Non-Consent Agenda Item:
Approval to amend the Acceptability of Undergraduate Transfer Credit Policies with: (1) new Policy for Non-Regionally Accredited Course Work; and (2) new Policy for Credit for Prior Learning

Effective Term: Spring 2019

Proposed amendments to Acceptability of Undergraduate Transfer Credit
http://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/acceptability-undergraduate-transfer-credit. Note: This is the proposed full revision for this policy. The red text is based on the two proposed policy additions. Other additions to the policy are previously approved policies that will be centralized in one location.

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. Course work completed at another institution or exam scores from an approved organization will be placed on student records based on an official transcript from the offering institution or organization.

General policies:
- Course work of comparable content and scope to University of Arizona curriculum will generally be 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 specific course work be considered for transfer, up to 2 courses, not to exceed a maximum of 10 credits (see policy specifics, p. 2).
- Credit for Prior Learning (Prior Learning Assessment) will be reviewed on a case by case basis. No more than six (6) credits will apply to the student’s degree (see policy specifics, p. 3).
- International transfer credit will generally be considered transferable if the international institution is recognized by their 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.
- The University of Arizona utilizes 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 will work with appropriate University faculty on the evaluation of transfer credit and determination of transferable learning.
- All transfer courses from Arizona public community colleges will be reviewed individually by the Director of Transfer Curriculum & Articulation and by the appropriate University faculty to determine which courses are acceptable for University credit.
- Transferability of courses of independent study, internship, or practicum will be determined by the appropriate faculty at The University of Arizona and may be restricted both in number of units and in degree applicability.
- 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 (link is external) to a student's academic curriculum is determined by the academic advisor in the student’s major department (link is external).

Proposed New Policy: Non-Regionally Accredited Course Work

Course work of comparable content and scope to University of Arizona curriculum will generally be transferable if it was completed at colleges or universities accredited by regional accreditation associations at the time the work was completed. However, if course work was completed at a school not regionally accredited, the student may specifically request that their course work be considered for transfer. The University of Arizona will review course work from non-regionally accredited institutions if the institution is Nationally Accredited as recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). Non-regionally accredited course work will be reviewed for transfer credit based on an official transcript from the offering institution, as well as submission of a syllabus for each individual course for department or college evaluation.

Students must meet the following standards if they are interested in receiving credit for coursework completed at a non-regionally accredited institution:

- Student must be admitted to the university,
- Student must be enrolled in a degree-seeking program, and
- The credit must be usable in the degree plan.

In addition, the following rules apply to non-regionally accredited course work:

- Must be college level learning
- Cannot be calculated in the GPA
- Cannot be calculated as part of enrollment
- Cannot duplicate any previously awarded credit
- Must meet or exceed "C" level work
- Cannot be used to satisfy residency requirements
- Students may submit up to 2 courses, not to exceed a maximum of 10 credits, for review by the appropriate department faculty.

Transferability of course work will be determined by faculty in the appropriate department or college, and the credit awarded may be restricted both in number of units and in degree applicability. Non-regionally accredited course work completed over eight (8) years ago may not apply to a student’s current degree program unless otherwise approved by the major department (as per the Time Limits policy).

Students should consult with their major Academic Advisor for degree applicability. Students must submit syllabi for each course to the Office of Transfer Credit & Articulation for evaluation of credit by the appropriate department or college. Official transcripts must be provided to the Office of the Registrar.

Proposed New Policy: Credit for Prior Learning (Prior Learning Assessment)

Prior Learning is a term educators use to describe learning and experience that an individual acquires outside of a traditional academic environment. This nontraditional learning is
typically not indicated on a transcript and can be acquired through: work experience, workshop or conference participation, in-service training, or involvement in professional organizations. Credit may be awarded for verifiable learning gained through experience—not for the experience itself. Students may also opt to pursue credit by examination options. This policy pertains to Prior Learning that is not credit by examination.

