



Eastern Kentucky University

Policy and Regulation Library

Academic Regulation: 4.2.1

Responsible Office(s): Provost

Effective: June 1, 2022

Next Review Date: Fall 2025

Academic Regulation: 4.2.1ACR

Academic Credit

Statement

This policy establishes Eastern Kentucky University's standards and procedures for awarding and recognizing academic credit, including credit for transfer coursework, examinations, military experience, and prior learning, in compliance with federal definitions and ECU Policies and Regulations. It ensures consistency and academic integrity in how credit is evaluated, awarded, and recorded. ECU faculty are responsible for the creation, management, assessment, and rigor of ECU courses and for evaluating matriculated credit. The Office of the Registrar is responsible for administrative oversight and the application of academic credit at ECU. Note that Academic Curricula is governed by University Policy: 1.5.4POL Academic Curriculum.

Entities Affected

- Colleges
- Departments
- Registrar
- Graduate School

Procedures

I. Determining the Amount and Level of Academic Credit

Per 34 CFR § 600.2, the United States Department of Education defines a credit hour as the representation of the amount of work required to accomplish student learning outcomes. This federal regulation requires institutions to establish an equivalency that reasonably approximates the following:

“Not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester . . . or the equivalent amount of work over a different period of time.”

EKU adopts a commonly accepted practice in higher education for calculating a credit hour. One credit hour is approximately 750 minutes of instruction per term plus a minimum of two hours of out-of-class work per week during a fifteen-week term (or 1800 minutes per term for alternate term lengths). This practice substantiates a reasonable approximation of the federal definition of a credit hour.

EKU expects that at least an equivalent amount of work as described above will be required in all course categories, including, but not limited to, laboratories, internships, externships, practica, studio education, and cooperative education, as well as all course modalities. Some fields of study, certain types of academic experiences, or different degree levels may require additional contact hours or student work for the assignment of one credit hour.

Faculty have the primary responsibility for determining the level and the number of credit hours to be assigned to coursework, per University Policy: 1.5.4POL Academic Curriculum, which shall be determined at least in part by the learning outcomes and the amount of work such learning outcomes will entail.

EKU accepts non-EKU academic credit as follows: Undergraduate, degree-seeking students may apply up to seventy-five percent (75%) of non-EKU academic credits to an EKU undergraduate degree. Graduate, degree-seeking students may apply up to 33.3% (one-third) of non-EKU credit to an EKU graduate degree. The annual Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs include additional guidance regarding academic credit limitations. Accepted credits may only be applied to program and degree requirements following a review by the appropriate academic department and/or other EKU entity as appropriate. For non-degree students, only credits earned at EKU will be recorded in their academic history.

Zero Credit Hour Courses

To support the transfer of student work, EKU does not offer undergraduate courses at zero credit hours. Graduate-level courses with zero credit hours are only offered as residency or graduate examination requirement courses. Zero-credit hour graduate-level courses are reviewed through the curriculum process managed by the Council for Academic Affairs and in accordance with 1.5.4POL: Academic Curriculum.

Non-Academic, Non-Degree Credentials

EKU offers academic credentials that result in degrees, including associate, baccalaureate, master's, educational specialist, and doctorate degrees, as well as credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels.

EKU also offers non-academic, non-degree credentials, including, but not limited to, workforce credentials, certifications, and badges. These credentials are properly maintained, appropriately advertised, and defined as follows: Non-degree credentials are not construed as carrying academic credit since they carry no credit hour equivalency; they are not recorded on academic transcripts; they cannot be directly applied to another academic credential (i.e., "stacked" without oversight); they are not directly transferable; and they are not eligible for Title IV financial aid.

Other than academic Certificates, EKU does not offer for-credit academic, non-degree

credentials.

II. Credit by Non-EKU Collegiate Transcript

A. Transfer Credit

EKU accepts credits transferred from postsecondary institutions whose accreditation is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, credits earned by examination from nationally recognized tests that meet ECU standards, and awards credits for certain types of military experiences.

International transfer credits are recorded as free elective credits at the recommended level after they have been evaluated by an accepted, outside evaluation agency. Once awarded as free elective credit, students may present this credit to the appropriate academic unit, which may consider application as program credit.

Transfer credit may not be applied to a major course of study if specialized accreditation or other standards prevent such practice.

B. General Education

EKU adheres to the Kentucky statewide General Education Transfer Agreement, a copy of which is on file with CPE, allowing for the block transfer of courses from Kentucky public institutions to satisfy general education degree requirements. ECU will honor transfer general education courses from accredited out-of-state or Kentucky private colleges and universities. Students may be required to provide appropriate documentation, such as school catalog listings of courses with relevant general education designations to the ECU Registrar's Office or the office responsible for coordinating credit evaluations. Once approved, the transfer general education courses will be applied toward the student's ECU general education requirements where needed and as appropriate.

C. Transferring Previously Unevaluated Courses

When an acceptable transfer course, which has never been evaluated before, is presented to ECU for consideration, ECU records the course as unevaluated elective credit.

Unevaluated coursework is routed to the appropriate academic department for approval. The academic department determines if an exact equivalency or subject/discipline elective is appropriate, depending on course content and learning objectives. If no determination can be made, the course will remain a generalized elective credit. In some instances, the academic department may request that the student provide a syllabus to evaluate the course. The academic department, academic advisor, or enrollment counselor may recommend that a course be considered for General Education applicability

even if an exact equivalency is not awarded. Students wishing to appeal the evaluation of transfer credit should consult with the enrollment counselor, the Office of Articulation and Transfer Systems, or the Office of the Registrar.

