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The Institute for Supply Management, in conjunction with the National Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction recommendation for college credits, provides transcripts of students' records for the Certified Purchasing Manager (C.P.M.) and the Accredited Purchasing Practitioner (A.P.P.) examinations. Periodically, education institutions request clarification regarding the equivalence of C.P.M. and A.P.P. exam numerical scores to college letter grades. Although ISM does not use the letter grading system, this communication provides information that educational institutions may use to make an equivalency determination.

Background

The C.P.M. and A.P.P. examinations are criterion-referenced certification examinations administered by ISM as one of the requirements that must be fulfilled by an applicant in order to be granted the status of C.P.M. or A.P.P. The exams are developed by ISM, and are printed and administered on a nation-wide, and international basis by the Sylvan Prometric Testing Program and other providers. The A.P.P. examination is a two module, criterion-referenced certification examination that must be fulfilled by an applicant in order to be granted the status of A.P.P.

Note: The A.P.P. examination is identical to the first two modules of the C.P.M. examination. Care should be taken to avoid awarding duplicate credit.

Validity

The exam is constructed to be content-valid, covering the body of knowledge indicated in an attachment to this letter. Examination specifications were compiled from interviews and meetings with purchasing professionals who outlined the major tasks of the position, and the necessary knowledge areas related to those tasks.

All questions are reviewed by the ISM test development specialist for psychometric properties, and by committees of C.P.M.s for content, and by an editor for spelling and grammar, before actually appearing in the C.P.M. or A.P.P. exam.

Reliability

Reliability for the C.P.M. and A.P.P. exam is reported in three ways.

- KR-20 Reliability Coefficient
- Standard Error of Measurement (SEM)
 - for the entire exam
 - for each score level
- Reliability of the pass/fail decision
(see Berk, 1984)

Passing Scores

The passing score was determined for the initial anchor form using a judgmental procedure for criterion-referenced test standard setting. Specifically, the "Angoff" method was employed (see Livingston and Zieky, 1982). The pass scores were set with the intent of identifying the minimally competent purchasing manager. Separate passing scores were set for each module. The standard setting committees are comprised of purchasing experts from industry, government, academia, and other major areas. The same standard-setting procedures are applied to specific modules that undergo major revisions.

All later forms are ultimately equated back to the anchor forms using a technique sometimes referred to as "chaining". The score on the new forms that correspond to the passing scores on the anchor forms serve as the cut scores for the later forms. In this way, the same level of difficulty is maintained for passing from form-to-form.

Scores on the exam are reported separately for each module. The raw scores are expressed as scaled scores, ranging from 25 to 75, with the passing score set at 55.

Additional Comments

I trust that this information will help you evaluate credit applications related to this program. The National Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction, whose recommendations are recognized by the American Council on education, has evaluated the updated C.P.M. examination introduced on January 1, 2001, and has recommended a two part credit recommendation. Nine upper division baccalaureate semester hours: 3 in Procurement, Purchasing, or Acquisitions, and 3 as an Advanced Purchasing or Supply elective and 3 in general Management or Human Resource Management. In conjunction with additional academic work, in the upper division baccalaureate degree category, 3 semester hours as an internship or elective in Procurement, Purchasing or Acquisitions. For information regarding credit recommendations for earlier versions of the C.P.M. exam, refer to the attached information. The A.P.P. recommendation is 3 upper division baccalaureate semester hours in Procurement, Purchasing, or Acquisitions, and 1 semester hour as a general Business Administration elective.

Angoff, W.H. (1971) Scales, Normas, and Equivalent Scores. In R.L. Thorndike (Ed.) Educational measurement (2nd edition). Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education.

Berk, R.A. (1984) Selecting the index of reliability. In R.A. (Ed.) A guide to criterion-reference test construction. Baltimore, MD.: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Livingston, S.A. and Zieky, M.J. (1982) Passing Scores: A manual for setting standards of performance on educational and occupational tests. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

INSTITUTE FOR SUPPLY MANAGEMENT

The Institute for Supply Management (ISM.) is a nonprofit educational organization of purchasing and materials management personnel in the United States, with membership extending to several foreign countries. The Institute sponsors a variety of programs designed for career development in the purchasing and materials management area serving industrial, educational, governmental, institutional, distribution, and service organizations. The programs include independent study courses, video programs, and seminars given at various locations across the United States. ISM. maintains liaisons with colleges and universities, and sponsors grants and fellowships.

Source of official student records: Certification Program, Institute for Supply Management, 2055 East Centennial Circle, P.O. Box 22160, Tempe, Arizona 85282.

Accredited Purchasing Practitioner Examination

Location: Proficiency examination administered from the national offices of ISM. to over 130 U.S. centers and foreign sites.

Length: Self-study, variable depending on individual's preparation needs.

Dates: January 2001 – Present.

