

Assignment of Academic Credit at Indiana Wesleyan University

Background

The credit hour is a unit of measure for academic achievement in higher education. The credit hour is foundational to academic credentialing. For example, to earn a bachelor's degree from Indiana Wesleyan University (IWU), a student must complete at least 124 credit hours, as detailed in the catalog. At IWU, academic credit is always associated with courses of study, with a group of associated courses making up a coherent curriculum of study. IWU credit may be awarded for courses that are transferred in, for competencies demonstrated through examination, or for knowledge and skills acquired through life and work experience, but such credit is always accounted for as prior completion of a particular course in a given curriculum.

The credit hour is also a unit of measure for the awarding of federal financial aid. For this reason, the United States Department of Education has established the following definition of a credit hour.

A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally-established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than:

- (1) one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or*
- (2) at least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other activities as established by an institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading toward to the award of credit hours. 34CFR 600.2 (11/1/2010)*

Policy and Practice

IWU awards academic credit in accord with the federal definition of the credit hour. For term courses that follow the traditional academic calendar, the amount of direct faculty instruction and out-of-class student work assumed for the average student conforms to paragraph (1) of the federal definition. Courses that include practicums and internships include less direct faculty instruction but more out-of-class student work with the total student investment of labor conforming to paragraph (2) of the federal definition. Non-term courses that have shorter-than-traditional durations on the calendar may include the same amount of direct faculty instruction and student labor concentrated into fewer days, or may have fewer hours of direct faculty instruction with greater investment of student labor outside of class, or may have asynchronous contact between faculty and students as in online courses. In every case, the intended learning outcomes for the non-term course are identical to those of any equivalent term course and the anticipated investment of student labor is comparable, in accord with the opening phrase of the federal definition.

Assurance of Integrity

Integrity in the awarding of academic credit is assured through the process by which courses are added to the university catalog. The academic department that is sponsoring the new course provides a description of the intended learning outcomes for the course and a justification for the amount of credit requested for the course. The Curriculum Committee (or equivalent) and the Academic Affairs Committee (or equivalent) of the appropriate principal academic unit (college) of the university either certifies the amount of credit to be awarded for the course or requires adjustment to either the intended learning outcomes or the amount of credit to be awarded until the credit assignment is

appropriate to the intended learning outcomes and the anticipated investment of faculty and student labor as reflected in the federal standard.

Transfer of Credit

Transfer of credit policies vary somewhat by principal academic unit with the university. The appropriate sections of the university catalog are reproduced below.

College of Adult and Professional Studies

Credit is granted for work with a satisfactory grade ("C" or above) taken at an approved college or university accredited at the same level, provided the courses are applicable to the curriculum the student wishes to pursue at Indiana Wesleyan University. An "approved college or university" generally refers to those institutions that are accredited by a regional accrediting body or the Association for Biblical Higher Education. The following are exceptions to the transfer policy and credits earned are not counted toward the honors GPA:

- Credits from International Business College and ITT Technical Institute are transferable into undergraduate programs only through evaluation of each individual course. Students are responsible to supply course syllabi for this evaluation. A maximum of 62 semester hours may be accepted through this process from these two institutions.
- Indiana Wesleyan University accepts official transcripts from the American Council on Education (ACE) located in Washington, D.C. ACE evaluates and provides credit recommendations for educational offerings for a significant number of corporate universities and other extra-institutional learning providers.
- Courses from nonaccredited colleges and universities and from schools/colleges/universities not accredited at the same level, such as proprietary business schools, vocational/technical schools, or other single purpose institutions may be presented through the evaluation of assessed learning process. A maximum of 40 hours may be accepted through assessed learning and/or ACE credit.

The University Registrar is responsible for approving the transferability of all credits. Credit hours accepted in transfer are recorded, but quality points and grades are omitted and used only for the determination of graduating with honors. All credits are accepted as semester credits. Quarter credits are converted to semester credits using the two-thirds conversion ratio.

Credit through examination (CLEP, DSST, AP, institutional examinations) or assessed learning is not accepted in transfer from another institution's transcript. Credit through examination is awarded through Indiana Wesleyan University with official test scores from an official testing center. Credit from nontraditional learning by life experience is awarded through the IWU's assessed learning process. The Associate Vice President of Student Services is responsible for the assessment of all nontraditional learning, and the University Registrar is responsible for approving the transcription of any credits that result.

Transcripts from foreign institutions may need to be sent to an outside agency for evaluation and determination of transferable credits, degrees, and GPA. If this outside review is necessary, students are responsible for the initiation of this evaluation and for any fees incurred during the process. Applications for this service are available to the student through the university.

