

University Policy 3.04.11**Transfer Credit and
Prior Learning Assessment****Policy Approval Date: March 11, 2011****Policy Effective Date: July 1, 2011****Procedure Approval Date: October 28, 2015****Procedure Effective Date: November 1, 2015****POLICY STATEMENT**

Capella University recognizes relevant external learning that may be acceptable for credit toward a Capella degree or certificate program, including academic credit earned at other accredited institutions, credit based on nationally recognized examination programs, and credit based on prior learning.

Capella evaluates official transcripts from regionally accredited or internationally recognized institutions to determine acceptance of transfer credit. Capella may accept transfer credit from some non-regionally accredited institutions or programs on a case-by-case basis.

Capella also awards credit for acquired learning external to the university, based on nationally recognized examination programs such as the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) and DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST), and American Council on Education (ACE)-recommended credits for learning, including business-related certifications and corporate and military training.

As a competency-based institution, Capella allows learners to document their prior learning through prior learning assessment (PLA), which demonstrates that they have mastered the competencies of one or more specific Capella courses. If mastery of the competencies is successfully demonstrated, learners are awarded credit for the Capella course(s) as described in this policy and its related procedures.

Capella reserves the right to limit the number of external and PLA credits accepted toward the requirements of specific degree and certificate programs, in conjunction with the minimum residence requirements described in university policy *3.01.09 Degree and Certificate Conferral*.

RATIONALE

Capella University acknowledges that education occurs throughout all of a learner's life stages and in a variety of contexts and settings. When learning is relevant to the knowledge, skills, and competencies of a specific Capella academic program, applicants have the opportunity to provide documentation of that learning and be awarded appropriate credit to be applied toward the completion of his or her academic program.

DEFINITIONS

Competencies

Competencies are the defined learning outcomes for each course in each of Capella University's academic programs. Learners must demonstrate these outcomes to successfully complete a course.

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)

Prior learning assessment (PLA) is an approved means of academically evaluating and assessing knowledge that is acquired prior to beginning an academic program at Capella.

PROCEDURES

- I. Transfer Credit Requirements for All Learners
 - A. To be considered for transfer credit, course work must have been completed at an academic institution or program that was accredited prior to the learner's withdrawal from the institution. Transfer credit will be considered if an institution or program had provisional accreditation at the time the learner withdrew from the institution.
 - B. Courses eligible for transfer will be evaluated using criteria such as the course credit total, department, title, level, and description of course content. In order for an external course to apply as a Capella course, it must be evaluated as having significant shared content.
 - C. Credit awarded by other institutions through processes such as transfer, prior learning assessment (PLA) credit, portfolio assessments, or credit by examination will not be accepted for transfer credit at Capella.
 - D. Not all courses for which Capella may award transfer credit are offered by Capella University, but may be allowed to transfer in as general elective credit to programs that offer electives.
 - E. In order to award transfer credit, some programs at Capella may require that the original course work was taken as part of a program holding specific program accreditation, such as Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), The National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC), Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), or Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).
 - F. Some Capella courses are not eligible for fulfillment through transfer credit as noted in the *University Catalog* course descriptions.
 - G. Undergraduate Transfer Credit
 1. Minimum Grade Requirement

Applicants with previous undergraduate course work from institutions meeting Capella's qualifications for transfer credit may only be awarded transfer credit for course work completed with a grade of "C-" (or equivalent) or better.
 2. Vocational Courses
 - a. Capella will review vocational courses from technical colleges and programs for transfer credit, provided the institution holds appropriate accreditation, as described in section I of this policy.
 - b. Capella will accept a maximum of 18 quarter credits of approved vocational course work as transfer credit; these credits may only be applied to Capella elective courses.

