulation of this process in a policy and procedure, and publication of this policy and procedure, will ensure information is readily available to students, faculty, and staff.

## Conclusion

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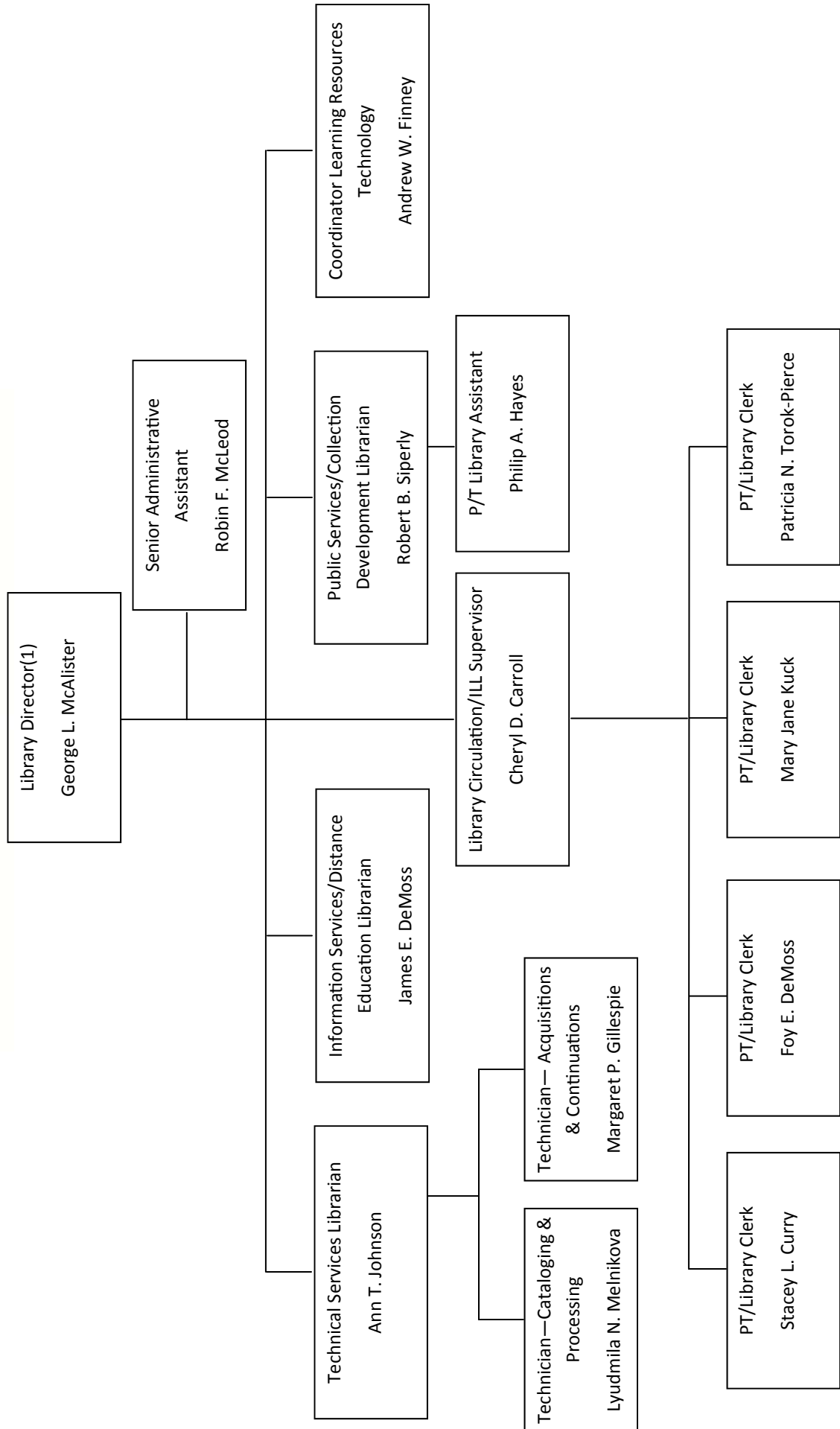
This Ad Hoc Report provides the Commission an update on Recommendations 4 and 5 since NIC's 2013 Year Seven evaluation. The response to Recommendation 4 describes the steps the college has taken to ensure that library support services and personnel are sufficient to support the college's mission, core themes, programs, and services. Under the leadership of the new library director, the college will continue to evaluate the demand for services, and the effectiveness of services, resources, and staffing for the library. The response to Recommendation 5 describes the steps the college has taken to ensure it has a clearly stated transfer-of-credit policy and procedure to follow that will ensure the college maintains the integrity of its programs while facilitating efficient transfer of students between institutions.





# North Idaho College

1000 West Garden Avenue, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814  
**Molstead Library**





# North Idaho College

*Molstead Library*

Library Instruction College-wide Press Release 9/25/2013

## **“Instructors encouraged to schedule a custom-tailored library orientation”**

Knowing how to use a library and its resources is one of the fundamental keys to lifelong, independent learning. Our library faculty welcome every opportunity to help and educate students to learn how to locate the information they need. Molstead Library staff have extensive experience in course-integrated library instruction; working with faculty to provide students with a broad foundation of information literacy and research skills.

Library faculty can teach students about resources and research methods in general, how to locate information specific to their discipline, or work one-on-one with students at the Information Desk to help them meet the needs of an assignment or project. To introduce key library services and methods, group orientation sessions are also available to your students in our library instruction classroom. We also provide opportunities for NIC faculty to learn about Molstead Library’s programs and services, and advise on research, copyright concerns and other scholarly information and communication issues. We also provide support to faculty that teach distance education courses. We encourage you to contact Jim DeMoss by phone at 769-3253 or email [JEDemoss@nic.edu](mailto:JEDemoss@nic.edu) for more information or to schedule a custom tailored library orientation suited to your students’ needs.

