Proposal to Standardize Offering UA University Credit for UA Study Abroad Programs

Originally submitted by UA Global, 3/29/19; approved with changes by the Curriculum & Policies Subcommittee, 8/27/19; approved with additional changes by Undergraduate Council, 9/10/19; approved by CAAC, 9/24/19; approved by Provost’s Council, 10/21/19

Definitions (See Appendix A for further information)

University credit is the term used to identify all credit offered by the University of Arizona with the exception of Special Examination for Credit. Only the grades of courses taken for University credit and by Special Examination for Grade are used in calculating the grade-point-average (GPA).

https://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/credit-definitions

Exchange Program. Program where students study abroad at one of UA’s partner institutions, pay tuition at UA, and apply UA financial aid.

Arizona Abroad Location. Partnership programs where students take UA courses offered on the partner’s campus or online, courses offered by the partner, or a combination thereof. Students can apply UA financial aid.

Faculty-led or Customized Program. Programs that are developed by a UA academic department where the department has curricular oversight of the courses offered. Students can apply UA financial aid.

Proposed Policy Changes

Departments are permitted to offer UA University Credit for coursework completed on UA Approved Study Abroad Programs including faculty-led/customized programs, exchange programs, and Arizona Abroad Locations where some or all of the courses are taught by local faculty. [This is simply a statement of existing practice]. Departments/Colleges currently offering UA University Credit for study abroad courses taught by non-UA/partner faculty include Communication, The School of Government and Public Policy, Russian and Slavic Studies, Spanish & Portuguese, French and Italian, The School of Middle Eastern and North African Studies, Latin American Studies, English, Critical Languages, Public Health, Geography, and Ecology and Evolutionary Biology.

UA Study Abroad proposes to standardize this process to ensure quality and consistency. In order to do so, we propose the following language changes to existing UA policy:

- Proposed language change to Units in Residence – University Credit Requirement: A minimum of 30 units of University Credit taken in residence (a student’s home campus) from The University of Arizona is required for the bachelor’s degree. It is further required that 18 of the final 30 units offered toward the degree be University Credit. Add clause: Additionally, units earned as University Credit as part of UA Approved Study Abroad Programs will not count toward the minimum of 30 units in residence.

- Proposed language change to Acceptability of Undergraduate Transfer Credit: The evaluation of course work completed at another institution or exam credit from an approved organization will be based only on an official transcript from the offering institution or organization. Preapproved coursework completed on UA Approved Study Abroad Programs will not be
considered transfer credit under this policy and will be awarded UA University Credit.

- Courses offered as University Credit as part of UA Approved Study Abroad Programs will be preapproved by the Head of the UA offering department or unit.

- Proposed addition to Acceptability of Undergraduate Transfer Credit policy: Grades from other institutions are not included in the calculation of the University of Arizona grade-point average. Grades awarded for units earned as University Credit as part of UA Approved Study Abroad Programs are included in the calculation of the University of Arizona grade-point average.

- Proposed language addition to Graduation Grade Averages and Credit Requirements - University Credit Requirements: University Credit earned on UA Approved Study Abroad Programs will be graded and calculated into a student’s GPA. Add clause: Additionally, units earned as University Credit as part of UA Approved Study Abroad Programs will not count toward the minimum of 30 units in residence.

- Add clause: Courses offered as University Credit as part of UA Approved Study Abroad Programs will be approved by the Head of the UA offering department.

Units in Residence

University Credit Requirement

A minimum of 30 units of University Credit taken in residence (a student’s home campus) from The University of Arizona is required for the bachelor’s degree. It is further required that 18 of the final 30 units offered toward the degree be University Credit. In other words, no more than 12 of the final 30 units to complete the degree may be credit-by-exam (i.e., CLEP, Special Examination for Credit), or transfer credit. Additionally, units earned as University Credit as part of UA Approved Study Abroad Programs will not count toward the minimum of 30 units in residence. Various departments have specific University Credit requirements for their majors, and students should consult individual departmental information sections for this information.

Acceptability of Undergraduate Transfer Credit

11/13/18 Note: credit may be awarded for prior learning and for course work from non-regionally accredited institutions beginning in Spring 2019.

The determination of acceptability of credit for course work completed at another institution of higher learning is made solely at the discretion of the University of Arizona. The evaluation of course work completed at another institution or exam credit from an approved organization will be based only on an official transcript from the offering institution or organization. Preapproved coursework with department head approval completed on UA Approved Study Abroad Programs will not be considered transfer.
credit under this policy and will be awarded UA University Credit.

