

University Policy 3.01.09**Degree and Certificate Conferral****Policy Approval Date: March 11, 2011****Policy Effective Date: July 1, 2011****Procedure Approval Date: June 6, 2017****Procedure Effective Date: July 1, 2017****POLICY STATEMENT**

Capella University learners are eligible for degree or certificate conferral upon successful completion of all degree or certificate program requirements as described in Capella's *University Catalog* and pursuant to this policy. Successful completion is determined by a degree audit conducted by the Learner Services and Operations department.

RATIONALE

Capella University requires all Capella graduates to have completed the requirements for their conferred degree or certificate. This policy ensures the integrity of degrees and certificates conferred by Capella University.

DEFINITIONS**Academic Program**

An academic program is any credentialed academic offering and its components, including but not limited to a degree, specialization, minor, focus, emphasis, concentration, certificate, or delivery model in which a learner is enrolled.

Commencement

Commencement is a voluntary ceremony that recognizes the conferral of a learner's degree. Participation in a commencement ceremony assumes the learner has completed all degree program requirements or is successfully progressing toward conferral, but it does not assume degree conferral has occurred. Degrees are not issued at commencement events.

Conferral

Conferral is the issuance of a degree or certificate by Capella University.

Conferral Date

Conferral date is the date upon which a learner's degree or certificate is formally issued.

Credit Residence Requirement

The credit residence requirement is the minimum number of quarter credits earned at Capella University that are applied toward the conferral of a unique Capella degree.

Graduation

Graduation is the successful completion of a learner's degree or certificate program with the conferral of a degree from Capella University.

University Catalog

Capella's *University Catalog* is the official record of requirements for the university's academic offerings. Learners are assigned their initial catalog of record upon their admission to Capella University. Learners who begin their academic programs in the winter or spring quarters are assigned to the January catalog and the April addendum, and learners who begin their academic programs in summer or fall quarters are assigned to the July catalog and the October addendum.

PROCEDURES

I. Degree and Certificate Conferral Requirements for All Learners

- A. Learners must complete all degree or certificate program requirements, including coursework, residencies, practica, internships, and any other components such as cumulative grade point average (GPA) and credit totals as described in their *University Catalog* of record.
 1. A single course may satisfy multiple requirements within a degree program, but the credits from that course may only be applied once toward the total credits needed for the degree.
 - a. Undergraduate general education requirements may fulfill either core or specialization requirements when the course is applicable to both categories.
 - b. A single course may not fulfill both a core and a specialization requirement in any program.
 2. Learners should refer to university policies *2.02.07 Changing Academic Program* and *4.01.04 University Catalog* for information about catalog and catalog changes.
 3. Learners are encouraged to contact Academic Advising should they have questions about their current catalog requirements.
- B. Learners must also meet the minimum university credit residence requirements for their degree or certificate level. Any credits above the university minimum may be fulfilled by transfer and/or prior learning assessment (PLA) credit.

Minimum University Credit Residence Requirements by Degree Level

Degree Level	Credit Minimum Earned at Capella University*	Additional Requirements
Bachelor's	45 quarter credits of total required credits. PLA may account for up to 15 credits of this minimum residence requirement.	Minimum quarter credits includes courses that cannot be fulfilled by transfer as stated in the course descriptions in Capella's <i>University Catalog</i> . 30 quarter credits of Capella's residence requirement must be fulfilled in core and specialization courses. Learners enrolled in any FlexPath bachelor's degree program must complete a minimum of 22.5 program points at Capella University, and 15 program points in

		core and specialization courses.
Undergraduate Certificate	12 quarter credits or at least 50% of total required credits, whichever is greater.	Only full courses will be accepted toward the 50% minimum.
Master's	33 quarter credits of total required credits. PLA may account for up to eight credits of this minimum residence requirement.	<p>Minimum quarter credits includes courses that cannot be fulfilled by transfer as stated in the course descriptions in Capella's <i>University Catalog</i>.</p> <p>Learners enrolled in FlexPath master's degree programs must complete a minimum of 16.5 program points at Capella University.</p> <p>Learners enrolled in the Master of Education in Teaching and Learning degree program must complete a minimum of 26 quarter credits at Capella University.</p> <p>Learners enrolled in the Master of Education in Teaching and Learning FlexPath option must complete a minimum of 13 program points at Capella University.</p>
Education Specialist	36 quarter credits of total required credits.	Minimum quarter credits includes courses that cannot be fulfilled by transfer as stated in the course descriptions in Capella's <i>University Catalog</i> .
Professional Doctorate	52 quarter credits of total required credits.	Minimum quarter credits includes courses that cannot be fulfilled by transfer as stated in the course descriptions in Capella's <i>University Catalog</i> .
PhD	76 quarter credits of total required credits.	<p>Minimum quarter credits includes courses that cannot be fulfilled by transfer as stated in the course descriptions in Capella's <i>University Catalog</i>.</p> <p>Learners enrolled in the PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision degree program must earn a minimum of 72 quarter credits at Capella University.</p>
Graduate Certificate	4 quarter credits or at least 25% of	Only full courses will be accepted toward the 25% minimum.

	total required credits, whichever is greater.	Minimum quarter credits includes courses that cannot be fulfilled by transfer as stated in the course descriptions in Capella's <i>University Catalog</i> .
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* Individual academic programs may have additional/greater credit [residence requirements](#).