Objectives: Module 1, Purchasing Process: Part A, Identifying Requirements: Establish procurement plans and make decisions necessary to purchase products or services in congruence with organizational objectives and sourcing strategies; review purchase requisitions in accordance with organizational requirements and/or budgetary constraints; determine appropriate methods of procurement; perform cost/benefit analyses on planned acquisitions; review supplier samples and/or demonstrations with the buying organization management and/or user departments. **Part B, Preparation of Solicitations:** Develop/review specifications, statements of work, performance terms, and/or acceptance criteria; locate and select potential sources of materials or services; prepare and solicit competitive bids, quotations, and proposals with pertinent specifications, terms, and conditions; manage and develop lists of recommended sources. **Part C, Supplier Analysis:** Evaluate competitive offerings to determine the overall best offer for a product/service; conduct supplier visits/evaluations to determine suitability; measure supplier performance using rating systems and/or predetermined standards. **Part D, Contract Execution, Implementation, and Administration:** Prepare and/or issue contracts/purchase orders; obtain legal review and approval of a contract when required; administer contracts/purchase orders from award to completion; expedite deliveries and conduct follow-up procedures when necessary; resolve contract/purchase order differences with suppliers; resolve payment problems with suppliers and user departments; review and revise purchasing practices to ensure their conformance with established laws, policies, and ethical principles; manage files of agreements, equipment records, and/or specifications.

Module 2, Supply Environment: Part A, Negotiations: Prepare for and develop strategies and tactics for negotiations; conduct negotiations with potential and/or current suppliers to obtain maximum value. **Part B, Information Technology:** Develop/utilize a computerized purchasing system (e.g., online buying, EDI, Web-based electronic commerce); develop/implement/maintain a database of specifications, suppliers, products, and/or services; develop/utilize a computerized inventory and/or capital equipment tracking system. **Part C, Quality Issues:**

Resolve quality problems with suppliers and user departments; develop measurements for quality improvement and target setting (e.g., "best in class" benchmarks). **Part D, Internal Relationships:** Develop/manage/evaluate relationships with other internal departments; participate in cross-functional and/or multifunctional teams (e.g., project management, process improvement); recommend/implement changes to the organization's purchasing, supply management, and material usage policies as needed; disseminate information and provide training related to purchasing and supply management policies and procedures. **Part E, External Relationships:** Develop/manage effective relationships with suppliers, utilizing such techniques as supplier partnerships, strategic alliances, supply chain management, and supplier training programs; review product availability and/or pricing information with suppliers; conduct interviews with current and prospective supplier sales personnel; coordinate/review/respond to supplier inquiries, protests, and appeals; develop/implement a small business/disadvantaged supplier development program; represent the buying organization in meetings with corporations, government agencies, professional institutes, media, and other organizations.

Instruction: Two-module examination developed by ISM. and administered and scored by Prometric. The modules can be taken in a written or computerized format. The modules are each a maximum of 105 minutes in length and contain 95 items. The modules cover the principles, concepts, and techniques related to the following major content areas and related areas:

Module 1, Purchasing Process: Identifying requirements; preparation of solicitations; supplier analysis; contract execution, implementation, and administration.

Module 2, Supply Environment: Negotiations; information technology; quality issues; internal relationships; external relationships.

Credit recommendation: In the upper division baccalaureate degree category, 3 semester hours as a first level course in Procurement, Purchasing, or Acquisitions and 1 semester hour as a general Business Administration elective (9/00). **NOTE:** A candidate must pass both modules to benefit from the credit recommendation. **NOTE:** The A.P.P. examination is identical to the first two modules of the C.P.M. Examination. Care should be taken to avoid awarding duplicate credit.

Certified Purchasing Manager Examination

Location: Proficiency examination administered from the

national offices of ISM. to over 130 U.S. centers and foreign sites.

Length: Self-study, variable depending on individual's preparation needs.

Dates: **Version 4:** May 1997 – December 2000.*

Version 5: January 2001 – Present.

VERSION 4

Objectives: Version 4, Module 1, Purchasing and Sourcing: Part A, Procurement Requests: Review requests for purchases, including analyzing and determining the appropriateness of the requests in terms of organizational requirements, budget, and goals; identify and select potential sources of services and supplies, involving make or buy, privatization, or outsourcing considerations; develop/implement a minority/women/small business/disadvantaged supplier development program; participate in decisions to lease or buy equipment. **Part B, Preparation/Evaluation of Solicitations (RFQ, RFI, RFP, RFB, EOI):** Develop/review product specifications, performance terms and/or acceptance criteria; issue requests for bids/quotations and determine appropriate methods of procurement; solicit competitive bids, and include consideration of all pertinent specifications, requested terms and conditions; evaluate competitive offerings. **Part C, Supplier Analysis:** Conduct supplier visits and evaluations; analyze supplier performance using rating systems; **Part D, Negotiation Process:** Prepare for and develop strategies and tactics for negotiations; conduct negotiations with potential suppliers to obtain agreement on pricing, delivery, and other terms. **Part E, Contract Execution, Implementation, and Administration:** Prepare and/or issue purchase orders/contracts; obtain legal review and approval of a contract; administer contracts/purchase orders from award to completion; expedite deliveries and conduct follow-up procedures; resolve contract differences, quality problems, and payment problems; verify that purchasing practices comply with established laws, policies, and ethical principles.