General policies:

- Course work of comparable content to University of Arizona courses is usually transferable if it was completed at colleges or universities accredited by regional accreditation associations at the time the course work was completed.
- If course work was completed at a non-regionally accredited school, the student may request that up to two (2) courses be considered for transfer, not to exceed a maximum of 10 credits. See Non-Regionally Accredited Course Work Transfer Policy.
- Requests for credit for Prior Learning (Prior Learning Assessment) are reviewed on a case by case basis. No more than six (6) general elective credits for Prior Learning will apply to the student’s degree. See Credit for Prior Learning Policy.
- Course credit earned at an institution of higher education in another country is generally considered transferable if that international institution is recognized by the Ministry of Education as a degree granting institution or by an American accreditation body.
- Credit is not given for grades lower than a "C".
- Grades from other institutions are not included in the calculation of the University of Arizona grade-point average. Grades awarded for units earned as University Credit as part of UA Approved Study Abroad Programs are included in the calculation of the University of Arizona grade-point average.
- The University of Arizona considers the credit recommendations from the American Council on Education (ACE). Remedial, vocational, and personal development courses are not accepted for credit.
- Physical education (PE) activity courses and Success Courses are accepted for credit; however, no more than three (3) PE activity credits and three (3) Success Course credits will apply as general electives toward the student's degree.
- Proficiency or competency credit-by-exam earned at another college or university is non-transferable.
- The Office of Transfer Credit & Articulation collaborates with appropriate University faculty on the evaluation of transfer credit and determination of transferable learning.
- Courses from Arizona public community colleges are evaluated by the Director of Transfer Curriculum & Articulation and by the appropriate University faculty to determine which courses are acceptable for transfer.
- Transferability of courses of independent study, internship, or practicum are subject to approval by the appropriate faculty at The University of Arizona and may be restricted both in number of units and in degree applicability. Students who have taken community college courses in these categories may petition for an exception.
- Students who lack not more than a one-semester course toward the fulfillment of curriculum and minimum-graduation-average requirements may apply, as the final course to complete the degree, a single one-semester course in residence at another accredited institution. The graduation GPA shown on the transcript will include the grade from the approved course taken in absentia. An anecdotal note will be added to the transcript explaining the difference between the graduation GPA and the cumulative GPA, which will not reflect the course taken in absentia. Permission must be obtained from the academic dean, prior to enrolling for the course, to apply the grade received in such a course toward the graduation average. This provision may be applied also to the required separate average of 2.000 in the major field if prior permission is
obtained from the major advisor and the academic dean.

Applicability of transfer credit to a student's academic curriculum is determined by the academic advisor in the student's major department.

Graduation Grade Averages and Credit Requirements

Graduation Average
A graduation average of 2.000 for all University Credit course work undertaken and for any work satisfied by the Special Examination for Grade is required for the bachelor's degree. Note: The graduation grade average is based only on University Credit grades awarded prior to the graduation date, when all degree requirements have been satisfied. University Credit earned on UA Approved Study Abroad Programs will be graded and calculated into a student's GPA.

Major Average and University Credit Requirement
Majors for undergraduate degrees require a 2.000 or better grade point average (GPA) for all University Credit work in the major as defined on the Academic Advisement Report or for any work in the major satisfied by the Special Examination for Grade. All grades for repeated courses will be calculated in the major GPA, with the exception of grades that have been replaced by the Grade Replacement Opportunity (GRO) and those removed from the grade point average through Second Start or Academic Renewal.

Major course work should include no fewer than 18 units of University Credit. Major course work is defined as the major, pre-major, and/or professional core. Departments may also include supporting foundation course work in the major as appropriate. This requirement applies to all majors in the student's academic program.

For Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Science (BS) Degrees offered in the College of Humanities and College of Social & Behavioral Sciences, no more than 48 units in the major discipline may be applied toward the degree. Excluded from the 48-unit maximum are first-year English composition, the first year (elementary level) of a foreign language, and courses cross-listed with a second academic department if the latter is the home department.

The double use of courses in the major with other degree requirements is subject to University General Education, college, and department policies on double dipping. See the General Education policy and check with your major AND minor advisors for clarification on the double use of any courses. See the Catalog's majors section for a list of approved majors with links to their respective requirements.