Related to the above, the University of Arizona recognizes Prior Learning with regards to the following methods:

- Workforce training
- Portfolios
- Certification

Students must meet the following standards if they are interested in receiving prior learning credit:

- Student must be admitted to the University,
- Student must be enrolled in a degree-seeking program, and
- The credit must be usable in the degree plan.

In addition, the following rules apply to prior learning credit:

- Must be college level learning
- Cannot be calculated in the GPA
- Cannot be calculated as part of enrollment
- Cannot duplicate any previously awarded credit
- Must meet or exceed “C” level work
- Cannot be used to satisfy pre-requisites
- Cannot be used to satisfy residency requirements
- Cannot be used to satisfy General Education requirements
- Will only count as lower division general elective credit
- Students may receive up to 6 credits maximum, as determined by the appropriate department faculty.

The University of Arizona utilizes the credit recommendations from the American Council on Education (ACE). If awarded, credit for prior learning will be distinguishable on a University of Arizona transcript. It will be granted lower division transfer credit, with a grade of pass/fail as explained on The University of Arizona’s grade policy. In general, credit for prior learning completed over eight (8) years ago may not apply to a student’s current degree program unless otherwise approved by the major department (as reflected in the Time Limits policy).

Students interested in receiving credit for prior learning must first consult with their major Academic Advisor for degree applicability. Students must submit prior learning materials (proof of verifiable learning) to the Office of Transfer Credit & Articulation for evaluation of credit by the appropriate department or college. Prior learning materials should detail content learned (i.e. hours, subjects, texts, relevant documents, completed work, etc.).

Rationale for these new policies:

- Maricopa Community College has proposed a change to Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC) statewide policy in an effort to include non-regionally accredited course work and prior learning credit within the AGEC, at the discretion of the community college.
- These policy changes would ward off undue pressure from state community colleges.
- Like NAU and ASU, we do not currently have policies to accept non-regionally accredited course work nor credit for prior learning. The impetus is that these policies are now relevant in transfer. ASU and NAU will likely adopt policies similar to ours for these types of credit.
We must update the catalog policy to include transfer credit processes in the new office of Transfer Credit/Articulation, as well as processes that have been in existence, but aren’t in the catalog policy yet.

Creating policies concerning credit for prior learning and non-regionally accredited course work are needed to remain at the forefront of national transfer credit trends and transfer student demands (including online students and returning students).

Regarding credit for prior learning (PLA), HLC states that institutions must establish a policy and involve faculty to evaluate any PLA credit. The policy must establish how the credit is being assigned, by whom, whether the credit awarded applies to degree requirements as electives or general education, and what kind of threshold for academic rigor is associated with that assignment of credit. Any PLA credit assigned on a transcript does not carry a grade or count in a student’s GPA.

Here are the commission’s rules on PLA (core components CC and assumed practices AP):

- CC 4.A.2. – Have a formal process to evaluate all the credit you allow on an academic transcript;
- AP A.5.d. – Establish formal policies on acceptance of the PLA credit, with no promises until that credit is evaluated and approved;
- AP B.1.b. – There must be a minimum of 30 of the 120 (baccalaureate) units earned at the institution itself;
- AP B.1.g. – Establish the ‘maximum allowable credit’ under PLA; this must be documented, evaluated and appropriate for level of degree awarded; and typically, may not be any more than 25% of the degree, as established by common practice;
- AP B.1.h – Establish a minimum requirement for PLA in general education, and if PLA is accepted, how much and according to what threshold of rigor and academic success.

At nine of fourteen of our ABOR Peer Institutions, non-regionally accredited courses are evaluated on a case by case basis. The remaining five accept credit from nationally accredited institutions.

Credit for prior learning is also reviewed on a case by case basis at many of our ABOR Peer Institutions. Even the cases where it is “not awarded”, students can appeal to potentially receive credit.

It is more efficient and strategic to handle non-regionally accredited course work and credit for prior learning as formal policies, instead of burdening transfer appeal and general petition processes.

Approvals:
- Undergraduate Council: 10/09/18
- Graduate Council: NA
- Academic Deans: TBA (10/23/18)
- Administrative Review: TBA (11/5/18)
- FS: