



Technical Data Sheet

For Academic Counseling and Credit-Awarding Purposes

DSST exams were developed to enable schools to award credit to students for knowledge equivalent to that learned by taking the course. The ultimate passing score for each exam is determined by each school. Each school is provided with a recommended passing score established by subject matter experts comprised of college faculty who teach the relevant course. The DSST program is approved by the American Council on Education (ACE), and ACE provides both a recommended passing score and number of credits that could be awarded to students who achieve a passing score.

Exam Updates

1. A History of the Vietnam War
2. Art of the Western World
3. Astronomy
4. Business Ethics & Society
5. Business Mathematics
6. Criminal Justice
7. Computing & Information Technology
8. Environmental Science
9. Ethics in America
10. Ethics in Technology
11. Foundations of Education
12. Fundamentals of College Algebra
13. Fundamentals of Counseling
14. Fundamentals of Cybersecurity
15. General Anthropology
16. Health & Human Development
17. Human Resources Management
18. History of the Soviet Union
19. Introduction to Business
20. Introduction to Geography (Formerly Titled: Human and Cultural Geography)
21. Introduction to Geology
22. Introduction to Law Enforcement
23. Introduction to World Religions
24. Lifespan Developmental Psychology
25. Management Information Systems
26. Math for Liberal Arts
27. Money & Banking
28. Organizational Behavior
29. Personal Finance
30. Principles of Advanced English Composition
31. Principles of Finance
32. Principles of Public Speaking
33. Principles of Statistics
34. Principles of Supervision
35. Substance Abuse
36. Technical Writing
37. The Civil War and Reconstruction

National panels of subject matter experts and college faculty were formed for each exam. Test items were newly written to match the updated content outline for each exam. In addition to updating content of the exams, pass/fail standard-setting methodologies and new score scales were introduced in 2008.

Cut Score Determinations

Unlike the norm-referenced approach used previously for DSST exams, criterion-referenced methods are now used to set an absolute standard for all exams beginning in 2008. For each exam, subject matter experts participated in a series of standard-setting activities, including modified Angoff (1971) and Beuk (1985) procedures. For these procedures, the minimally competent candidate was defined as a student who would just pass the respective course.

Equating Multiple Forms

Multiple forms for each exam were constructed to include an overlap of items in common. These overlapping items were drawn strategically from across the testing domains to approximate the domain coverage plan established in the content outline for each exam. Separate standard-setting procedures were conducted on each individual form, and linear scaling methodologies were used to map raw scores to scaled scores.

Score Scales & Score Reporting

The new score scale introduced for the 2008 and later exams uses scores ranging from 200 to 500, with the cut score (pass point) set at 400 for all exams. Score reports for candidates provide scaled score achieved and corresponding pass/fail status.

B-Grade Equivalent Scaled Scores

Because of the conversion to criterion-referenced standard-setting, various grade equivalents were not established. However, some credit-awarding schools have requested a B-grade equivalent scaled score be provided in addition to the 400 cut score. B-grade equivalent scores have been calculated for each of the exams updated or introduced since 2008 and are provided, along with B-grade equivalents for the remaining norm-referenced exams, in the table on the next page.

B-Grade Equivalent Scores

Exam Title, 2008-present Updated Exams	Criterion-Referenced	Calculated B-Grade Equivalent
A History of the Vietnam War	400	434
Art of the Western World	400	434
Astronomy	400	434
Business Ethics & Society	400	434
Business Mathematics	400	434
Criminal Justice	400	434
Computing and Information Technology	400	434
Environmental Science	400	434
Ethics in America	400	434
Ethics in Technology	400	434
Foundations of Education	400	434
Fundamentals of College Algebra	400	434
Fundamentals of Counseling	400	434
Fundamentals of Cybersecurity	400	434
General Anthropology	400	434
Health & Human Development	400	434
Human Resources Management	400	434
History of the Soviet Union	400	434
Introduction to Business	400	434
Introduction to Geography (Formerly Titled: Human and Cultural Geography)	400	434
Introduction to Geology	400	434
Introduction to Law Enforcement	400	434
Introduction to World Religions	400	434
Lifespan Developmental Psychology	400	434
Management Information Systems	400	434
Math for Liberal Arts	400	434
Money & Banking	400	434
Organizational Behavior	400	434
Personal Finance	400	434
Principles of Advanced English Composition	400	434
Principles of Finance	400	434
Principles of Public Speaking	400	434
Principles of Statistics	400	434
Principles of Supervision	400	434
Substance Abuse (formerly Drug & Alcohol Abuse)	400	434
Technical Writing	400	434
The Civil War and Reconstruction	400	434

Exam Title, Exams Prior to 2008- present Updates	Norm-Referenced Cut Score (C-Grade)	B-Grade Equivalent
Art of the Western World	48	53
Astronomy	48	52
Business Law II	44	52
Business Mathematics	48	49
The Civil War and Reconstruction	47	52
Criminal Justice	49	54
Drug & Alcohol Abuse	49	53
Environment and Humanity: The Race to Save the Planet	46	53
Ethics in America	46	50
Foundations of Education	46	50
Fundamentals of College Algebra	47	50
Fundamentals of Counseling	45	48
General Anthropology	47	53
Here's to Your Health	48	51
A History of the Vietnam War	44	49
Human/Cultural Geography	48	54
Human Resource Management	46	53
Introduction to Business	46	54
Introduction to Computing	45	51

Introduction to Law Enforcement	45	52
Introduction to the Modern Middle East	47	51
Introduction to World Religions	48	52
Lifespan Developmental Psychology	46	51
Management Information Systems	46	50
Money and Banking	48	54
Organizational Behavior	48	52
Personal Finance	46	51
Physical Geology	46	53
Principles of Finance	46	53
Principles of Financial Accounting	47	55
Principles of Public Speaking	47	52
Principles of Statistics	48	51
Principles of Supervision	46	49
Rise and Fall of the Soviet Union	45	51
Technical Writing	46	50
Western Europe Since 1945	45	49