College of Arts and Sciences and Pre-Licensure Nursing

Students who have attended other accredited colleges or universities may transfer credit toward their education at IWU. Transcripts of all other university work must be submitted directly to the Indiana Wesleyan University Registrar's Office from the office of the registrar at the college or university previously attended. Transcripts delivered by hand or received from another party are not official and cannot be used for purposes of transfer work. The university registrar is responsible to approve the transferability of all credits.

To earn a degree from IWU, undergraduate students must take the last 30 semester hours of course credit needed to fulfill degree requirements at IWU. Students pursuing transfer course options toward the

end of their college career should seek assistance from the Registrar's Office to ensure they are in compliance with this policy.

Credit is granted for work with a satisfactory grade ("C" or above) taken at an approved college or university that are accredited by a regional accrediting body or the Association for Biblical Higher Education (formerly the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges). If there is no applicable course at IWU or within the student's major, the credits may be applied as elective credit. Credit hours accepted in transfer are recorded, as part of the student's official academic record. All graded qualified coursework transferred and transcribed are used solely in the calculation of the honors GPA.

Credit taken by correspondence from a regionally accredited institution may be applied toward a degree at Indiana Wesleyan University, for a maximum of 12 semester hours accepted.

Credits from unaccredited schools, colleges and universities and from schools/colleges/universities not accredited by recognized accredited agencies—such as proprietary business schools, vocational/technical schools, or other single purpose institutions may be assessed individually for possible credit. The number of credits transferable from such institutions will be limited to two years (62 semester hours).

Credits earned from international institutions will require submission of transcripts and course syllabi for external evaluation by Education Credentials Evaluators (ECE). For more information about this organization, please visit their Web site (<https://www.ece.org/>).

Post-Licensure Nursing

Credit is granted for work with a satisfactory grade ("C" or above) taken at an approved college or university accredited at the same level, provided the courses are applicable to the curriculum the student wishes to pursue at Indiana Wesleyan University. An "approved college or university" generally refers to those institutions that are accredited by a regional accrediting body or the Association for Biblical Higher Education. The following are exceptions to the transfer policy:

1. Credits from International Business College and ITT Technical Institute are transferable only through evaluation of each individual course. Students are responsible to supply course syllabi for this evaluation. A maximum of 62 semester hours (of which no more than 40 may be in Nursing) may be accepted through this process from these two institutions. (Credit earned in this way is not counted toward the honors GPA.)
2. Indiana Wesleyan University accepts official transcripts from the American Council on Education (ACE) located in Washington, D.C. ACE evaluates and provides credit recommendations for educational offerings for a significant number of corporate universities and other extra-institutional learning providers.
3. Courses from non-accredited colleges and universities, and from schools/colleges/universities not accredited at the same level, such as proprietary business schools, vocational/technical schools, or other single purpose institutions may be presented through the evaluation of assessed learning process. A maximum of 40 hours may be accepted through assessed learning and/or ACE credit.
4. The following pertain to applicants to the Post-licensure Nursing program:
 - Applicants with a diploma from a State Board of Nursing accredited hospital school of nursing may be eligible to apply for credit through the diploma evaluation process. A maximum of 40 semester hours may be awarded through this process.
 - Applicants who have earned an A.S. in Nursing or equivalent degree at a proprietary school which holds a national accreditation are eligible to apply per the Indiana Wesleyan admission policy. Supporting science courses and core nursing courses may transfer up to a maximum of 40 semester hours.

The University Registrar is responsible for approving the transferability of all credits. Credit hours accepted in transfer are recorded, but quality points and grades are omitted and used only for the determination of graduating with honors. All credits are accepted as semester credits. Quarter credits are converted to semester credits using the two-thirds conversion ratio.

Credit through examination (CLEP, DSST, AP, institutional examinations) or assessed learning is not accepted in transfer from another institution's transcript. Credit through examination is awarded through Indiana Wesleyan University with official test scores from an official testing center. Credit from nontraditional learning by life experience is awarded through the IWU's assessed learning process. The Associate Vice President of Student Services is responsible for the assessment of all nontraditional learning, and the University Registrar is responsible for approving the transcription of any credits that result.

Transcripts from foreign institutions may need to be sent to an outside agency for evaluation and determination of transferable credits, degrees, and GPA. If this outside review is necessary, students are responsible for the initiation of this evaluation and for any fees incurred during the process. Applications for this service are available to the student through the university.

Graduate Studies in Nursing

The university may allow a maximum of nine credits in transfer to the graduate nursing programs. Transfer of credit will be determined by the Division Chair of the Division of Graduate Studies in Nursing or designee.

