



System Policy 3.35 Credit for Prior Learning

Part 1. Purpose

To provide students with opportunities to demonstrate competence at the college- and university-level from learning gained through learning experiences outside of a college or university credit-bearing course and to establish consistent practices among colleges and universities for evaluating and awarding undergraduate or graduate credit for prior learning.

Part 2. Authority

Minn. Stat. § 197.775 Higher Education Fairness requires the awarding of credit for veteran's military training or service. Minn. Stat. § 120B.13 Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Programs requires Minnesota State to award credit for Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB). Minn. Stat. § 120B.131 College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) requires Minnesota State to award credit for College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) examinations. Minn. Stat. § 120B.022 Elective Standards requires Minnesota State colleges and universities to establish criteria for translating world language certificates and seals into academic credit.

Part 3. Definitions

Credit for prior learning

Academic credit awarded for demonstrated college- and university-level learning gained through learning experiences outside college or university credit-bearing courses and assessed by academically sound and rigorous methods and processes.

Credit for prior learning (CPL) - external assessments

Assessment methods and processes at the colleges or universities of Minnesota State that could result in credit for prior learning achieved and assessed through a nationally recognized third-party assessment agency or organization, regionally or nationally accredited postsecondary institution, or noncredit instruction. Students demonstrate a level of proficiency that is recognized through curriculum, instruction, program, or a standardized exam. CPL external assessment types may include, but are not limited to, AP, IB, CLEP, and other national standardized assessments, world languages seals and certificates, industry recognized credentials, licenses, and certifications, and noncredit instruction in programs such as registered apprenticeships, continuing education, and customized training.

Credit for prior learning (CPL) - internal college/university assessments

College or university assessment methods and processes used by Minnesota State faculty members to assess students' demonstrated learning and/or competence. Such assessments

determine competence-to-credit comparability, course-equivalency or individualized subject status, and application to degree requirements or electives. CPL internal assessment types may include, but are not limited to, credit by exam, prior learning portfolio assessment, individualized subject-area assessment, group or seminar assessment, and competency-based assessment.

Military courses

A curriculum with measurable outcomes and learning assessments that service members are required to successfully complete based on their military occupation.

Military occupations

A service member's job(s) while in the military.

Prior learning

Learning gained in life, community and/or work-based settings, and through experiences outside of the college or university credit-bearing course, including but not limited to independent study, life experience and reflection, non-credit study programs, career education, continuing education, online learning or instruction, and training or certificate programs. The learning occurs "prior to" the student's request for assessment at a college or university.

Part 4. Opportunities for Students

Colleges and universities shall provide current, comprehensive, and accessible information on opportunities to obtain credit for prior learning to prospective and admitted students as part of degree planning and advising. Colleges and universities shall provide opportunities for enrolled students to demonstrate college- and university-level learning achieved through prior learning experiences outside of the college or university credit-bearing course that is applicable to their courses, programs, or degree requirements. Credit for prior learning opportunities may include CPL external assessments, CPL internal college/university assessments, and/or military courses and military occupations according to System Procedure 3.35.1 Credit for Prior Learning - External Assessments, System Procedure 3.35.2 Credit for Prior Learning - Internal Assessments, and System Procedure 3.35.3 Military Courses and Military Occupations.

Part 5. Awarding Credit for Prior Learning

Colleges and universities shall determine the credit award for students who demonstrate prior learning consistent with system procedures and through processes and methods of external assessment, internal college/university assessment, and/or for military courses or occupations. Credit awarded for prior learning may fulfill general, technical, Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC), program/major/minor, and/or elective courses.

Part 6. College and University Transfer of Credit for Prior Learning

Credit awarded for prior learning by a college or university must be accepted in transfer by the receiving college or university in accordance with System Procedure 3.21.1 Undergraduate Course Credit Transfer.

Part 7. Credit for Prior Learning Appeals

Colleges and universities shall establish an appeals process that may be used by students who are denied credit requested for prior learning.

Date of Adoption: 09/17/08

Date of Implementation: 03/01/09

Date of Last Review: 10/17/18

Date and Subject of Amendments:

10/17/18 – Language from Policy 3.15 Advanced Placement Credit, Policy 3.16 International Baccalaureate Credit, and Policy 3.33 College-Level Examination Program Credit were incorporated. Part 3. Definitions was added, including external assessments and internal college/university assessments language. The policy was updated throughout with current terminology.

No Additional HISTORY.