

# Stetson Cultural Credit Committee

## Policies and Procedures

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# Overview of Cultural Credits

Per Catalogue:

In addition to completing 32 course units, students join Stetson University's intellectual and creative life outside the classroom by participating in at least three approved cultural events for each semester of enrollment at the university. These events include lectures by distinguished visitors, musical performances, plays and art shows.

Per Website:

Students are highly encouraged to participate in three approved cultural events for each of their semesters of enrollment at the university. Stetson awards 1 cultural credit per 5 transfer/exemption credits awarded to enrolling students at the university for a maximum of 12 cultural credits.

Stetson University has defined Cultural Credit as follows:

“Cultural credit allows students to engage in continued learning outside the classroom. These events connect what you learn in the classroom with experiences and events in the real world. They vary widely in form and usually include lectures, concerts, art shows, film screenings or literature discussions. These events can be online face-to-face or virtual.”

The Cultural Credit Committee acknowledges that the word “cultural” is multi-faceted and not easily defined. As such, the Cultural Credit Committee interprets the word “cultural” to reflect its alignment with the currently established academic culture of Stetson. In other words, a Cultural Credit event is one that supports and/or enhances the existing academic curriculum (*directly aligns with an established major/minor*) of Stetson University and is openly available to all students. Additionally, Cultural Credits *cannot promote any company or organization (whether on or off campus) and cannot be used as a tool for recruitment (again, whether on or off campus).*

## Off-Campus Cultural Credit Events

There are several off-campus Cultural Credit opportunities that have been approved by the committee. Off-campus Cultural Credits must be free for students and include a brief reflection of learnings from the experience.

To be approved, off-campus opportunities should be brought to the committee for approval (similar to other Cultural Credit events). Once approved, the site will coordinate with the Registrar to track student attendance and participation (library scanners are not provided to off-campus Cultural Credits).

Current off-campus Cultural Credits:

[The African-American Museum of the Arts](#)

325 South Clara Avenue  
DeLand, FL 32720  
(386)736-4004

[Daytona State College Southeast Museum of Photography](#)

1200 W. International Speedway Blvd.  
Daytona Beach, FL 32114  
(386)506-4475

[Museum of Art](#)

600 N. Woodland Blvd.  
DeLand, FL 32720  
(386)734-4371

## Description and Make-up of Cultural Credit Committee

The Cultural Credit Committee is housed in the College of Arts and Sciences and reports to the Dean of Arts and Sciences. The committee is composed of six tenured (or tenure-track) faculty members from the College of Arts and Sciences, with at least one representative from each Division (Humanities, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Education and the Arts). The faculty members are voted in by faculty and appointed to this committee by the Dean's office for a two-year term. Once appointed, the committee members select a Chair.

## Committee Charge

The primary responsibility of the Cultural Credit Committee is to vet event proposals and determine whether or not an event should be approved for Cultural Credit, based on the established guidelines. In addition, the committee members also make recommendations with regard to proposal forms, the process for approval, and faculty sponsorship. As Cultural Credits are a degree requirement for students in the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Business Administration, this committee does not reform or revise any current policies related to Cultural Credits.

It is up to the committee to make functional changes that impact the process of Cultural Credit event submissions or how the committee is structured. Any changes need a majority approval and should be emailed to George Glander for his record.

## Process for Cultural Credit Event Proposals

### Process for Submitting a Proposal to the Cultural Credit Committee

1. Complete an Event Request on the Calendar of Events webpage to reserve the place, day, and time of your event (***this request should not identify your event as a Cultural Credit event at this point***). Once your event location/time request is approved, move to item 2 (send your event request approval with your request for Cultural Credit event form to the dean)
  - a. Canvas shell events can be submitted (meaning a fully asynchronous events that still allows for the same learning opportunities and engagement as face-to-face events) so long as they 1) submit an event request under the guidelines listed below, 2) provide clear learning objectives and engagement opportunities, 3) can track and report student 800# to registrar within 5 days of completion, and 4) can ensure that students do not repeat the same Canvas event more than once
2. Complete the request for Cultural Credit event form. It should be completed and submitted to the appropriate dean ***at least 7 calendar days before the event (events not submitted within this timeframe will automatically be rejected\*)***
  - a. \*This timeline allows for events to be processed through the College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Office and the Library (for scanners) in a timely manner
  - b. As these credits are a graduation requirement, "Description of Event" should include clearly articulated learning objects for student engagement, see samples (Appendix A)
  - c. If an appropriate signature of approving body is not available on the form, email Dean's Office with an approval from approving body (can be in email form) to be forwarded to committee
  - d. Events should only be tagged as Cultural Credit by the dean's office and not by the person requesting the event
3. The event request will go through the Cultural Credit Committee process (see next section) for approval, revisions, or rejection based on established criteria
4. A confirmation email containing the details of the committee's decision will be sent

