

Senate Recommendation 2023-12-01 *Proposal to Revise Academic Policy – Credit for Prior Learning*  
December 14, 2023 meeting.

*Susan Eagle* 2/23/2024

*Robert Fische* 02/27/2024

Proposal Date: 9/27/2023

**Office of the Registrar**  
**Proposal to Revise an Academic Policy**  
**(Action Item)**

Contact Person:

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Identification of proposed policy revision:

**1. Catalog statement of existing policy:**

***NOTE: Charts were admitted due to space and are not relevant to the proposed changes.***

The credit hours earned through these examinations will count toward graduation, but will not apply to WKU residence credit or be used to compute grade point averages since a letter grade will not be given. Additional information about the exams may be obtained by clicking on the underlined course title in the charts below.

Although students may receive credit hours through any of these seven programs, duplicate credit may not be earned. For example, a student who earns credit hours for English 100 through the AP program may not receive additional credit for English 100 on the ACT exam, on a departmental exam, or on the CLEP exams.

High school seniors should take CLEP and ACT or SAT examinations by February at the latest so the results may be available for use in selecting courses during the March or June Topper Orientation Program.

The Office of the Registrar notifies students of their eligibility for credit upon receiving an application for admission and the official test score report. Students will receive the credit during the first semester of enrollment.

Credit awarded for these exams will apply toward the WKU General Education categories as indicated. For detailed information refer to the General Education section of the catalog. Credit for these exams will also apply toward the Kentucky Statewide General Education categories as indicated. The categories are: Written Communications (WC) and Oral Communications (OC), Arts and Humanities (AH), Social and Behavioral Sciences (SB), Natural Sciences (NS), Natural Sciences Lab (SL) and Quantitative Reasoning (QR).

**Advanced Placement Program (AP)**

Students may earn college credit through the Advanced Placement Program of the College Board upon attaining the minimum score on the AP examination. AP credit will not count toward WKU residence credit.

Official scores may be obtained on-line at <http://www.collegeboard.com> or by contacting:

AP Exams,  
PO Box 6671  
Princeton, New Jersey 08541-6671  
Telephone (888) 225-5427

The following code number should be used to have scores sent to WKU: AP-1901. Students will receive the credit during the first semester of enrollment.

### **Accounting, Pilot and Bridge Project (APBP)**

Students may earn three hours of proficiency non-residence credit for successful completion of the high school Accounting Pilot and Bridge Project (APBP) course. Students who earn credit from the APBP exam will meet the prerequisite for the first introductory accounting course, ACCT 110. Contact the Department of Accounting at [acctdept@wku.edu](mailto:acctdept@wku.edu) or (270) 745-4814 for more information.

### **ACT or SAT English and Math Proficiency Credit**

The WKU course below and 3 credit hours are received with an American College Testing Program (ACT) or Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) score in the designated test category. WKU does not require the written component on either exam. A student who earns credit for ENG 100 or MATH 116 on the ACT or SAT may not receive additional credit for ENG 100 or MATH 116.

Official ACT or SAT scores should be sent by the testing company to the Office of Admissions as part of the admissions process. ACT scores may be obtained by contacting: ACT Records, P.O. Box 451, Iowa City, Iowa 52243, phone (319) 337-1313, or accessing on-line information at <http://www.act.org>.

The following code number should be used to have scores sent to WKU: ACT-1562. SAT score information can be obtained by calling 1- 866-756-7346 or on-line at <http://www.collegeboard.com>. The following code number should be used to have scores sent to WKU: SAT-1901. The Office of Admissions will notify applicants who qualify for academic credit on the basis of ACT/SAT scores.

### **Cambridge International Examinations (AICE)**

Cambridge International Examinations provide curriculum for High Schools at advanced levels that offer learners a broad range of AS-level & A-level subjects. Students who participated in the Cambridge Advanced (AICE) program may be awarded Colonnade general education or other WKU credit. An official certifying AICE transcript is required. Evaluation of credit and recommendations are determined by the appropriate WKU academic department.

The grade necessary to earn WKU credit, the corresponding course, and the credit hours which may be earned appears below. The acceptable grade for credit may vary between courses and the level of the exam taken. Credit hour equivalencies are reviewed annually by academic units.

### **College Level Examination Program (CLEP)**

The CLEP examinations may be taken each month at any national testing center, including the testing center at WKU. Information about CLEP may be obtained by writing: CLEP, CN 6600, Princeton, New Jersey 08540-6600, or accessing on-line information at <http://www.collegeboard.com>, or by contacting:

Distance Learning Testing Center, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101, (270) 745-5122. The following code number should be used to have scores sent to WKU: CLEP-1901.