Version 4, Module 2, Management: Part A, Administrative Aspects of the Purchasing Department: Develop goals and objectives of a purchasing department; plan and develop operating policies, guidelines, and procedures for the control of department work flow; develop/utilize criteria for evaluating purchasing department performance; ensure the maintenance of files on contracts, bids, agreements, and leases; ensure the maintenance of records on capital equipment, vehicles, tools, etc.; ensure the maintenance of files on product/service specifications, descriptions, prices, lead times, etc.; prepare a purchasing department budget; design operational forms. **Part B, Personnel Issues:** Supervise and delegate work to purchasing department staff; hire/promote/dismiss purchasing department personnel; evaluate purchasing staff performance; conduct/authorize formal job training; resolve employee performance problems.

Version 4, Module 3, Supply: Part A, Material Flow: Define incoming material packaging and transportation requirements; route inbound-outbound freight; trace inbound freight; supervise/monitor the activities of the receiving department; ensure that materials are distributed to user departments; resolve delivery/receiving problems. **Part B, Inventory Management:** Organize and control the storage of materials; determine sources of and reconcile inventory discrepancies; review inventory to verify that materials are rotating/turning; handle obsolete equipment/materials, surplus equipment/materials, and scrap. **Part C, Ancillary Supply Functions:** Develop a standardization program; develop a cost-reduction/cost avoidance program; implement a material requirements plan and a manufacturing resource plan.

Version 4, Module 4, Critical Issues in Supply Chain Management: This four-part module addresses current topics that present both national/international problems of concern to purchasing managers. By periodically changing the topics covered in this module, the student should be able to discuss current issues that relate to the performance of purchasing functions; discuss changing factors affecting the purchasing function and anticipate the effect of these factors on an organization's purchasing program; keep abreast of methodological and technological innovations and apply these to the purchasing function, as appropriate; analyze situations, synthesize and define the problems presented in representative situations, and make evaluative judgments as to how best to solve the problems in the context of the environment presented. **Part A, Forecasting and Strategies:** Develop forecasts in light of economic trends and conditions that affect procurement; plan purchasing strategies based on forecasting data; formulate strategic plans and objectives; provide forecasted data of future market conditions to management and/or requisitioning departments; provide forecasted data of future organization buying requirements to suppliers. **Part B, External/Internal Relationships:** Develop/manage effective relationships with suppliers and other internal departments; represent the buying organization in meetings with corporations and other organizations; recommend/implement changes to the organization's purchasing and materials management policies, as needed; develop new/alternate materials, equipment, and international sources of supply. **Part C, Computerization:** Develop/utilize a computerized purchasing system. **Part D, Environmental Issues:** Organize and control the storage/disposal of hazardous/regulated materials.

Instruction: Version 4: Four-module examination developed by ISM. and administered and scored by Prometric. The modules can be taken in a written or computerized format. Each module is a maximum of 105 minutes in length and contains 85 items, covering the principles, concepts, and techniques related to the following major content areas and related areas:

Module 1, Purchasing and Sourcing: Procurement requests; solicitation/evaluation of proposals; supplier analysis; negotiation process; and contract execution, implementation, and administration.

Module 2, Management: Administrative aspects of the purchasing department; personnel issues.

Module 3, Supply: Material flow; inventory management; ancillary supply functions;

Module 4, Critical Issues in Supply Chain Management: This module is based on themes of national or international importance to purchasing and materials management. The four current themes are forecasting and strategies; external/internal relationships; computerization; and environmental issues.

Credit recommendation: Version 4, Modules 1-4: In the upper division baccalaureate degree category, 3 semester hours as a first-level course in Procurement, Purchasing, or Acquisitions **and** 3 semester hours as a first-level course in Materials Management, Logistics, or Inventory Control **and** 3 semester hours as an elective in general Business Administration (9/93 revalidation) (9/98 revalidation). **NOTE:** A candidate must pass all four modules to benefit from the credit recommendation.

VERSION 5

Objectives: Version 5, Module 1, Purchasing Process: Part A, Identifying Requirements: Establish procurement plans and make decisions necessary to purchase products or services in congruence with organizational objectives and

sourcing strategies; review purchase requisitions in accordance with organizational requirements and/or budgetary constraints; determine appropriate methods of procurement; perform cost/benefit analyses on planned acquisitions; review supplier samples and/or demonstrations with the buying organization management and/or user departments. **Part B, Preparation of Solicitations:** Develop/review specifications, statements of work, performance terms, and/or acceptance criteria; locate and select potential sources of materials or services; prepare and solicit competitive bids, quotations, and proposals with pertinent specifications, terms, and conditions; manage and develop lists of recommended sources. **Part C, Supplier Analysis:** Evaluate competitive offerings to determine the overall best offer for a product/service; conduct supplier visits/evaluations to determine suitability; measure supplier performance using rating systems and/or predetermined standards. **Part D, Contract Execution, Implementation, and Administration:** Prepare and/or issue contracts/purchase orders; obtain legal review and approval of a contract when required; administer contracts/purchase orders from award to completion; expedite deliveries and conduct follow-up procedures when necessary; resolve contract/purchase order differences with suppliers; resolve payment problems with suppliers and user departments; review and revise purchasing practices to ensure their conformance with established laws, policies, and ethical principles; manage files of agreements, equipment records, and/or specifications.

