

## DSST EXAMINATIONS

### STRITCH POLICIES AND TEST INFORMATION

#### WHAT IS DSST?

The DSST exam program (<http://getcollegecredit.com>), administered by Prometric, is a nationally recognized program offering 37 exams in six general content areas. These tests allow students to demonstrate their knowledge in subjects for which they have acquired considerable prior knowledge. Exam content parallels that of commonly offered, undergraduate college coursework. Passing DSST scores demonstrate competence in a subject equal to that of a student who has passed a comparable course.

#### WHAT ARE THE TESTS LIKE?

Exams are multiple-choice, with most allowing 90 minutes to complete. The number of questions varies from approximately 85 to as many as 100. Stritch does not require students to write the optional essay for any subject exam. Complete [exam descriptions](#), including sample questions and study resources, may be found online.

#### HOW MANY CREDITS CAN I EARN?

Stritch follows recommendations from the American Council on Education (ACE) regarding minimum passing scores and credits to award. Academic departments determine exact course equivalencies. Where no specific course equivalencies exist, students may still be awarded credit in transfer.

Individual tests earn 3 credits with a passing score. See the DSST transfer guide for specific course equivalencies. No more than 60 of the 60 allowable credits for all extra-institutional learning may be earned from the DSST testing program. Extra-institutional learning includes credit earned through prior learning assessment (military, portfolio, exam, experiential essay) as well as from nationally accredited institutions.

Credit can potentially transfer to fulfill general education, major, or elective requirements, but test restrictions may apply to currently enrolled students based on the student's program or major. Credit may not be received for an exam that duplicates content already awarded credit in transfer or at Stritch. Always consult with an academic advisor prior to registering for any DSST exam.

Since credits earned through DSST testing are assessments of past learning, they **cannot** be included in your credit load count for the purpose of determining enrollment, financial aid, or academic honors for any term.

#### WHAT IS A PASSING SCORE?

Scores of 400 represent the equivalent of a "C" and earn credit. Wisconsin teacher certification requirements mandate that students majoring in education earn a score of 434 (normed "B") to receive credit for the Principles of Advanced English Composition exam.

#### HOW MUCH DO DSST TESTS COST?

DSST exam fees start at \$85, payable to Prometric. Testing centers also charge a fee for taking the exam; students should budget approximately \$25 dollars for this cost. There is no charge for sending an initial score report to Stritch, nor does Stritch charge any fees associated with accepting DSST credit.

## WHERE CAN I TAKE THE TEST?

Students may take a DSST exam at any one of the over 1,200 testing centers nationwide. To locate an open test center near you, visit the [DSST Test Center Search](#) site.

## HOW DO I REGISTER FOR A DSST TEST?

1. First, confirm with your academic advisor that the test you are interested in is appropriate for your needs. You may also discuss DSST options with the Coordinator of PLA.
2. Currently enrolled students will need to complete the [Permission to Take Test form](#) before taking any DSST exam. This form serves as a check that the test is allowable both within the policies of your academic program and of the university.
3. Contact a testing center in your area and schedule a time to take the exam.
4. Obtain study materials and prepare for the test.

## HOW DO I PREPARE FOR A DSST TEST?

Students should always seek exams in content areas where they feel more confident and possess significant prior knowledge. However, advanced preparation is required to successfully pass any DSST exam. Test preparation information, including study courses, tips, materials, and sample questions, are available [directly from DSST](#) as well as at area book stores and online retailers. For students planning on taking multiple exams, the *DSST Official Test Preparation Guide* may be a wise investment. Prometric has also partnered with [Peterson's](#) to develop test preparation materials and resources. [Study.com](#) also provides prep courses that have been shown to improve pass rates.

Additionally, the explosion of massive open online courses, known as MOOC's, has placed free learning opportunities at the fingertips of everyone, and these can provide excellent means to supplement a student's self-study efforts. Many of these are sponsored by respected universities and were created by credentialed faculty members in the discipline.

## HOW DO I NOTIFY STRITCH OF MY RESULTS?

Transfer students who have taken DSST exams prior to admission at Stritch should request an official transcript from Prometric via the [Transcript Order Form](#). Prometric can provide a comprehensive record of all exams taken previously. A charge of \$30 is assessed by Prometric for each transcript requested.

Currently enrolled students should indicate Cardinal Stritch University as a score recipient when taking the exam by entering the code number **9987**. Most score reports arrive within two weeks of the test date, though some exams requiring more intensive assessment may take longer.

Credit cannot be posted to a student's record without official documentation from Prometric.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T PASS?

There is no academic penalty for failing a DSST exam. The score will be recorded by the PLA office but will not impact the student's GPA. Exams can be retaken after a period of 30 days. If a second attempt is unsuccessful, subsequent attempts may be denied at the discretion of the PLA office.