



Procedure 303-15 Credit for Prior Learning

Sponsor: Student Services

Purpose

Credit for prior learning validates students' previous experiences, accelerates their progress toward degree and certificate completion, and allows them to continue progressing in their education without having to repeat previous work. All credit awarded by Coconino Community College for prior learning shall be awarded in accordance with prescribed procedures. These procedures comply with the policies, standards, and expectations of the Higher Learning Commission and are informed by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL).

Definitions

Credit by National Examination The practice of awarding credit to a student who has demonstrated achievement of the learning outcomes of a CCC course by passing a nationally recognized examination.

Prior Learning Learning that occurred in a setting outside of a regionally-accredited college or university's credit courses. This can include learning that took place in a non-regionally-accredited college or university's credit courses, noncredit coursework, military training, on-the-job training, registered apprenticeship programs, personal study, or any other setting in which demonstratable learning occurred.

Prior Learning Assessment The process of evaluating knowledge and skills gained through prior learning to award Coconino Community College credit.

Procedure

Awarding Credit for CCC Courses

Credit for prior learning shall only be awarded to individuals who demonstrate learning equivalent to an approved Coconino Community College course or learning of equivalent rigor. No credit will be awarded for partial completion of learning outcomes or learning that cannot be demonstrated. In addition, no credit for prior learning will be awarded for Special Topics, Independent Study, or other CCC courses with individualized course outcomes that have not been reviewed by the CCC Curriculum Committee.

Authority to Award Credit

Credit for prior learning shall only be awarded with the approval of qualified teaching faculty in the relevant discipline to ensure the integrity of CCC's academic courses and programs. Authority for awarding credit by standard evaluation practices, such as credit by national examination, may be delegated to Registration & Enrollment Services after initial review and approval by qualified teaching faculty.

Eligibility for Credit for Prior Learning

Credit for prior learning will only be awarded to admitted CCC students. Prospective students may be advised on how their prior learning could count toward fulfillment of CCC program requirements.

Methods for Evaluating Prior Learning

Prior learning can be evaluated to determine whether it achieves the learning outcomes of a CCC course in a variety of ways.

1. Credit by National Examination: Credit is awarded based on a passing score on a nationally recognized test (see Exam Equivalency Guide in the CCC Catalog for qualifying scores and the credit awarded for each).
 - a. Advanced Placement (AP)
 - b. Cambridge International Examinations (CIE)
 - c. College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
 - d. DANTES Subject Standardized Test (DSST)
 - e. International Baccalaureate (IB)
2. Third-party Review and Recommendation
 - a. ACE (American Council on Education) Recommendations for Military Training: Students who completed formal or on-the-job training in any branch of the US Military may have their military Joint Services Transcript evaluated by the American Council on Education. CCC credit may then be awarded based on ACE recommendations.
 - b. Foreign Credential Evaluation: Students who completed postsecondary education outside of the United States of America may have their foreign transcripts reviewed and translated by any organization affiliated with the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES). CCC may waive requirements and/or award credit based on this evaluation.
3. Professional License or Certification: Possession of an industry license or credential is equivalent to achieving the learning outcomes of certain CCC courses. For example, students who possess an active Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) license may receive credit for EMS 131 – Emergency Medical Technician. Standard course equivalencies for professional licenses and certifications can be found on the Registration and Enrollment Services website.
4. Evaluation of prior course materials: Similar to the evaluation of transfer courses from a regionally accredited postsecondary institution (see Procedure 501-07 Transfer and Evaluation of Credit to the College), appropriately qualified faculty may review course materials (including course descriptions, syllabi, completed assignments, examinations, etc.) from a noncredit course or a course taken at a postsecondary institution that is not regionally accredited. If the student has met the learning outcomes of a CCC course at the required level of rigor, CCC faculty may recommend that credit be awarded for the CCC course.

Process for Evaluating & Awarding Credit for Prior Learning

Registration & Enrollment Services (RES) manages the evaluation of all incoming transfer coursework and prior learning activity.

1. Evaluation of prior learning & determination of credit to be awarded
 - a. Credit by National Examination: Students who wish to receive credit by examination should submit their test scores directly to RES. RES staff will award credit based upon the Exam Equivalency Guide, which is approved by appropriately qualified teaching faculty.
 - b. Third-party Recommendation or Professional License/Certification: Students who wish to receive credit through a third-party evaluation or a professional license/certificate should submit their documentation directly to RES using the Request for Evaluation form, following the instructions listed on the form. RES staff will award credit based upon established course crosswalks, which are approved by appropriately qualified teaching faculty. If there is no existing crosswalk for a particular third-party recommendation or professional license/certification, students (with the assistance of an advisor if necessary)

shall submit documentation to RES, who will forward the documentation to an appropriately qualified teaching faculty and the area dean for review. The faculty and dean will approve awarding credit for specific CCC courses (if warranted), and RES staff will award the appropriate credit.

- c. Evaluation of prior course materials: Students who wish to receive credit for courses taken at an institution without regional accreditation will submit their transcripts and course materials directly to RES using the Request for Evaluation form, following the instructions listed on the form. RES will forward the documentation to an appropriately qualified teaching faculty and the area dean for review. The faculty and dean will approve awarding credit for specific CCC courses (if warranted), and RES staff will award the appropriate credit.
2. Recording awarded credit on the CCC transcript: Credit for prior learning will appear on the CCC transcript in the same manner as credit transferred from a regionally accredited college or university (see Procedure 501-07 Transfer and Evaluation of Credit to the College).
3. Archiving materials submitted: Registration & Enrollment Services will electronically archive all submitted materials according to Procedure 160-01 Records Retention.

Waiving Requirements for Prior Learning

Prerequisites and program requirements can be waived at the discretion of appropriately qualified teaching faculty and academic leadership based on prior learning. However, this does not waive the minimum required credits for a student's degree or certificate. Students should consult with their advisor and program faculty to determine whether to pursue waivers or awarded credit in meeting course prerequisites and program requirements.

Limits on Credit for Prior Learning

Credits awarded for prior learning are not considered to be credits in residence; at least 25% of the credits applied to a degree or certificate must be earned at CCC (see Procedure 501-16 Awarding of Degrees and Certificates).

Financial Aid and Prior Learning

Awarded credits applied to a student's degree count toward the student's maximum timeframe and quantitative (pace of progression) Satisfactory Academic Progress standards.

Assigning Grades for Prior Learning

Credit for prior learning will not be assigned a standard letter grade. Credit will only be awarded if the prior learning meets the minimum standards of the CCC course and will be assigned a grade of "TC", which is equivalent to a grade of "C" or higher.

Using Credit for Prior Learning to Meet Program Requirements

Unless otherwise specified, credit awarded for prior learning may be used to meet program requirements. Note that courses with a "S" (satisfactory) or "TC" grade cannot be used to satisfy some program requirements such as those of the Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC) (see Procedure 303-05 Grading and AZTransfer Policy 403 Pass/Fail Coursework).

References

Procedure 160-01 Records Retention

Procedure 303-05 Grading

Procedure 501-07 Transfer and Evaluation of Credit to the College

Procedure 501-16 Awarding of Degrees and Certificates
AZTransfer Policy 302 Credit by Examination
AZTransfer Policy 403 Pass/Fail Coursework

Procedure History

02/22/2012	New
03/12/2014	Revised
02/09/2015	Revised
12/09/2015	Revised and Approved by College Council
04/28/2021	Revised, Renamed (Prior Learning Assessment) and Approved by Executive Leadership Council
07/14/2025	Revised Sponsor from Registration and Enrollment Services to Student Services

Legal Review

None