Version 5: Module 2, Supply Environment: Part A, Negotiations: Prepare for and develop strategies and tactics for negotiations; conduct negotiations with potential and/or current suppliers to obtain maximum value. **Part B, Information Technology:** Develop/utilize a computerized purchasing system (e.g., online buying, EDI, Web-based electronic commerce); develop/implement/maintain a database of specifications, suppliers, products, and/or services; develop/utilize a computerized inventory and/or capital equipment tracking system. **Part C, Quality Issues:** Resolve quality problems with suppliers and user departments; develop measurements for quality improvement and target setting (e.g., "best in class" benchmarks). **Part D, Internal Relationships:** Develop/manage/evaluate relationships with other internal departments; participate in cross-functional and/or multifunctional teams (e.g., project management, process improvement); recommend/implement changes to the organization's purchasing, supply management, and material usage policies as needed; disseminate information and provide training related to purchasing and supply management policies and procedures. **Part E, External Relationships:** Develop/manage effective relationships with suppliers, utilizing such techniques as supplier partnerships, strategic alliances, supply chain management, and supplier training programs; review product availability and/or pricing information with suppliers; conduct interviews with current and prospective supplier sales personnel; coordinate/review/respond to supplier inquiries, protests, and appeals; develop/implement a small business/disadvantaged supplier development program; represent the buying organization in meetings with corporations, government agencies, professional institutes, media, and other organizations.

Version 5: Module 3, Value Enhancement Strategies: Part A, Sourcing Analysis: Conduct decisions to "make or buy," privatize, or outsource products or services; conduct decisions to lease or buy equipment; develop financing and

leveraging strategies for purchases. **Part B, Supply and Inventory Management:** Organize, control, and minimize the storage of materials; meet with appropriate departments to discuss current material inventories, and establish restock levels or just-in-time strategies; determine sources of and reconcile inventory discrepancies; handle obsolete equipment/materials, surplus equipment/materials, and scrap. **Part C, Value Enhancing Methods:** Develop/implement a standardization program; develop/implement a process improvement program; develop a cost reduction, cost avoidance, cost containment program (e.g., value analysis, consolidation of orders/suppliers, leadtime reduction, activity based costing); coordinate the introduction of new and modified products and services with appropriate departments. **Part D, Forecasting and Strategies:** Plan purchasing, sourcing, and supply strategies based on forecast data; develop supply plans and strategies based on forecasts of future demand; provide forecasted data of future organization buying requirements to suppliers; develop and maintain market awareness through merchandise shows, trade periodicals, and other resources to secure new product and pricing information; provide data on current and future market conditions to management, sales management, and/or user departments.

Version 5: Module 4, Management: Part A, Management and Organization: Develop strategic plans and objectives (short- and long-term); develop goals and objectives of purchasing and supply department aligned to organizational goals; plan/develop/provide operating policies, guidelines, and procedures; prepare periodic reports of department activities for senior management and other areas of the organization; analyze and resolve issues raised in purchasing and supply audit reports; develop/utilize criteria for evaluating purchasing and supply department performance; prepare and/or administer a purchasing department/supply management budget; design, modify, and/or manage operational forms (paper and/or electronic). **Part B, Human Resources Management:** Supervise and lead purchasing and supply staff; hire, promote, and/or dismiss purchasing and supply personnel; evaluate purchasing and supply staff performance; conduct/authorize job training for the development of the professional competence of the staff; resolve employee performance problems; implement programs to prevent and respond to discrimination or harassment.

Instruction: Version 5, Examination component: Four-module examination developed by ISM and administered and scored by Prometric. The modules can be taken in a written or computerized format. The first three modules are each a maximum of 105 minutes in length and contain 95 items; the fourth module is a maximum of 130 minutes and contains 120 items. The four modules cover the principles, concepts, and techniques related to the following major content areas and related areas:

Module 1, Purchasing Process: Identifying requirements; preparation of solicitations; supplier analysis; contract execution, implementation, and administration.

Module 2, Supply Environment: Negotiations; information technology; quality issues; internal relationships; external relationships.

Module 3, Value Enhancement Strategies: Sourcing analysis; supply and inventory management; value enhancing methods; forecasting and strategies.

Module 4, Management: Management and organization; human resources management.