Averaging of Grade for Final Non-University Credit Course
Students who lack not more than a one-semester course toward the fulfillment of curriculum and minimum-graduation-average requirements, may apply as the final course to complete the degree, a
single one-semester course in residence at another accredited institution. The graduation GPA shown on
the transcript will include the grade from the approved course taken in absentia. An anecdotal note will
be added to the transcript explaining the difference between the graduation GPA and the cumulative
GPA, which will not reflect the course taken in absentia. Permission must be obtained from the
academic dean, prior to enrolling for the course, to apply the grade received in such a course toward the
graduation average. This provision may be applied also to the required separate average of 2.00 in the
major field if prior permission is obtained from the major advisor and the academic dean.

University Credit Requirement
A minimum of 30 units of University Credit from The University of Arizona is required for the
bachelor's degree. It is further required that 18 of the final 30 units offered toward the degree be
University Credit. Additionally, units earned as University Credit as part of UA Approved Study Abroad
Programs will not count toward the minimum of 30 units in residence. Various departments have
specific University Credit requirements for their majors, and students should consult
individual departmental information sections for this information.

Upper-Division Unit Requirement
The University of Arizona recognizes both breadth and depth of knowledge as important characteristics
of a baccalaureate degree. To insure depth of study beyond introductory levels, the University has a
general policy requiring students to complete a minimum of 42 units of upper-division course work for
graduation. This requirement applies to students graduating under the 1991-93 catalog or any subsequent
catalog. The special requirements of some academic programs may necessitate an exception to this
requirement. Some degree programs require fewer than 42 units of upper-division credit. For current
information, students should consult their advisors, the departmental information sections for this information.

Elective Credit Maximums
No more than three (3) Physical Education activity credits and no more than three (3) Success
Course credits will apply as general elective credit toward a bachelor's degree.

Credit by Examination Credit Maximum
A maximum of 60 units toward a bachelor's degree may be earned through credit by examination.

UA University Credit for Undergraduate Study Abroad Course Work: Standard
Policies and Procedures

1. With departmental approval, UA Study Abroad will run a pilot program to be
reevaluated after 4 years where study abroad courses will be pre-articulated and
given UA direct course equivalents.
2. Students accepted into a UA Approved Study Abroad Program will be registered in
Study Abroad sections of UA courses that have been pre-articulated. (See Appendix
3. UA Study Abroad will facilitate the collection of materials necessary for departments to determine UA direct equivalencies (e.g. instructor CVs, accreditation information for each institution, instructor qualifications (Ph.D., MA, etc. in a relevant discipline), course syllabi, credit hours).

4. Transfer Credit & Articulation will route course syllabi to appropriate faculty using workflow technology for evaluation to UA direct credit.

5. Coursework taken on UA approved study abroad programs will appear on students’ UA transcripts as University Credit, regardless of the grade, with a notation that the credit was earned at a partner institution. Grades will calculate into the students’ term and cumulative GPA. (See Appendix B for further information)

6. Courses for UA Credit cannot be taken on a pass/fail basis. Students may file for a GRO for a course taken abroad if a direct equivalent is available on campus. Students may not take courses abroad for a grade replacement of a course taken on main campus. Student may not petition UA Study Abroad direct credit coursework.

**Rationale**

- Studying abroad should be an accessible part of a student’s UA experience. Standardizing the way UA Credit is offered for UA Approved Study Abroad Programs by pre-articulating partner courses will help students understand how study abroad fits into their degree programs and will enable students to take advantage of their full financial aid package during the semester to study abroad. (See Appendix C for more information on “Academic Fit”)

- Awarding students graded credit ensures that students’ will be appropriately academically focused during their time abroad and will be rewarded for their achievements.

- In order to meet the UA Strategic Plan Pillar 4 goal of being the leader in study abroad, UA must adjust our policies to be in line with peer institutions already awarding resident (University) credit to their students participating in study abroad.

- See Appendix D for information on partner selection and program evaluation.

**Study Abroad Leading Institutions**

The practice of awarding University Credit for study abroad is aligned with the policies of the following leading study abroad institutions that are University of Arizona ABOR peers: University of Arizona ABOR peers University of Texas, Ohio State University, Michigan State University, University of Minnesota, and University of Wisconsin-Madison have similar policies allowing them to award resident (University) credit to their students who participate in Study Abroad Programs. (See Appendix E for more information on institutions offering resident credit for study abroad and for language related to similar policies at these institutions.)

(See Appendix F for responses to Undergraduate Council Member’s Feedback on the Proposal to Accept International Transfer Courses from UA Study Abroad Partner Institutions as University Credit for study abroad.)
Credit.)