Students may register for CLEP examinations at WKU by contacting the Distance Learning Testing Center or by going online to <http://www.registerblast.com/wku>.

Students applying to WKU should have their scores sent to the Office of Admissions. Students currently enrolled at WKU should request their scores be sent to the Office of the Registrar. The appropriate office will then notify applicants who qualify for academic credit.

#### Policies

1. A student who has completed a course or has received credit by examination at WKU or at another accredited college or university may not receive credit for a CLEP examination of similar content.
2. A student may not take a CLEP examination for credit after having taken a college course at a higher level in the same department (subject matter area).
3. A student may establish credit in all courses or areas in which he/she is able to demonstrate proficiency, provided he/she meets the University's residence requirements for graduation. The credit earned will not count toward WKU residence.
4. A student who fails to earn credit on a CLEP examination may not repeat the same examination within three months of the initial testing date.
5. A student may not repeat by proficiency testing a course which has been previously taken or failed at WKU or another accredited institution.

#### **International Baccalaureate**

Western Kentucky University recognizes the International Baccalaureate (IB) program completed in high school. Credit will be awarded by earning the required score in a specific subject, and awarded as non-residence credit. To receive credit the student must furnish an official IB transcript to the Office of Admissions issued directly from the New York office of the International Baccalaureate Organization. Specific information about required scores and credit may be obtained from the Office of Admissions website (<http://www.wku.edu/international/ib.php>).

#### **Departmental Credit By Examination**

Students enrolled at WKU may also receive credit on the basis of departmental examinations, also called departmental comprehensive proficiency assessments. A student may take a departmental comprehensive proficiency assessment in any course listed as satisfying a requirement in any of the categories of general education. Departments may offer departmental comprehensive proficiency assessments in other courses at their discretion.

To assess student proficiency, a department may adopt either a standardized examination available from outside the University or develop an appropriate comprehensive proficiency examination within the department by means of a faculty committee. Departmental comprehensive proficiency assessments may be written, oral or both.

To be eligible to take a departmental comprehensive proficiency assessment, a student must be fully matriculated, in good standing, and regularly enrolled at WKU. Credits earned in this manner will be recorded on the student's official transcript as non-residence credit but will not be considered as a part of the normal semester load in the term in which the examination is taken. A student may not register for a departmental comprehensive proficiency assessment for a course while he or she is enrolled in that course. A student may not take a departmental comprehensive proficiency assessment in a course which has been previously taken at WKU or at another accredited institution.

A student desiring to take a departmental comprehensive proficiency assessment must complete an appropriate request form in the Office of the Registrar. A fee of \$25 per credit hour must be paid at the time the form is submitted. The form must be submitted to the Registrar prior to the end of the third week of classes in either the fall or spring semesters. The Registrar will notify the appropriate department of the student's request. The department will administer the comprehensive proficiency assessment during the seventh week of classes. The student must obtain the specific time and place for testing from the department chair.

After the assessment has been completed, the department chair will notify the Registrar in writing as to whether or not the student demonstrated acceptable proficiency. If the department recommends credit be granted, the semester hours earned will be recorded on the official transcript. However, the credit will not be used in computing the grade point average since letter grades will not be assigned.

### **Military Service Credit**

WKU strives to be a military friendly institution that will provide military personnel the ability to attend WKU and receive college credit for formal courses and primary occupations offered while in the military. WKU awards college credit based on the American Council on Education (ACE) Guide recommendation, and the credit will count as non-residence credit. Active duty soldiers or military veterans are required to submit official military transcripts prior to admission. Any soldier who is retired or discharged from the military will be required to submit their official military transcripts and a copy of the DD form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty of Service) member copy 4. The DD 214 must have characterization of service listed on the form. The DD 214 Form may be requested at <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>. Official military transcripts may be requested at <https://jst.doded.mil/>.