D. Transferring Courses Taken Elsewhere while Enrolled at ECU

Currently enrolled students who desire to take courses elsewhere and transfer them back to ECU should consult with the enrollment counselor and their academic advisor to establish the course's equivalency. The University does not guarantee transfer course equivalency until the official transfer transcript is received, as established equivalencies may be updated at any time. Students should be aware that there are limits to the number of credit hours a student may earn in any one term (see Catalog, Academic Load). Credit and grades earned in transfer are posted to the student's ECU transcript.

E. Posting of Previous Degrees on an ECU Transcript

Degree-seeking transfer students who have already attained a post-secondary or graduate-level degree will have that earned degree noted in their ECU academic record. Details of the academic work counting toward a degree earned at another institution will not be posted, course by course, onto the ECU transcript; only the earned degree is recorded from the official transfer school transcript.

III. Credit for Prior Learning (Non-Collegiate Learning)

A. Military Credits

Students must submit an official Joint Services Transcript (JST) to receive academic credit for military training and experience. Credit hours will be awarded based on the American Council on Education (ACE) recommendations listed on the official JST. The Office of Military and Veterans' Affairs facilitates the evaluation of military credit.

B. Credit by Academic Agreements

Academic Agreements are governed by ECU Academic Regulation 4.3.17: Academic Agreements. Regarding credit for prior learning at the collegiate level, faculty subject matter experts evaluate non-collegiate training, instruction, certifications, education, credentials, and/or other relevant learning to determine whether a learner has acquired the knowledge or skills equivalent to an ECU course. In those cases, faculty will complete an Academic Agreement per 4.3.17, and the prior learning evidence will be verified by disciplinary faculty and the relevant college before being recorded by the Registrar.

C. Credit by Examination

Credit by examination is an approved method to demonstrate proficiency in

course content areas. Students may earn academic credit by completing an examination in certain undergraduate and graduate courses. Only admitted and active degree-seeking ECU students may have credit by examination recorded onto an ECU transcript. Academic credit earned by external examinations and challenge tests (such as AP, IB, CLEP®) shall not be considered as credit earned at ECU and will not apply toward the residency credit requirement for an associate or baccalaureate degree. Credit awarded through credit by examination is not guaranteed to meet ECU degree requirements since these are program- and college-specific decisions. Credit earned by examination is recorded as “CR” (no letter grade) and has no effect upon the overall GPA. Students must complete all requirements related to the examination, including paying fees if required.

For Examinations Completed Prior to Admission:

- Proficiency examination credit is eligible for transfer to ECU if it is from a nationally-recognized standardized test, earned at a college or university from which ECU accepts transfer credit, or at an ECU-recognized testing site, and is recorded on an official transcript.
- Departmental or institutional specific challenge tests presented on the official transcript of an institution from which ECU accepts transfer credit may be accepted in transfer upon the review and approval of the academic department most closely related to the subject matter.
- Students seeking to have AP or IB credit recorded on their ECU academic record must have score reports sent to the ECU Office of Articulation and Transfer Systems .

For Examinations Completed After Admission:

- A student may attempt to earn credit-by-examination in a specific course only once in a six-month period.
- A student will not receive academic credit for a course specific College Level Examination Program (CLEP®) or departmental examination in an area in which advanced course work has already been completed, and ECU credit recorded.

D. Credit by Portfolio Review

ECU acknowledges that students may have completed education, training classes, and work experiences that result in learning that sufficiently meets or exceeds the course requirements, exhibited via Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). At ECU; therefore, formal recognition of that body of knowledge is warranted upon evaluation by appropriately qualified ECU faculty without taking the particular course.

Portfolio assessment allows admitted ECU students to demonstrate competence in a course and thus meet the course requirements and receive ECU academic credit in those subject areas through one or more of the following

activities: past work, training programs or in-service courses, volunteer service, cultural or artistic pursuits, hobbies and recreational pastimes, community or religious activities, organizational memberships, adult education, non-credit courses, study abroad, military training not evaluated for credit by ACE or other experiences. This list is not meant to be exhaustive.

Credit may not be earned through portfolio assessment for certain types of courses. In addition, credit by portfolio review may not be suitable for application to professionally accredited programs.

The Office of the Provost is responsible for maintaining the portfolio assessment process. Students submit portfolios according to the currently published procedures. Faculty subject matter experts who are affiliated with the educational program responsible for administering the course review the portfolios and determine ECU course equivalencies when appropriate. The Registrar applies the recommended ECU credit.

Definitions

- **Articulation Agreement:** An agreement that defines how collegiate or non-collegiate coursework—whether completed at ECU, another institution, or through recognized non-collegiate learning—is evaluated for academic credit and transferred to, from, or within ECU. Articulation Agreements may be established externally (between ECU and other institutions) or internally (between ECU programs) to ensure consistency in credit evaluation and application and to facilitate seamless academic progression.
- **Non-Collegiate:** Any institution or organization not directly affiliated with an institution of higher education.

Regulation Adoption, Review, and Approval

Regulation Revised

<u>Date</u>	<u>Entity</u>	<u>Action</u>
X/X/2025	X	X
October 18, 2024	University Counsel	Editorial Revision

Regulation Issued

<u>Date</u>	<u>Entity</u>	<u>Action</u>
June 24, 2022	President	Approved