## Process to Approve/Revise/Reject a Cultural Credit Event Proposal

1. The Cultural Credit Committee Chair creates a rotating review schedule for the academic year. During their assigned week, Cultural Credit Committee members review all of the event proposals that are submitted during the given week. Proposals are emailed from the Arts and Sciences Dean's Office to the Cultural Credit Committee member assigned to review proposals that week
2. Cultural Credit Committee member checks for\*\*:
  - a. Approved **faculty member's** signature; other approved signatures are:
    - i. Director of the Gillespie Museum
    - ii. Director of the Hand Art Museum
    - iii. Director of Community Engagement
    - iv. Director of Health Services
    - v. Director of Academic Success
    - vi. Director of Diversity and Inclusion
    - vii. Chaplan
  - b. Event date at least 7 calendar days from submission date (expedited submissions must be cleared with chair and Dean's office)
  - c. Location (tabling events are usually not approved)
  - d. Whether the event 1) supports or enhances the academic curriculum of the University (as stated above, Cultural Credit events need to demonstrate that students will engage with academic curriculum in a meaningful manner. For this reason, "tabling" events will not be approved unless the application offers a clear description as to the ways in which the student will engage with academic curriculum while "tabling"); 2) is promoting a company or organization (these will not be approved), and 3) is being used for recruitment to an organization or company (these will not be approved)

\*\*Failure to meet any of these criteria may result in revision or rejection of proposal

## Process for Approved Cultural Credit proposal (including Revised process)

1. If the description of the event meets the criteria as described above, then the committee member will approve the even
2. Approval of an event requires a reply email back to the Dean's office indicating approval

- a. If the description of the event lacks enough information to determine whether or not it meets the criteria for approval, the committee member will either 1) reach out to other Cultural Credit Committee members for their feedback or 2) reach out to the event organizer to request a revised proposal. If the revision meets the criteria, the approval process above will be followed. If not, then the event will be rejected (see below)
3. For approved events, scanners will be provided for on campus, face-to-face events. Shortly before the event, you'll receive an email letting you know that the scanner is ready for pickup. Please note that scanning has been changed to only take place at check-out at the event. Students should attend the event and abide by the Honor Pledge as they would at any other curricular experience
4. Scanners should be returned to the library promptly once your event has concluded
5. For Virtual Events, a process must be in place by the host of the event to capture the student ID of any and all students who attend
  - a. These names/student IDs need to be sent as an excel file to registrar@stetson.edu for processing and the awarding of the event to the student. This file should include the event number

## Criteria and Process for Rejection of a Cultural Credit Proposal

1. If the event does not support or enhance the academic curriculum of the University, is being used to promote a company or organization, or is being used for recruitment purposes, the event will be rejected
2. If an event is not approved, the committee member will contact the event organizer directly to inform them the proposal request has been denied. The committee member will articulate the reason why the event was rejected, and inform the organizer that the decision to deny the proposal *came from the committee* (not the individual)
  - a. The dean's office should be CC'd on this communication

## Appeals of Cultural Credit Proposal Rejection

If an organizer feels that their proposal should have been approved, they can reach out to the chair of the Cultural Credit Committee to appeal the decision. The chair will communicate with the committee member who reviewed the proposal in question. If established criteria (above) was accurately followed, the rejection will stand. If the chair feels that the proposal was supportive of the established Cultural Credit guidelines, they can overturn a rejection. If there is a larger issue, the chair will bring the question back to the entire committee for discussion.

Note: While individual committee members review proposals, they may reach out to the committee at large at any time so that others may weigh in on whether or not an event should be approved.

## Process for Auto-Approved Events

1. The following events/sponsors have been approved for automatically approved Cultural Credits:
  - a. Hand Art Center
  - b. Gillespie Museum
  - c. Theater Department
  - d. Library
  - e. SPREES
  - f. Cross Cultural Center
  - g. Dialogue and Civic Action
  - h. Center for Community Standards
  - i. Office of Religious and Spiritual Life
  - j. CREA
  - k. Asian Studies
  - l. Africana Studies
  - m. Uncouth
  - n. Values Day(for three credits total)
  - o. Stetson Showcase (for 3 credits total)
2. To have events auto-approved, the above stated sponsors must provide a *single email to the Dean's Office with the 1) name(s) of the event(s), 2) date(s) of the event(s), and 3) location(s) of the event(s)by the first class-day of each semester.*
3. If other events come up after this day, they will need to go through the pre-existing process, with an individual Cultural Credit form submitted 7 calendar days before the event for approval by the committee.
  - a. If an event that was auto-approved and needs to be canceled or modified after the first class-day of the semester, let Marj know and make the changes for the event; you don't need to let the Cultural Credit Committee or Dean's Office know