### **Articulated Credit Pathways**

WKU has an articulation agreement with the Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Career and Technical Education (KDE) to allow students who complete a career pathway and who meet designated criteria to earn college credit at WKU. Students may earn college credit through the Articulated Credit Pathways upon attaining the required score on the CTE End-of-Program Assessment. Earned credit will not count toward WKU residence credit. There will be no charge to students for any articulated credit covered in this agreement. To be eligible for credit, a student must:

- complete a minimum of 3 high school credits for courses aligned with the Secondary (K-12) State-Approved Career Pathway in the subject area with a GPA of 3.0 or higher or letter grade of B or higher,
- pass the aligned CTE End-of-Program Assessment, inform WKU that they were part of the articulation agreement with their secondary school by supplying appropriate documentation from that school's designated personnel,

- and enroll at WKU within 5 years of graduation.
- Additionally, some departments may require a student to complete credit hours in their particular major at WKU before credit may be awarded i.e., Early Childhood Education, Interior Design and Fashion Merchandising, and Hospitality Management and Dietetics.

Evaluation of credit and recommendations are determined by the appropriate WKU academic department. The corresponding course and the credit hours which may be earned appears below. Credit hour equivalencies are reviewed as needed by academic units.

### **Prior Learning Assessment**

Students who have acquired extensive college-level knowledge and skills in academic areas including but not limited to employment, military experience, civic activities, volunteer service, organizational training or workshops, or other non-traditional means may be granted credit for the knowledge and skills they have gained through nationally standardized exams (AP, CLEP, IB, ACE, etc.), departmental assessments, or portfolio development and evaluation. This policy focuses on portfolio development and evaluation. This policy focuses on portfolio development and evaluation, while referencing national and departmental assessments when appropriate.

Prior learning by portfolio evaluation is considered an opportunity for students to demonstrate their knowledge and is not a guarantee of credit for experience. Students will complete a portfolio of their prior learning as a part of a portfolio development course, IDST 250, taught by an instructor who has undergone training by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). Please note: the three credits earned in IDST 250 will count toward residence, while the prior learning credit awarded will be treated as non-residence credit. The portfolio, with varying forms of documents, will tie content learning outcomes to the knowledge and skills students have acquired through experiential learning. Credit earned will depend upon the student's ability to produce a portfolio that communicates learning outcomes consistent with the WKU mission on the level expected for the credit sought. Before registering for this course, students will consult with the instructor to evaluate the feasibility of seeking credit in a particular area.

The student will identify a maximum of two content areas for which credit is being sought, and his or her portfolio will be submitted to two full-time WKU faculty members, at least one from each area for which the student is seeking credit, upon successful completion of the course. These faculty experts will review the portfolio and determine if and how much academic credit is to be granted, as well as whether the credit should be given for a specific course, or for non- course-specific credit. The consensus recommendation of the reviewers must be approved by the department chair(s) and dean(s) of the college(s) concerned, and then will be forwarded to the Office of the Registrar to transcript recommended credit.

The portfolio development course, IDST 250, may be repeated for a maximum of three credits. The total number of Prior Learning credits applied toward a WKU credential cannot exceed a quarter of the total hours in the credential. For additional information, please contact: the School of Professional Studies at (270) 745-8973 or visit [www.wku.edu/pla](http://www.wku.edu/pla).

## 2. Catalog statement of proposed policy:

WKU offers multiple pathways for undergraduate students to earn course specific credit for prior learning provided that the experience is aligned with course and program learning outcomes.

**Eligibility:** To earn credit for prior learning, a student must be enrolled and registered at Western Kentucky University.

**Application of Credit:** Credit for prior learning shall be applied to degree or program requirements in the same manner as credits earned through the completion of the equivalent courses at WKU. Credit will be applied for WKU course equivalents when students demonstrate mastery of course objectives. Credit will be counted only once for the same course.

**Residency:** Credits for demonstrated knowledge earned through any prior learning method do not fulfill WKU residency requirements.

**Grading:** Credit awarded by prior learning assessment at WKU shall receive a CR grade. Letter grades will not be used. The transcript will not indicate an unsuccessful attempt to earn credit for prior learning.

**Transcription:** Credit awarded for prior learning will be transcribed indicating the method of prior learning assessment used.

### **Examination and Proficiency Credit**

WKU provides several opportunities for students to earn credit through examinations. The credit hours earned through these examinations will count toward graduation, but will not apply to WKU residence credit or be used to compute grade point averages since a letter grade will not be given. Additional information about the exams may be obtained by clicking on the underlined course title in the charts below.

Although students may receive credit hours through any of these ~~seven programs~~ programs, duplicate credit may not be earned. For example, a student who earns credit hours for English 100 through the AP program may not receive additional credit for English 100 on the ACT exam, on a departmental exam, or on the CLEP exams.

High school seniors should take CLEP and ACT or SAT examinations by February at the latest so the results may be available for use in selecting courses during the March or June Topper Orientation Program.