- c. Some programs may offer courses that apply specifically to a program of study. Any such vocational transfer credit used toward program requirements will be included in the 18-credit transfer maximum.
 - 3. Developmental or remedial course work will not be awarded undergraduate transfer credit.
 - 4. Associate of Arts (AA) Requirements for Transfer Credit
 - a. An Associate of Arts (AA) degree from a Minnesota Transfer Curriculum institution may satisfy Capella's 45-quarter-credit general education requirement provided that:
 - i. The degree was granted in 1994 or later.
 - ii. The degree was granted with a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher.
 - iii. The degree included at least 90 earned quarter credits.
 - iv. Each course meets the criteria for transfer as articulated in this policy.
 - b. Applicants who do not meet all of these criteria will receive a course-by-course transfer credit evaluation to determine credit that will fulfill their general education requirements, and may be required to complete additional general education course work.
 - H. Graduate Learners
 - 1. Applicants with previous graduate course work from institutions meeting Capella's qualifications for transfer credit may only be awarded transfer credit for course work completed with a grade of "B-" (or equivalent) or better.
 - 2. Graduate-level courses applied toward a previous undergraduate degree will not be awarded graduate-level transfer credit.
 - 3. Undergraduate-level courses applied toward a graduate degree program are not evaluated for graduate credit unless specified on the transcript key.
 - 4. Only courses that meet the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) Standards will be accepted for transfer to the PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision degree program.
 - 5. Courses that were completed 10 years prior to the date of application to Capella University will not be accepted for transfer credit to psychology programs within the Harold Abel School of Social and Behavioral Sciences.
 - 6. Development, vocational, or remedial course work will not be awarded graduate transfer credit.
 - I. Transfer credit can be applied to select Capella certificate programs as determined by the school.
- II. International Transfer Credit for All Learners
 International courses may be awarded transfer credit depending on the review by a Capella-approved third-party evaluator who will assess their equivalency to U.S. courses or degree programs. Both an official transcript (or its equivalent) and a diploma (if a degree has been awarded) must be submitted to complete the evaluation process.
- III. Transfer Credit Evaluation Process for All Learners
 A. Applicants seeking transfer credit from each previously attended external institution must submit official transcripts from the awarding institution(s) in sealed envelopes or through secure electronic transfer.

- B. The Learner Services and Operations (LSO) department reviews applicant transcripts and evaluates them against the criteria of the associated academic program and this policy. The transfer credit evaluation includes a summary of the courses that have been accepted for transfer and awarded transfer credit toward the applicant's academic program; transfer credit is awarded for those courses.
- C. Official transfer credit evaluations will be processed after the LSO department receives all official transcripts from each external institution or, for those entering undergraduate programs, after the end of the applicant's first academic quarter, whichever comes first.
- D. Change Requests
 - 1. Learners may request a change of catalog, degree or certificate program, specialization, concentration, or emphasis by submitting the [Change Program, Specialization, Concentration and Emphasis Form](#) located on Campus. Learners considering such changes should refer to university policy *2.02.07 Changing Academic Program*.
 - 2. Learners who make a change will have their previously awarded transfer credit re-evaluated and, if necessary, an advising team that specializes in the learner's new degree program will be assigned. The advising team will assist the learner in completing a new academic plan.

IV. Appeal of Transfer Credit Evaluation for All Learners

- A. Learners and applicants have the right to appeal their transfer credit evaluation.
 - 1. To appeal the results of the transfer credit evaluation, applicants or learners must submit a formal appeal request to the Learner Services and Operations (LSO) department by completing and submitting the [Transfer Credit Appeal Form](#) located on Campus. Learners must submit additional information, including an extended course description and course syllabus.
 - 2. The LSO department will review all records from prior transfer credit evaluations and may consult with appropriate academic leadership in reviewing the appeal.
 - 3. Following review of the appeal and records of prior transfer credit evaluations, the LSO department will issue a decision and report it to the learner or applicant as soon as practicable.
 - 4. The duration of the transfer credit evaluation appeal review process is determined by the complexities of the case, but is not to exceed 90 calendar days.
- B. The decision of the LSO department is final.

V. External Learning Assessments for All Learners

- A. The following nationally recognized examination programs will be considered for transfer credit toward a Capella bachelor's degree program:
 - 1. Advanced Placement (AP) examinations
Transfer credit is awarded for the successful completion of AP examinations as outlined by the American Council on Education (ACE) recommendations. When applicable, these credits are counted toward the completion of general education requirements and/or electives. If there is no ACE recommendation for the examination, scores of 3 or higher will be awarded six quarter credits.
 - 2. International Baccalaureate (IB) examinations

Learners who have earned an IB diploma with composite scores of 30 or higher are awarded 12 quarter credits for each higher-level examination and three quarter credits for each standard-level examination. Learners who participated in an IB program but did not receive an IB diploma, or received a composite score lower than 30, are awarded 12 quarter credits for each higher-level examination on which they scored 5 or higher.

3. College-Level Examination Program (CLEP)

Transfer credit is awarded for the successful completion of CLEP examinations as outlined by ACE recommendations.

4. DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST)

Transfer credit is awarded for successful completion of DSST examinations as outlined by ACE recommendations.

B. ACE-recommended credits

1. Capella awards credit for knowledge obtained through learning experiences such as military training, corporate training, and business-related certifications that have been reviewed and recommended for credit by ACE.

2. All eligible ACE credit recommendations are considered for transfer and are applied as appropriate to Capella's academic programs.

VI. Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) for All Learners

A. PLA is a process by which learners demonstrate that they have mastered the competencies of one or more specific Capella courses. If mastery of the course competencies is successfully demonstrated, learners are awarded credit for the Capella course. PLA does not fulfill Capella's credit residence requirements as described in university policy *3.01.09 Degree and Certificate Conferral*.

B. PLA Eligibility for All Learners

Capella currently awards credit for prior learning for a limited number of courses at the bachelor's and master's levels. Learners should refer to the [Prior Learning Assessment Center](#) located on Campus. To request credit for prior learning through the PLA process, a learner must:

1. Be admitted to an approved Capella program.

2. Verify with his or her advising team that courses for which PLA credit is being requested apply to the requirements outlined in his or her academic plan.

3. Verify with his or her advising team that the courses for which PLA credit is being requested are in alignment with Capella's credit residence requirements described in university policy *3.01.09 Degree and Certificate Conferral*.

C. Whether a request for PLA credit is approved or denied, Capella PLA fees are nonrefundable. Fees per credit are listed in the tuition and fees schedule located on Campus.

D. Any certification presented for PLA credit may only be applied to one degree level per learner.

E. PLA Request Timing

All learners are encouraged to submit PLA requests as early as possible. Delaying submission of a PLA request until the final quarters of a degree program may result in the loss of potential PLA credit. Learners should plan their PLA requests carefully to

ensure compliance with minimum university credit residence requirements as described in university policy *3.01.09 Degree and Certificate Conferral*.

VII. Additional Considerations for FlexPath Learners

A. FlexPath Transfer Credit Considerations

1. FlexPath learners are only eligible to have courses evaluated and receive transfer credit within 12 weeks of starting their first FlexPath course.
2. FlexPath learners requesting to apply transfer courses will have courses evaluated against the credit-bearing versions of the program and applied to the degree requirements as appropriate.

B. FlexPath Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Considerations

1. FlexPath learners are only eligible to submit certifications for PLA credit within 10 weeks of starting their first FlexPath course.
2. Learners may not gain credit by petition for FlexPath courses.

POLICY OWNERS

Academic Owner: Admissions and Transfer Officer

Operations Owner: Learner Services and Operations

RELATED DOCUMENTS

University policy 2.01.01 Admission

REVISION HISTORY

Original Policy Approval Date: March 11, 2011

Revision Dates: 6-1-12; 10-8-12; 9-16-13; 10-28-15

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Content previously contained in university policies 3.04.02 Credit for Prior Learning and 3.04.03 Transfer of Credit