

# Credit for Prior Learning Policy - Graduate

---

UWL appreciates and values students' learning experiences outside of the confines of UWL's sponsored credit instruction. Students may be awarded credit for their previous graduate-level learning in a variety of ways including but not limited to transfer coursework, military training, industry-certified and assessed credentials or licensures, and UWL-administered prior learning assessments. These methods of gaining credit for prior learning (CPL) foster educational attainment and can shorten time to degree or credential completion. Students should work with their graduate program director to identify possible pathways to gaining credit for their graduate-level knowledge.

## Credit by transfer

To be considered for graduate transfer credit at UWL, these requirements must be met:

1. Transfer credits will not be accepted with grades lower than "B" (not "BC" or "B-") or equivalent nor with grades of "pass." Staff from the Admissions Office may assist in evaluation of courses from international institutions.
2. The institution offering the course must be regionally or nationally accredited at the graduate level for a domestic institution, or internationally recognized for an international institution.
3. The course must be acceptable for graduate credit toward a graduate degree or certificate at the offering institution and must be appropriate to a degree or certificate at UWL.
4. The course must appear as a graduate course on the student's graduate transcript from the offering institution. All transfer credit processed from quarter-hour institutions will be converted to semester credits at UWL. Similarly, course work measured in units will be converted to semester credits. This will ensure students will receive the equivalent number of credits. To make the quarter-hour to semester-hour conversion, UWL multiplies quarter credits by 0.666. For example, if a student has 40 quarter credits ( $40 \times 0.666 = 26.64$ ), the student will receive 27 semester credits.
5. Credit for prior learning that has been internally reviewed, assessed and transcribed as a course equivalent by any University of Wisconsin institution will be considered for transfer credit by UWL. All other credit for prior learning awarded credits by non-UW institutions may need additional explanation or evaluation by UWL subject matter experts and may require additional fees.

Any graduate credit transfer must be approved by the graduate program director. As described above, the number of credits awarded across all forms of Credit for Prior Learning may be up to 1/3 of the total credits in the graduate program that the student will be pursuing at UWL. Students may request to transfer up to three additional credits under extraordinary circumstances. The additional three credits must be approved first by the graduate program director and then by the Graduate Council. Graduate programs with articulation agreements with other institutions (<https://www.uwlax.edu/academic-affairs/resources/articulation-agreements/>) may accept a greater proportion of graduate credits in transfer.

Graduate program directors have discretion in evaluating proposed transfer credits and determining if graduate courses taken at other institutions may apply to a student's program of study at UWL. In addition to reviewing an official graduate transcript, graduate program directors may request to review a course syllabus, written assignments,

and examinations to assist them in their evaluations. Other factors that may be considered include the method of course delivery and course format. Individual program directors may have program-specific information on credit transfer policies and procedures.

Graduate program directors should communicate their approval of any transfer credits for incoming students to Admissions. If previously-completed credits are approved for transfer after a student has been admitted, the graduate program director should inform the academic services director for their college. Graduate students currently enrolled at UWL must secure approval from their graduate program director in advance of enrollment at another institution for such course work to transfer back to UWL.

UWL requires transcripts be sent directly from the issuing institution(s). UWL will not accept transcripts that come directly from the student and/or those marked "Issued to Student" unless the transcript(s) remains sealed in an envelope stamped by the issuing institution(s). Graduate applicants should submit transcripts to UWL Admissions. Current graduate students wishing to transfer in credits completed while enrolled at UWL should request those transcripts be sent to Records & Registration.

Requests for an exception to these policies should be directed to Graduate & Extended Learning.

## Credit for military training and service

Graduate students at UWL may earn graduate-level credit for completion of advanced individual military training, or for military service school credits, following the recommendations of the American Council on Education. Credit for vocational/technical training or in a military occupational specialty will not be accepted. The Joint Services Transcript (JST) is the basic document used to evaluate graduate transfer credits. To request a copy of their transcript, students should visit the Joint Services Transcript (<https://jst.doded.mil/official.html>) site. Air Force enlisted personnel will receive their official professional military education transcript from the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) (<https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Barnes/CCAF/>).

Credit for military training and service is guided by WI Act 59 and WI Act 147. Students are strongly encouraged to consult with their graduate program director and the UWL Veteran Services Office before making determinations regarding prior military credit. Students who are given credits that may not pertain directly to their program could be disadvantaged for financial aid purposes or other professional groups or designations.

## Credit for professional/industry learning

In some disciplines, industry-certified programs, assessments, or licensures may allow for credits awarded toward a student's specific graduate degree requirements. These industry certified credentials must be verifiable and are up to individual UWL departments to determine validity and applicability to a student's program of study. Additional documentation or assessments may be required to validate learning and will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Students should contact their graduate program director if they feel they have a certification which may apply toward their program of study in this way.

## Credit by institutional prior learning assessment

UWL graduate programs may develop assessment tools to evaluate student learning specific to those programs. Assessments may include written challenge exams, skills demonstration exams, portfolio

presentations or a combination of these. A small non-refundable fee will be charged for each assessment and is payable to the Cashiers Office. The fee must be paid prior to attempting the assessment and will go to the department offering the assessment.

## **Additional limitations and exceptions**

Credit for prior learning can only be awarded if the student has not enrolled in (beyond date of record) or completed the course already at UWL.

The number of credits awarded for all forms of credit for prior learning, in total, may be up to 1/3 of the total credits in the program that the student will be pursuing at UWL, plus a potential additional 3 credits of transfer credit (see below). This maximum may vary in the case of special consortia or collaborative degree programs recognized by the Graduate Council. Students pursuing a post-master's degree (e.g., Ed.S., Ed.D., or DPT), may be awarded no more than 15 credits worth of credit for prior learning from any source.

All credits awarded for prior learning must have been earned within the timeframe indicated by the graduate seven year completion policy (<http://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/academicpolicies/timelimitdegreecompletion/>).

Students with questions about this policy or who wish to request an exception should contact Graduate & Extended Learning.

## **Transcription of credit for prior learning**

Upon admission to UWL, awarded credits will be posted to the term that corresponds with the admitted term or when the transfer course was completed. If a student is awarded credit after admission to UWL, the credits earned will be transcribed to the term the assessment was evaluated.

Transfer courses are listed under the heading "Transfer Credits" on the student's transcript along with the grades earned. All other credit awarded through credit for prior learning processes are listed under the heading "Other Credits."

If a student attempts a credit by institutional prior learning assessment and is unsuccessful, no record of the attempt will be noted on the student's UWL transcript. Course credit earned via credit for prior learning does not carry grade points and does not factor into the UWL resident grade point average, although some programs utilize transfer grades when determining GPA for admission purposes. Credits for prior learning may be used for Satisfactory Academic Progress calculations by Financial Aid. Course credit earned via credit for prior learning does not factor into UWL enrollment status.