The Office of the Registrar notifies students of their eligibility for credit upon receiving an application for admission and the official test score report. Students will receive the credit during the first semester of enrollment.

Credit awarded for these exams will apply toward the WKU ~~General general eE~~ Education categories as indicated. For detailed information refer to the ~~General Education~~ WKU Colonnade program section of the catalog. Credit for these exams will also apply toward the Kentucky Statewide General Education categories as indicated. The categories are: Written Communications (WC) and Oral Communications (OC), Arts and Humanities (AH), Social and Behavioral Sciences (SB), Natural Sciences (NS), Natural Sciences Lab (SL) and Quantitative Reasoning (QR).

### Advanced Placement Program (AP)

**NO PROPOSED CHANGES TO EXISTING STATEMENTS.**

### Accounting, Pilot and Bridge Project (APBP)

**NO PROPOSED CHANGES TO EXISTING STATEMENTS.**

### ACT or SAT English and Math Proficiency Credit

**NO PROPOSED CHANGES TO EXISTING STATEMENTS.**

### Cambridge International Examinations (AICE)

**NO PROPOSED CHANGES TO EXISTING STATEMENTS.**

### College Level Examination Program (CLEP)

**NO PROPOSED CHANGES TO EXISTING STATEMENTS.**

### International Baccalaureate

**NO PROPOSED CHANGES TO EXISTING STATEMENTS.**

### Departmental Credit By Examination

Students enrolled at WKU may also receive credit on the basis of departmental examinations, also called departmental comprehensive proficiency assessments. A student may take a departmental comprehensive proficiency assessment in any course listed as satisfying a requirement in any of the categories of general education. Departments may offer departmental comprehensive proficiency assessments in other courses at their discretion.

To assess student proficiency, a department may adopt either a standardized examination available from outside the University or develop an appropriate comprehensive proficiency examination or demonstration within the department by means of a faculty committee. Departmental comprehensive proficiency assessments may be written, oral, or both.

To be eligible to take a departmental comprehensive proficiency assessment, a student must be fully matriculated, in good standing, and regularly enrolled at WKU. Credits ~~earned in this manner will be recorded on the student's official transcript as non-residence credit but~~ will not be considered as a part of the normal semester load in the term in which the examination is taken. A student may not register for a departmental comprehensive proficiency assessment for a course while he or she is enrolled in that course. A student may not take a departmental comprehensive proficiency assessment in a course which has been previously taken at WKU or at another accredited institution.

A student desiring to take a departmental comprehensive proficiency assessment must complete an appropriate request form in the Office of the Registrar. A fee of \$25 per credit hour must be paid at the time the form is submitted. The form must be submitted to the Registrar prior to the end of the third week of classes in either the fall or spring semesters. The Registrar will notify the appropriate department of the

student's request. The department will administer the comprehensive proficiency assessment during the seventh week of classes. The student must obtain the specific time and place for testing from the department chair.

After the assessment has been completed, the department chair will notify the Registrar in writing as to whether or not the student demonstrated acceptable proficiency. If the department recommends credit be granted, the semester hours earned will be recorded on the official transcript. However, the credit will not be used in computing the grade point average since letter grades will not be assigned.

## **Military Service Credit**

### **NO PROPOSED CHANGES TO EXISTING STATEMENTS.**

#### **Agreements and Partnerships**

~~The University may enter articulation [PR1] agreements with state or national agencies to award credit for prior learning.~~

#### **KDE Articulated Credit Pathways**

WKU has an articulation agreement with the Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Career and Technical Education (KDE) to allow students who complete a career pathway and who meet designated criteria to earn college credit at WKU. Students may earn college credit through the Articulated Credit Pathways upon attaining the required score on the CTE End-of-Program Assessment. Earned credit will not count toward WKU residence credit. There will be no charge to students for any articulated credit covered in this agreement. To be eligible for credit, a student must:

- complete a minimum of 3 high school credits for courses aligned with the Secondary (K-12) State-Approved Career Pathway in the subject area with a GPA of 3.0 or higher or letter grade of B or higher,
- pass the aligned CTE End-of-Program Assessment, inform WKU that they were part of the articulation agreement with their secondary school by supplying appropriate documentation from that school's designated personnel,
- and enroll at WKU within 5 years of graduation.
- Additionally, some departments may require a student to complete credit hours in their particular major at WKU before credit may be awarded i.e., Early Childhood Education, Interior Design and Fashion Merchandising, and Hospitality Management and Dietetics.