- C. To qualify for conferral in their degree or certificate program, learners must complete the following requirements. Advanced doctoral learners are exempt from these requirements in some circumstances.
 - 1. Apply to each degree or certification program and be admitted to that program.
 - 2. Register for and complete a minimum of one Capella University course that will be applied to their academic program requirements after admission, change of academic program, or change of catalog.
- D. Learners must complete and submit the Graduation Application located on Campus for any degree or certificate program for which they are seeking conferral.

II. Degree and Certificate Conferral Process for All Learners

- A. Learners requesting consideration for degree or certificate conferral must complete and submit the Graduation Application located on Campus.
- B. Upon receipt of the Graduation Application, the Learner Services and Operations department will conduct a degree audit of the learner's record.
- C. Upon completion of the degree audit, the Learner Services and Operations department will notify the learner of the status of his or her Graduation Application.
- D. Upon confirmation by the Learner Services and Operations department that the learner has met all degree or certificate program requirements, the learner will be conferred his or her degree or certificate.
- E. Degrees and certificates are conferred on the last day of the month in which it is confirmed that the degree or certificate program requirements were met.
- F. Learners who have one or more required courses to complete at the time of Graduation Application and who are not registered for those remaining required courses will be asked to reapply for graduation at a later time.
- G. Changes in any form including GPA, quarter credit totals, or specializations, cannot be made to conferred degrees.

III. Commencement for All Learners

- A. Approval for Commencement

Learners who have applied for graduation, who are registered for but have not yet completed any remaining course requirements, and/or who have any Incomplete ("I") grades to resolve will be approved to participate in commencement.
- B. Doctoral Learners
 - 1. Learners in doctoral programs that require a dissertation must have completed dissertation milestone 9 to be approved to participate in commencement.

2. Learners in the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) degree program must be registered for the final dissertation capstone course in order to be approved to participate in commencement.
 3. Learners in the Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) in School Psychology degree program must be registered for the final integrative project in order to be approved to participate in commencement.
- C. Academic progress will be monitored for approved applicants until they have successfully completed their remaining requirements. These learners do not need to reapply for graduation.
- D. Additional commencement information is located on Campus.

IV. Capella University Diplomas

Capella University diplomas will identify a learner by the individual's official learner name of record, unless the learner requests otherwise and the request is approved. To request that an alternate name appear on a Capella University diploma, a learner must contact Learner Services and Operations. Such requests shall be approved or denied on a case-by-case basis.

V. Capella University Transcripts

- A. The Capella University transcript is the learner's official academic record at Capella University.
- B. Capella University will not modify a learner's certificate- or degree-conferred transcript after a degree or certificate has been conferred. The learner's record is considered to be sealed from retroactive change upon conferral, except to correct clerical errors.

VI. All procedures with this policy apply to learners in credit-based (GuidedPath) and FlexPath programs.

POLICY OWNERS

Academic Owner: Registrar

Operations Owner: Learner Services and Operations

RELATED DOCUMENTS

University policy 2.01.01 Admission

University policy 2.01.02 Maximum Time to Degree Completion

University policy 2.02.07 Changing Academic Program

University policy 3.01.03 Academic Recognition

University policy 3.01.08 Academic Degree and Certificate Requirements

University policy 3.04.04 Application of Capella Credits

University policy 3.04.05 Attendance at Residencies

University policy 3.04.11 Transfer Credit and Prior Learning Assessment

University policy 4.01.04 University Catalog

University policy 4.01.06 Official Learner Name of Record

University policy 4.03.01 Tuition and Fees

University Catalog

[*Dissertation Manual*](#)

Graduation Application

[Campus commencement pages](#)

REVISION HISTORY

Original Policy Approval Date: May 22, 2009

Revision Dates: 11-11-09; 7-1-11; 7-1-12; 10-8-12; 11-21-12; 8-21-13; 12-21-13; 5-8-15; 4-28-16; 8-11-16; 11-1-16; 12-20-16; 6-6-17

Administrative edits as result of ongoing review: 2-16-10; 8-9-11; 10-18-12; 1-18-13; 1-29-13; 6-24-13; 2-10-14; 7-20-14; 1-29-15; 11-1-15; 4-26-17; 10-25-17