Version 5, Work Experience: As part of the requirements to qualify for the C.P.M. designation, applicants complete a

minimum of five years of full-time professional purchasing and supply management experience or three years of similar experience if they hold a four-year degree from an accredited institution. One letter per employer is submitted, on original organization letterhead, from a supervisor or personnel department verifying and describing all job titles and dates of employment. Acceptable experience involves primary year-round purchasing/supply management employment only.

Credit recommendation: Two-part credit recommendation: 1. Version 5, Modules 1-4: In the upper division baccalaureate degree category, 3 semester hours as a first-level course in Procurement, Purchasing, or Acquisitions **and** 3 semester hours as an Advanced Purchasing or Supply elective **and** 3 semester hours in general Management or Human Resource Management (9/00 revalidation). **NOTE to credit recommendation for Modules 1-4:** A candidate must pass all four modules to benefit from the credit recommendation. **2. Version 5, Work Experience:** In conjunction with additional academic work, in the upper division baccalaureate degree category, 3 semester hours as an internship or elective in Procurement, Purchasing, or Acquisitions (9/00). **NOTE to credit recommendation for Work Experience:** A candidate must receive the C.P.M. designation to benefit from the credit recommendation. In addition, it is recommended that the candidate enter into a learning contract with a faculty member at his/her enrolled college to prepare a 15-20 page reflective research paper addressing a problem or issue experienced during the work experience as it relates to the concepts, principles, and theories associated with the discipline. The research paper should be supported by a bibliography of relevant scholarly research in the field and evidence appropriate integration of all readings.

***Credit recommendation for earlier versions:** Three earlier versions of the C.P.M. Examination were recommended for credit. **1.** The following credit recommendation applies to the time period from January 1980 to December 1984: In the upper division baccalaureate degree category, 3 semester hours in Purchasing or Purchasing Management. **2.** The following credit recommendation applies to the period January 1985 to May 1992: In the upper division baccalaureate degree category, 3 semester hours as a first-level course in Purchasing, Purchasing/Materials Management, Procurement, or Acquisitions **and** 3 semester hours in General Business Administration **and** 3 semester hours as a selected topics elective in Purchasing, Operations Management, or Materials Management. **3.** The following credit recommendation applies to the period June 1992 to April 1997: In the upper division baccalaureate degree category, 3 semester hours as a first-level course in Procurement, Purchasing, or Acquisitions **and** 3 semester hours as a first-level course in Materials Management, Logistics, or Inventory Control **and** 3 semester hours as an elective in General Business Administration. **NOTE:** For each of the earlier versions, a candidate must pass all four modules to benefit from the credit recommendation. Please refer to the 1998 and 2000 editions of this Directory for further information or contact the National PONSI office.

Information for College Officials Responsible for Making Credit Determinations on Noncollegiate Learning

The following information is intended to assist college officials in making appropriate credit determinations when students who are enrolled at their institutions request approval to transfer the courses evaluated and recommended for college credit by National PONSI.

The National Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction was initiated by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York in 1973. In 1994 it became a cooperative endeavor of The University of the State of New York and the California State University. National PONSI administers a system that evaluates courses and educational programs conducted by noncollegiate organizations nationwide and recommends to colleges and universities that they grant credit when learning experiences are found comparable to college-level instruction.

National PONSI's evaluation process is modeled after those employed by higher education accreditation agencies. Credit recommendations are made by a team of subject matter specialists, drawn primarily from the academic community, who conduct a thorough and objective evaluation under the supervision of National PONSI staff. A site visit is arranged to review instructional materials and evaluation instruments, and to discuss curriculum and examination development and revision with administrative and instructional staff. The resulting credit recommendations provide a consistent and reliable academic standard upon which to base credit decisions. The document "Program Policies on Evaluating Courses" can be obtained from the Program office.

When a course or educational program receives a credit recommendation, the recommendation together with a description of the learning experience is published in the Program's Directory, *College Credit Recommendations*, which is used by colleges and universities throughout the country. The Directory is designed to assist college officials in evaluating requests for credit by individuals who have successfully completed evaluated learning experiences and who wish to apply this learning to degree programs. Each edition of *College Credit Recommendations* also contains a [list of cooperating colleges](#), now numbering close to 1,500, who have reported they are willing to consider awarding credit based on National PONSI's recommendations. This list provides solid evidence of the Program's support within the academic community.

The operation of National PONSI is an extension of the accreditation activities of the New York State Board of Regents, which is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a national accrediting agency. National PONSI is administered by the State Education Department's Office of Higher Education, the same office which oversees higher education accreditation activities in

New York State. The California State University, which cooperates in the conduct of National PONSI, is the nation's largest senior institution of higher education. College officials may be assured, therefore, that the credit recommendations are established according to the same criteria that they would employ themselves.

The New York State Board of Regents established National PONSI to serve as a link between the noncollegiate and academic sectors of education in recognizing the merits of quality course work completed outside the college classroom. The Regents hoped to create opportunities for colleges to attract mature and motivated future students. As a national accrediting body, however, the Regents are also concerned that the granting of credit for noncollegiate learning be considered carefully. They, therefore, conceived of National PONSI, with its objective, third party assessment of noncollegiate learning, as a means to lend legitimacy to the credit decision process.