Evaluation of credit and recommendations are determined by the appropriate WKU academic department. The corresponding course and the credit hours which may be earned appears below. Credit hour equivalencies are reviewed as needed by academic units.

#### **Departmental Articulation and Partnership Agreements**

~~WKU's colleges, and academic departments may enter agreements or establish partnerships with external agencies to award credit for prior learning. Partnerships and agreements for prior learning credit must be approved by the Dean's Office (if applicable) and Office of the Provost [PR2]. The Office of the Registrar will notate details regarding the agreement and/or partnership with the specific academic program's information within the catalog.~~

## Prior Learning Assessment Portfolio Evaluation

Students who have acquired extensive college-level knowledge and skills in academic areas including but not limited to employment, military experience, civic activities, volunteer service, organizational training or workshops, or other non-traditional means may be granted credit for the knowledge and skills they have gained through nationally standardized exams (AP, CLEP, IB, ACE, etc.), agreements and partnerships, departmental assessments proficiency assessments, or portfolio development and evaluation. This policy focuses on portfolio development and evaluation. ~~This policy focuses on portfolio development and evaluation,~~ while referencing national and departmental assessments when appropriate.

~~Prior learning by p~~Portfolio evaluation is considered an opportunity for students to demonstrate ~~their~~ knowledge and is not a guarantee of credit for experience. Students will complete a portfolio of their prior learning as a part of a portfolio development course, ~~IDST 250~~, taught by an instructor who has undergone training by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). Please note: the three credits earned in ~~IDST 250~~the portfolio course will count toward residence, while the prior learning credit awarded will be ~~treated as~~ non-residence credit. The portfolio, with varying forms of documents, will tie ~~course content~~ learning outcomes to the knowledge and skills students have acquired through experiential learning. Credit earned will depend upon the student's ability to produce a portfolio that communicates learning outcomes consistent with the WKU mission on the level expected for the credit sought. Before registering for this course, students will consult with his or her advisor ~~the instructor to evaluate~~ to discuss the feasibility of seeking credit in a particular area. Portfolio courses are available based on student need. Currently, IDST 250 is the only approved portfolio course available for students to enroll for credit evaluation. The student and/or advisor should contact the School of Leadership & Professional Studies to request enrollment in the course prior to the start of the semester or term.

~~The student will identify a maximum of two content areas for which credit is being sought, and his or her~~The portfolio will be submitted to two full-time WKU faculty members, at least one from each area for which the student is seeking credit, upon successful completion of the course. These faculty experts will review the portfolio and determine if and how much academic credit is to be granted, as well as whether the credit should be given for a specific course, or for non- course-specific credit. The consensus recommendation of the reviewers must be approved by the department chair(s) and dean(s) of the college(s) concerned, and then will be forwarded to the Office of the Registrar to transcript recommended credit.

~~The portfolio development course, IDST 250, may be repeated for a maximum of three credits.~~The total number of credits earned through portfolio evaluation ~~Prior Learning credits~~ applied toward a WKU credential cannot exceed a quarter of the total hours in the credential. For additional information, ~~please contact: the School of Professional Studies at (270) 745-8973 or visit~~ www.wku.edu/pla.

## **Alternative Forms of Credits for Prior Learning**

WKU's colleges and academic departments may agree to award undergraduate credit based on verified trainings, ACE credit, or certification evaluated by program faculty. Credit based on trainings, certifications, etc. must meet rigor of upper- or lower-division courses and coordinated through the Office of the Registrar.

**3. Rationale for proposed policy revision:** The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) recommends the phrase “Prior Learning Assessment” be changed to Credit for Prior Learning to encompass all avenues a student may earn credits for prior learning. WKU’s existing PLA policy (implemented in 2014) had not been revisited since University College merged with the College of Education & Behavioral Science and was tied to a portfolio evaluation which limited the awarding of credit across disciplines. The proposed policy allows for departments and schools to explore partnership agreements agencies and organizations to award prior learning credit using the existing MOA/MOU agreement process.

**4. Impact of proposed policy revision on existing academic or non-academic policies:**

4.1 Impact on policies: None.

4.2 Impact on populations that may be affected: None.

**5. Proposed term for implementation:** Fall 2024

**6. Dates of prior committee approvals:**

UCC Academic Policy Subcommittee (if applicable) October 31, 2023

Undergraduate Curriculum Committee November 14, 2023

Faculty Senate

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