

## Credit By Exam Through CLEP and DSST

For decades, credit by exam (CBE) has allowed students to earn college credit by taking an exam to prove their knowledge. Although there are several different types of CBE (including Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate), the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) and the DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST) offer a high level of flexibility for students. Students are not required to enroll in a specific course to take the exam or receive credit. Instead, students may study with their chosen materials and methods. This can be useful for more motivated students, but for those struggling with the subject matter, it can be a challenge without an instructor to turn to.

### CLEP

CLEP exams were originally created in 1965 and are managed by College Board (the organization that administers AP exams and the SATs). CLEP credit is currently accepted by over 2,900 colleges and universities.

### Cost of the Test

CLEP and DSST exams cost about \$100 plus a proctoring fee of around \$30. If an institution accepts CLEP or DSST exams for college credit, they usually award 3 college credits per exam. That is about \$22 -\$44 per college credit.

### DSST

DSST exams were created in 1974 by the Department of Defense and were offered to military service members seeking to earn academic credit. These exams were opened up to civilians in 2006. Currently, over 1,500 institutions accept DSSTs.

### Taking the Test

There are over 1,800 CLEP testing centers and over 1,200 DSST testing centers where students may schedule an exam. Alternatively, both CLEP and DSST offer remote proctoring if certain technological requirements are met. However, some exams have a low pass rate, indicating these are not a guaranteed way to earn credit.

### Institutional Policy

Not all colleges and universities accept CLEP and DSST test results for credit, but many do. For example, Yale and UConn do not accept either. But UMass Amherst, Goodwin University, Post University and Central and Eastern Connecticut State Universities and all Connecticut community and technical colleges accept both tests for credit. It appears that Southern and Western Connecticut State Universities, Quinnipiac University, and University of Fairfield accept CLEP, but not DSST.

## CLEP Exams Offered

There are 34 CLEP exams that generally cover introductory courses. The table below lists titles and the recommended number of credits.

Exam	Credit	Exam	Credit	Exam	Credit
American Government	3	Financial Accounting	3	Macroeconomics	3
American Literature	3	French Levels 1 & 2	6-9	Microeconomics	3
Analyzing and Interpreting Lit	3	German Levels 1 & 2	6-9	Natural Sciences	6
Biology	6	History of the US I	3	Precalculus	3
Calculus	4	History of the US II	3	Principles of Management	3
Chemistry	6	Human Growth and Development	3	Principles of Marketing	3
College Algebra	3	Humanities	3	Social Sciences and History	6
College Composition	6	Information Systems	3	Spanish Levels 1 & 2	6-9
College Composition Modular	3	Intro to Educational Psychology	3	Spanish w/Writing Levels 1 & 2	6-12
College Math	3	Intro to Psychology	3	Western Civilization I	3
English Literature	6	Intro to Sociology	3	Western Civilization II	3
		Introductory Business Law	3		

## DSST Exams Offered

There are 37 DSST exams shown below covering introductory and upper-level courses. Each is recommended to receive 3 college credits.

Exam		
Art of the Western World	Fundamentals of Cybersecurity	Math for Liberal Arts
Astronomy	General Anthropology	Money and Banking
Business Ethics and Society	Health and Human Development	Organizational Behavior
Business Mathematics	History of the Soviet Union	Personal Finance
Computing and Information Technology	History of the Vietnam War	Principles of Advanced English Composition
Criminal Justice	Human Resource Management	Principles of Finance
Environmental Science	Introduction to Business	Principles of Public Speaking
Ethics in America	Introduction to Geography	Principles of Statistics
Ethics in Technology	Introduction to Geology	Principles of Supervision
Foundations of Education	Introduction to Law Enforcement	Substance Abuse
Fundamentals of College Algebra	Introduction to World Religions	Technical Writing
Fundamentals of Counseling	Lifespan Developmental Psychology	The Civil War and Reconstruction
	Management Information Systems	

## Receiving College Credit

The American Council on Education provides recommendations for passing scores and how many credits an institution should award. However, each institution establishes its own credit policy regarding CBE credit, including how many credits may be transferred in, what scores are required, and the number of credits awarded for an exam. For example, Southern Connecticut State University requires CLEP scores of 50 or higher, but notes that individual departments may have different degree requirements or have to satisfy external accreditation standards.

**Learn  
More**

[CLEP from College Board](#)

[DSST from Get College Credit](#)

[Modern States](#)

[Peterson's Test Prep](#)



OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH

Analyst: Matthew H. Frame  
Connecticut General Assembly  
860-240-8400 | [www.cga.ct.gov/olr](http://www.cga.ct.gov/olr)