For more information go to www.nationalponsi.org.

Information for Students and their Advisors in Noncollegiate Organizations

How do courses or programs receive credit recommendations?

National PONSI staff assist organizations in choosing which learning experiences to submit for evaluation based on their potential to receive credit recommendations. After the learning experiences are selected, National PONSI staff then assemble a team of evaluators, usually comprising three college faculty in the subject matter area, to visit the organization on site. During the visit, the evaluation team, supervised by a National PONSI staff member, reviews texts, lesson plans, graded exams, homework assignments, and records of grades, and any other appropriate instructional/programmatic materials that will illuminate the scope of each learning experience. The evaluation team determines if learning experiences are at the college level and, if so, they make appropriate recommendations about the amount of credit that may be awarded for each experience.

How can the credit recommendations be used?

The most common use of the credit recommendations is to obtain college credit either by a college actually awarding credit or waiving a required or prerequisite course. Individuals have also used the credit recommendations to qualify for job advancement, obtain salary increases, meet educational requirements for professional licensure or certification, qualify for veterans' or insurance benefits, or obtain entry into new areas of employment.

Who may submit courses or programs for evaluation?

Generally, organizations whose courses or programs are conducted on a formal basis and do not lead to an accredited college degree may submit them for evaluation. Course participants may not submit courses or programs for review. They may, however, contact National PONSI with the name and address of the training director or other appropriate official at the organization that sponsored the courses or programs. National PONSI staff will then contact this official to explain the evaluation and credit recommendation system.

How do I know which courses or programs have received a credit recommendation?

Contact the office within your organization that is responsible for administering courses or programs, and ask for a list of the courses or programs that have been evaluated, the recommended number of credits, and the dates for which the credit recommendations apply. If you do not know whom to contact, check with the National PONSI office for assistance.

Is college credit automatically earned when someone successfully completes a course or

program evaluated by National PONSI?

No. National PONSI credit recommendations are *recommended credits*. A credit recommendation results in actual college credit when a college or university grants it credit toward one of its certificates or degrees.

Are policies for granting credit the same at all colleges?

No. Academic institutions set their own policies regarding whether they will award credit for courses or programs completed at other colleges and universities or noncollegiate organizations, and these policies vary. Some colleges may grant credit for successful completion of a course or program sponsored by a noncollegiate organization for which another college will not. Another college may not grant credit but may, instead, waive a prerequisite or a required course.

Some policies are institution-wide; others are set by each academic unit or department. An individual should check with the college he or she is interested in attending to determine its policies. Officials listed in Appendix C of the Directory can serve as initial points of contact. If a college is not listed, the registrar's or admissions office may be the appropriate office; if not, they should be able to provide the name of an official to contact.

Is there a limit to the amount of credit an academic institution will award for noncollegiate courses or programs?

According to two surveys sent to colleges and universities across the country by National PONSI in 1988 and 1993, almost 30% of the responding colleges reported that they have no official policy limiting the number of credits which can be earned through transfer from other academic institutions or from noncollegiate organizations. Many other colleges reported they do set a limit, usually 15 to 30 credits for a four-year degree program. Institutions may also limit the amount of credit granted toward any given subject area. Further, an institution that does not have a degree program that complements the courses or programs the individual completed may decline to award credit or may modify the amount of credit awarded.

Two-year colleges, while generally very willing to consider awarding credit for National PONSI evaluated courses or programs, usually have limited flexibility in awarding a large amount of transfer credit because many of their associate degree programs are very structured. When an individual seeks credit for a large number of National PONSI evaluated courses, it is more likely that a four-year institution or a nontraditional college whose mission is to offer adult oriented, distance learning, or nonresidential degrees would have more latitude within their degree programs to award credit.

Do colleges charge a fee for granting credit for evaluated courses?

Based on the survey results mentioned in an earlier question, nearly 64% of the responding colleges and universities report that they charge no fee to the student. When a fee is charged, it is more often an assessment fee (19.2%) rather than full tuition (1.7%). Such fees are often charged to defray the costs of evaluating a student's prior learning, which may include National PONSI evaluated courses or programs.

How do I find out which colleges are willing to consider awarding credit for the National PONSI evaluated courses I've taken?

Check with the office within your organization responsible for administering the National PONSI evaluated courses or programs about colleges in your local area that may have already granted credit to other course participants. Also ask this office to share with you Appendix C from the most recent edition of our Directory, *College Credit Recommendations*, which contains the contact names and offices at close to 1,500 colleges and universities willing to consider awarding credit based on National PONSI credit recommendations. If your organization is not able to provide this information, contact the National PONSI office with the name of the college(s) you're interested in attending and we'll let you know whether your choice(s) is listed as a cooperating college. To view a list of the names of cooperating colleges and universities (without full contact information), [click here](#). Inclusion on this list of cooperating colleges does not mean that an institution automatically awards the credit recommended; requests for credit are typically evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The way a noncollegiate course fits into an individual's degree program must also be taken into account. Conversely, it should not be concluded that an institution will never award credit for noncollegiate course work, including courses evaluated by National PONSI, because the institution does not appear on this list. In addition to the colleges and universities on the list of cooperating colleges, there are many others that will consider awarding credit through an individualized portfolio assessment of prior learning. National PONSI credit recommendations may become part of such portfolios. If a college is not listed, you should contact the Registrar, the Admissions Office, or the chairperson of the degree program you wish to enroll in.