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The University Registrar is responsible for approving the transferability of all credits. Credit hours accepted in transfer are recorded, but quality points and grades are omitted. All credits are accepted as semester credits. Quarter credits are converted to semester credits using the two-thirds conversion ratio.

Transcripts from foreign institutions - are sent to an outside agency for evaluation and determination of transferable credits, degrees, and GPA. Students are responsible for the initiation of this evaluation and for any fees incurred during the process. Applications for this service are available to the student through the university.

Wesley Seminary

The university may allow a maximum of nine credits in transfer to the Master of Arts programs and a maximum of 27 hours into the Master of Divinity program provided the transfer work falls within seven years prior to admission. Transfer of credit will be determined by the Dean of Wesley Seminary.

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The University Registrar is responsible for approving the transferability of all credits. Credit hours accepted in transfer are recorded, but quality points and grades are omitted. All credits are accepted as semester credits. Quarter credits are converted to semester credits using the two-thirds conversion ratio.

Transcripts from foreign institutions - may need to be sent to an outside agency for evaluation and determination of transferable credits, degrees, and GPA. If this outside review is necessary, students are responsible for the initiation of this evaluation and for any fees incurred during the process. Applications for this service are available to the student through the university.

Credit by Exam

Credit through examination (CLEP/DANTES/Advance Placement) may only be awarded with official test scores from an official testing center and an Indiana Wesleyan University individual assessment. The maximum number of credits awarded shall be limited to a total of 40 semester hours for the baccalaureate degrees and 18 semester hours for the associate degrees, and ordinarily will not be applied to upper-division requirements in the major (junior and senior levels). It is the responsibility of the student to obtain approval from the appropriate division for the application of credits to the majors.

Assessment of Prior Learning

Indiana Wesleyan University assesses students' non-credited learning for academic credit toward an undergraduate degree. Non-credited learning is that which has taken place outside the traditional college classroom. The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), an educational association founded in 1974 to promote the acceptance of the awarding of university credit for experiential learning, has led the way in developing and implementing assessment techniques. Indiana Wesleyan University uses the guidelines developed by CAEL.

The student-prepared Prior Learning Assessment portfolio is the most commonly accepted method used to evaluate non-credited learning. These portfolios are collections of narratives and documentation which articulate a student's academically relevant, non-university learning. Portfolios can vary greatly in form and content, but in their preparation all students assume the responsibility for self-analysis, preparation, and presentation. The preparation itself is a learning experience.

At Indiana Wesleyan University the purpose of the portfolio is twofold:

- The portfolio enables Indiana Wesleyan University to evaluate and assign university credit for a student's university-level learning. No grades are assigned; only credit awarded.
- The portfolio represents a learning plan which helps integrate prior learning experience with the student's educational and professional objectives.

The student is responsible to develop the portfolio independently, following guidelines provided by the Coordinator of Prior Learning Assessment. The PLA Portfolio Instructions include all information necessary to prepare and submit material for evaluation. All assessment of items submitted is performed by faculty assessors whose knowledge and expertise qualify them to evaluate learning gained through experience.

The portfolio will be viewed only by those who have an official reason for doing so: the assessment staff, faculty evaluators, and accrediting association members. Any data from portfolios that may be made public will be generalized and will in no way be attributed to an individual unless the individual student has given a signed authorization. Students are also advised not to include any materials in the portfolio that will violate the legal and moral rights to privacy of other individuals.

In preparing the portfolio, the student must pause and recollect a history of learning and growth in order to develop a meaningful "learning autobiography." The student describes and analyzes learning experiences and then provides documentation that clarifies and validates the learning, e.g., letters, statements, products of work according to the PLA Portfolio Instructions.

The Indiana Wesleyan University Student Honesty policy also applies to the Prior Learning Assessment Portfolio.

Undergraduate students accepted to or enrolled in the General Studies associate degree program or any of the baccalaureate degree completion programs are eligible to complete a Prior Learning Assessment portfolio. Graduate students may not apply for prior learning credits. Credit hours awarded may be counted toward general education or elective requirements as applicable to the undergraduate degree. Baccalaureate students may earn a maximum of 40 hours of credit through the portfolio; General Studies associate degree students may earn a maximum of 18 hours. Undergraduate students may use portfolio credit to accrue toward the 60 hours of credit required for admission to the core curriculum.

The student must be in good standing at the university, both financially and academically, when a portfolio is submitted. Applicants denied entry into a degree program are not eligible to complete the portfolio process. In addition, students who are suspended from the program may not complete the portfolio process.