# Appendix A: Learning Objective Samples

\*\*\*Note Promotional and Recruitment Events are not considered Cultural Credit Events

Title – Wandering in a Quiet Space: A forest bath at Lake Woodruff Reserve

This event co-hosted by the Office of Health & Wellness and the Environmental Sciences program invites the campus community to come together in the woodsy area of Lake Woodruff Reserve to engage in a nature walk led by Assistant Professor, Misty Dew. On the forest bath, the group will exercise mindfulness, the exploration of physical, emotional and spiritual wellness. At the close of the event, students will have an opportunity to ask questions about this environmental landscape and to reflect on their individual and collective experiences.

Title – Barbie: More Than Life in Pink

Phi Delta Gamma will screen the Barbie movie and engage its members and invited guests in discussion about gender dynamics and the perceptions of identity through the lens of unfortunate societal norms. Moderators will pose specific questions aimed at unpacking prominent themes of the film to ignite discussion based on the group's varied interpretations.

Title – Sarah Strongbow, a Writer's visit to Stetson

Sarah Strongbow, poet and essayist, visits Stetson University to share their Haiku series inspired by the upcoming 2024 Presidential election. Strongbow's work has been studied in several courses and their virtual lecture series examines posturing, transparent justice and the unrest in the US's political systems. Hosted by the English Department, guests will engage in Q&A after a short presentation of Strongbow's work.

Title – Healthcare Ethics & Professional Certifications in Healthcare Systems

Representatives from Advent Health will present on healthcare ethics topics and the professional certifications that exist within healthcare systems that can be pursued collaterally as students continue their individualized courses of study post college. Students will learn about adjacent professional tracks within healthcare professions and the credentials necessary to engage with this valuable work.

Title – International Food Festival on Palm Court

Students from the Food Studies program partner with Stetson's Multicultural Student Council to bring flavors of the globe to the campus community for a mid-day lunch alternative. Guests will be able to sample delicious bites prepared by students and local restaurateurs while learning about the histories and cultures that these traditional foods originated from.

# Appendix B: Proposal to Re-Designate Cultural Credits as Academic Curricular Engagement (ACE) Credits

The faculty members of the 2023-2024 Cultural Credit Committee would like to propose a change from “Cultural Credits” to “Academic Curricular Engagement (ACE) Credits” This change in name reflects a corresponding change in focus that better aligns the program with Stetson’s existing graduation requirements.

## Background

According to the Stetson’s University’s Academic Catalog, the stated purpose of Cultural Events & Campus Engagement is for “Students [to] join Stetson's intellectual and creative life outside the classroom by attending a number of designated events such as performances, lectures by distinguished visitors, plays, art shows, and films.”<sup>[1]</sup>

Furthermore, the university’s web page about Cultural Credit says the following:

“Cultural credit allows students to more fully embrace the university's mission and values. Events are scheduled outside the classroom that provide "substantial intellectual or cultural value." These events connect what you learn in the classroom with experiences and events in the real world. They vary widely in form, and usually include lectures, concerts, art shows, film screenings or literature discussions. These events can be online face-to-face or virtual.”<sup>[2]</sup>

Students are required to earn 24 Cultural Credits (3 per semester over 4 years) in addition to the 32 course units (128 credits) required to complete an undergraduate degree.

## Challenges

- There is no one definition of “culture,” therefore, determining cultural value is inherently biased or problematic, especially when it leans toward Western elitist values about culture.
- The term “substantial intellectual value” is vague and creates ambiguities for events proposed and designated as Cultural Credits.
- The previously noted web page says that Cultural Credit is to support the “university’s mission and values.” However, mission and values have changed (and will continue to change) and the Cultural Credit program has not been

updated to reflect these changes. Thus, a realignment of this program should reflect what they are, requirements for graduation just like other course credits.

### **Proposed Solution**

While maintaining the structure of Cultural Credits as an academic requirement for earning an undergraduate degree, we propose to change “Cultural Credit” to “Academic Curricular Engagement (ACE) Credits” to better align these credits with their intended purpose of engaging Stetson students outside of the traditional classroom.

This change would enable events to be evaluated as events which align with existing curricular programming rather than under much more nebulous criteria of “substantial intellectual or cultural value.”