How should I notify a college about the evaluated courses I've taken?

Contact the office within your organization responsible for administering the National PONSI evaluated courses or programs and request that an official record of the courses

or programs you have successfully completed be sent to the college(s) you select. The official record will enable a college official to verify successful completion and the dates of attendance. You should provide the name and address where the official record should be sent. The organization will then transmit it directly to the college(s), since many academic institutions will not accept those delivered by students.

What if a college wants more information about the evaluated courses I've taken?

If the college is requesting information about National PONSI because it is not familiar with the college credit recommendation system, please refer to the next question for advice. If the college requests more information about a course than is contained in the course exhibit that appears in the Directory, the sponsoring organization should initially send the detailed course outline that National PONSI requests as part of the organization's preparation for a site visit. This is generally sufficient to answer most questions that a college official may pose. Colleges may also wish to review texts and other instructional materials and, perhaps, tests and other evaluation instruments. Requests for such extensive information are rare; most colleges are willing to use the descriptions contained in the Directory as the basis for making a decision about awarding credit.

What if a college isn't familiar with National PONSI?

A college often asks for more information when it is not familiar with National PONSI or the college credit recommendation service. To address this, National PONSI operates an advisory service to provide academic institutions with information on evaluated learning experiences. When questions arise, the sponsoring organization should contact National PONSI with the college official's name and address, the course participant's name, social security number, degree pursued, and courses or programs he or she wishes to receive credit for. A letter of introduction will be prepared on behalf of the sponsoring organization and the course participant. You may also suggest that the college official visit our Web site.

Can someone earn credit for courses or programs offered by noncollegiate organizations that are not listed in the Directory?

Yes, some institutions will evaluate a potential student's prior knowledge by means of an individualized assessment of prior learning or through examinations either developed by the college or those administered by nationwide proficiency examination programs. These national examinations may be used to validate study in learning experiences not listed in the National PONSI

Directory. A growing number of colleges and universities accept credits earned through these examinations. Information about a college's policy on the use of individualized assessment of prior learning and acceptance of nationwide proficiency examination programs can probably be obtained through the admissions office.

How do I choose a college to enroll in?

Certainly, your college choice will depend in part on what degree program you are interested in pursuing and whether a particular college offers that degree program. Other consideration might be whether the college offers part-time degree studies, evening courses, minimal or no residency requirements, special counseling and information services, and awarding credit for previous learning off-campus, including courses or programs recommended for credit by National PONSI. For information on colleges willing to consider awarding credit based on National PONSI credit recommendations, see the earlier question on this point.

If you live in an area where there are several colleges, review their catalogs and talk with their admissions counselors to see which college's degree programs can best meet your educational goals. If there are few institutions in your area, your choices will necessarily be limited. You may then wish to consider those nontraditional colleges that are oriented toward serving working adults and which generally do not have residency requirements. (See following question.)

What if I want a college degree, but don't have the time to attend classes?

To continue from the previous question, there are fully accredited nontraditional colleges that offer flexible degree programs geared toward working adults. These colleges would be good choices if you do not have the time to attend classes because of family and/or work responsibilities. To find out more about such institutions consult [Bear's Guide](#) or [Peterson's Guide](#).

Are there any resources available that may help me decide on which college and degree program may be best for me?

Information and assistance may be available in several places.

- *The organization which conducted the courses you completed* might have information on educational options and resources in your local area.
- *Public libraries* often offer special services for adult learners. Contact your local library to see if it provides any that interest you or whether it can direct you to other community-based organizations that may offer such services.

- *Many colleges and universities* have special advisory services designed expressly for working adults. Check with the admissions office at the college(s) of your choice and inquire about such services as degree and career counseling, part-time degree options, evening or weekend courses, distance learning courses, correspondence courses, child care services, or other services that would enhance your college experience.
- *Educational brokering agencies* offer services designed to link an individual's prior learning with his or her educational and career goals. Some agencies work directly with course participants through contracts with their sponsoring organizations; others serve individuals directly. Information on those agencies currently offering such services can be obtained from the National PONSI office.

For more information go to:
www.nationalponsi.com

Description of the Examination

Note: The A.P.P. examination is identical to the first two modules of the C.P.M. examination

The examination, which has a multiple-choice format, consists of four modules (A.P.P. consists of two modules). Each module asks sufficient questions to permit candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of the critical tasks in that area. The general content of each module is outlined below.