- George McAlister, Molstead Library Director

# Policy

Policy # \_\_\_\_\_

Effective Date \_\_\_\_\_

Revised \_\_\_\_\_

<p><i>(Impact Area - Dept Name)</i></p> <p>Students</p>	<p><i>(General Subject Area)</i></p> <p>Grading</p> <p><b>Author:</b> Registrar/Director of Admissions</p>	<p><i>(Specific Subject Area)</i></p> <p>Transfer of Credit</p> <p><b>Supersedes Policy #</b></p>
<p><b>Relates to Procedure #</b></p>	<p><b>Impact:</b> Any student who has taken credits at another accredited college or university</p>	
<p><b>Legal Citation (if any):</b></p>		
<p><b>North Idaho College</b></p>		

Policy Narrative

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North Idaho College may consider accepting transfer credits if the credits earned for coursework were completed at colleges and universities accredited by the following regional accrediting agencies: New England Association of Schools and Colleges; Middle States Commission on Higher Education; North Central Association of Colleges and Schools; Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; and/or Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

The Admissions Office is responsible for determining transfer course equivalencies according to the accompanying procedures. North Idaho College reserves the right to accept or reject credits earned at other institutions of higher education.

# Procedure

Policy # \_\_\_\_\_

Effective Date \_\_\_\_\_

Revised \_\_\_\_\_

<p><i>(Impact Area - Dept Name)</i></p> <p>Students</p>	<p><i>(General Subject Area)</i></p> <p>Grading</p>	<p><i>(Specific Subject Area)</i></p> <p>Transfer of Credit</p>
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<p><b>Legal Citation (if any):</b></p>		
<p><b>North Idaho College</b></p>		

Procedure Narrative

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## Introduction

A student enrolling at North Idaho College may have coursework evaluated for transfer of credit after having attended other post-secondary institutions. For coursework to be evaluated, students must apply for admission and submit official transcripts. For graduation purposes, students must request to have their transfer credit evaluated no later than one semester prior to applying for graduation.

## Factors which determine the transfer of credit:

1. The award of transfer credit shall imply that transfer credit will be applicable towards satisfying North Idaho College associate degree and certificate requirements.



2. Courses that are equivalent to core courses at North Idaho College will satisfy core requirements. Courses must be passed with a grade of C- or better. Any transfer course with a grade lower than a C- may be considered as elective credit.
3. Courses not equivalent to specific core courses at North Idaho College but meeting core general education requirements at an accredited institution within the State of Idaho may be considered in meeting core requirements.
4. Courses not equivalent in content to any course at North Idaho College may be considered as elective credit.
5. Developmental coursework (below 100-level) is accepted for the purpose of fulfilling course prerequisites. The credit may satisfy certificate requirements but will not satisfy associate degree requirements.
6. Courses with quarter credit hours are converted to semester credit hours upon acceptance. The semester conversion of quarter credits is at a rate of .67 semester credit hours for each quarter hour.
7. Students who have completed a degree and are considered core complete at an accredited institution from the State of Idaho will not be required to complete additional core classes at North Idaho College. Students must still meet specific program requirements.
8. Upper division courses are not accepted unless there is a specific equivalent lower-division course at North Idaho College.
9. The age of credit may preclude acceptance when applying credit toward specific program requirements (e.g. nursing).
10. Transfer grades and credits are not computed within the cumulative GPA earned at North Idaho College.
11. After evaluation, students' transfer credit reports are made available through the student portal pages.
12. After evaluation, the college's degree audit system report-shows how transfer courses apply toward meeting certificate and degree requirements.
13. Students may request a re-evaluation of their transfer courses if they believe the results warrant a different NIC course equivalency than the one provided through the initial course evaluation. To receive a re-evaluation of credit students must submit a request to the Admissions Office accompanied by a course description and syllabus from the originating institution. The appropriate Division will be consulted in the reevaluation.

### **International Transfer Coursework**

College-level courses completed outside the United States and recorded on official transcripts will be evaluated for transfer credit, provided that the institution where the courses were taken is accredited by the ministry of education in that country. It is the student's responsibility to submit all foreign and international transcripts to an international credential evaluator to be translated into English, evaluated on a course-by-course-basis, and sent directly to North Idaho College. North Idaho College reserves the right to determine acceptability and/or placement of international academic credit. Evaluation by an international evaluation agency does not guarantee acceptance or use in the degree.

### **Credit for Military Service**

Credit may be given for military courses according to recommendations in the American Council on Education (ACE) Service Guide. Official documentation is necessary and may include DD-214 papers, official certificates, and transcripts showing coursework completed.

### **Transfer Credit to Four-year Institutions with Articulation Agreements**

North Idaho College has developed formal agreements to facilitate the transfer of credit to four-year colleges and universities. This is accomplished through the development of course and program articulation agreements. North Idaho College articulates with area private and public baccalaureate degree granting institutions that are accredited or in candidacy status with a regional accreditation commission. Students should consult with their transfer institution regarding such agreements.

### **Time Limit for Transfer Coursework**

Students should be aware other colleges and universities may have age of credit limits on certain coursework to be used in transfer. Students should refer to the policy of their intended transfer institution regarding time limits for transfer coursework.

### **Credit for Prior Learning and Credit by Examination**

The Transfer of Credit Policy and Procedures may not apply to Credit for Prior Learning and Credit by Examination.