Module 1: Purchasing Process

Part A- Identifying Requirements: Review requests for purchases, including analyzing and determining the appropriateness of the requests in terms of organizational requirements and goals. The identification and selection of potential sources of supplies, including “make or buy” consideration.

Part B- Preparation of Solicitations: Develop/review specifications, statements of work performance terms and/or acceptance criteria; locate and select potential sources of materials or services; prepare and solicit competitive bids, quotations, and proposals with pertinent specifications, terms, and conditions.

Part C- Supplier Analysis: Conduct supplier visits/evaluations; manage and develop list of recommended sources.

Part D- Contract Execution, Implementation, and Administration: Prepare and/or issue contracts/purchase orders; obtain legal review and approval of contracts; administer contracts/purchase orders from award to completion; expedite deliveries and conduct follow-up procedures; resolve contract/purchase order differences; review and revise purchasing practices to ensure conformance with established laws, policies and ethical principles; manage files of agreements, equipment records, and/or specifications.

Module 2: Supply Environment

Part A- Negotiations: Prepare, develop and conduct negotiation strategies and tactics to obtain maximum value.

Part B- Information Technology: Develop/utilize a computerized purchasing system; develop/implement/maintain database; develop/utilize computerized inventory and/or capital equipment tracking system.

Part C- Quality Issues: Resolve quality problems. Develop measurements for quality improvement and target setting.

Part D- Internal Relationships: Develop/manage/evaluate relationships with internal departments; recommend/implement changes to the organization’s purchasing, supply management, and materials usage policies; disseminate information and provide training related to purchasing and supply management policies and procedures.

Part E- External Relationships: Develop/manage effective supplier relationships; review product availability and or/pricing information with suppliers; conduct interviews with current and prospective suppliers; coordinate/review/respond to supplier inquiries, protests, and appeals; develop/implement a small business/disadvantaged supplier development program; represent the buying organization in meetings.

Module 3: Value Enhancement Strategies

Part A- Sourcing Analysis: Conduct decisions to “make or buy”, privatize, or outsource products/services; develop financing and leveraging strategies.

Part B- Supply and Inventory Management: Organize/review storage and movement of materials; reconcile inventory; the disposition of obsolete, surplus material, equipment and scrap.

Part C- Value Enhancing Methods: Develop/implement a standardization and process improvement program; develop a cost reduction, cost avoidance, cost containment program; coordinate the introduction of new and modified products and services.

Part D- Forecasting and Strategies: Plan purchasing, sourcing and supply strategies based on forecasted data; provide data on current and future market conditions; develop supply plans and strategies based on forecasts of future demand; develop and maintain market awareness.

Module 4: Management

Part A- Management and Organization: Develop strategic plans and objectives; develop goals and objectives aligned to organizational goals; plan/develop/provide operating policies, guidelines, and procedure; prepare periodic reports; analyze and resolve issues raised in purchasing and supply audit reports; develop/utilize

criteria for evaluating purchasing and supply department performance; prepare and or administer budget; design, modify, and/or manage operation forms.

Part B- Human Resources Management: Supervise and lead purchasing and supply staff; hire, promote, and/or dismiss personnel; evaluate staff performance; resolve employee performance problems; implement programs to prevent and respond to discrimination or harassment.

REQUEST FOR THE C.P.M. or A.P.P. EXAMINATION

Please complete this form to have an official copy of your C.P.M. or A.P.P. examination transcript forwarded to you and the college or university of your choice. Please note that the recommendation of the New York Board of Regents -- that college credit be awarded for completion of the C.P.M. and/or A.P.P. examination--is just a recommendation. Most universities and colleges will consider awarding college credit but are not bound by the recommendation to allow credit for your degree program.

PLEASE BE SURE TO COMPLETE EVERY SECTION AS COMPLETELY AS POSSIBLE TO PREVENT DELAYS IN PROCESSING. If you are unsure of the dates you tested, please record the testing dates and type to the best of your recollection. We will search our records based upon that information.

NAME: _____

Indicate name tested under if different from above: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

DAYTIME PHONE #: _____

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: _____

TRANSCRIPT PROCESSING FEE: \$15.00

FORM OF PAYMENT:

___ Check included ___ Visa ___ Master Card ___ AmEx (check one)

Card # _____ Exp. Date: ____ / ____

EXAM INFORMATION

MODULE 1 taken by: ___ Computer ___ Written -Date Passed: _____

MODULE 2 taken by: ___ Computer ___ Written -Date Passed: _____

MODULE 3 taken by: ___ Computer ___ Written -Date Passed: _____

MODULE 4 taken by: ___ Computer ___ Written -Date Passed: _____

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

NAME: _____

UNIVERSITY: _____

DEPARTMENT/COLLEGE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

I hereby authorize ISM to release my scores to the college/university indicated on this form.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Mail or fax transcript request to: ISM - CERTIFICATION DEPT., PO Box 22160, Tempe AZ 85285-2160 Fax 480/752-7890