

SUBJECT:	Credit For Prior Learning
REVIEWED/REVISED:	3/2014; 6/2015; 9/2015; 2/2016; 6/2020
PURPOSE:	To communicate NMC's policy and process for evaluation and validation of possible transfer credit from prior learning experiences.
POLICY OWNER:	Vice President of Academic Affairs

SECTION I: Transfer of Credit

The College is committed to working with potential students to maximize transfer credit. The Admissions Office can provide an initial evaluation during the application process. Applicants granted admission will have an official evaluation completed by the Registrar's Office. Links to transfer guides and any articulation agreements with area colleges are available on the College website. Credit for courses taken elsewhere may be accepted for transfer from another college provided:

1. Course credits are listed on the official, electronically verified or raised-seal transcript mailed to the College from the former institution.
2. The educational institution is accredited by a regional accrediting body and, where applicable, the program is approved by the state and is accredited by professional organizations.
3. Course is determined to be comparable to one required in the curriculum or is considered to be appropriate as an elective.
4. Grade of "C -" or better is achieved at the certificate and undergraduate levels and a grade of "B" or better at the graduate level. Grades earned in transfer courses will not be used in determining the student's cumulative grade point average, unless the student has already matriculated and has been given permission to enroll at another institution. All courses accepted for transfer will be noted on the transcript. Such transfer courses will be included in the total number of hours passed.

The Registrar is responsible for interpreting and implementing the transfer of credit policy.

1. The Registrar reviews official transcripts of the student from a regionally accredited educational institutions. In consultation with the Division of Arts & Sciences, the Registrar authorizes transferability of arts and sciences courses. The Program Director is responsible for the determination of the transferability of professional/technical and graduate courses.

2. Courses older than five years will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis for transferability. To maximize the chance of student success in any program, the College recommends that a student retake any course older than five years regardless of whether or not the course is transferable.
3. Syllabi for nursing courses taken previously will be evaluated for transfer of credit if taken within three years of the time of application. Nursing courses between three and five years old will be considered but will not necessarily be awarded credit. Nursing courses five years and older will not be awarded transfer credit. [Note: This does not apply to LPN, MSN or RN advanced-standing applicants.]
4. Courses considered for transfer are reviewed to assure that they are comparable to those required in the curriculum or meet requirements to be used as an elective.
5. Students matriculating who took a three-credit language course will be given two credits for either COM 230 or COM 245 and must take COM 252 Cross-Cultural Service Learning in Health Care for one credit.
6. Students matriculating who are given two credits for COM 320 must take COM 352 Portfolio Development & Integration for one credit.
7. Students matriculating with a bachelor's degree or who took a three-credit public speaking course and a three-credit critical thinking course are awarded two credits for HUM 150 and must take HUM 152 Portfolio Introduction for one credit.
8. Partial credit may be considered with directed study to meet deficiencies.
9. The Registrar will work with the appropriate Dean on a case-by-case basis to determine equivalency for quarter credit hours from transfer institutions.
10. The student and the student's academic advisor are notified in writing by the Registrar of courses recognized for transfer.
11. If the student has a question about any course(s) not being recognized for transfer, such questions are to be directed, in writing, to the Registrar within 30 days of receipt of the College's summary of official transferred courses.
 - *Certificate and Undergraduate Students:* No course with a grade below "C-" is considered for transfer of undergraduate credit.
 - *Graduate Students:* No course with a grade below "B" or "B-" is considered for transfer of graduate credit.

SECTION II: Assessment and Validation of Credit for Prior Learning

Validation of prior learning can be obtained through several methods. Credits earned by validation are not applicable toward the residency requirement. Grades of "CR" will be issued for all credit earned through these methods. In all cases, the appropriate Program Director is responsible for whether or not credit can be earned. In cases where the student is attempting to receive credit for an arts and sciences course, approval must come from both the Program Director and the Dean for Arts & Sciences. All

Professional Portfolio: Credit for Life Experience must have approval of the faculty member(s) with content expertise/Program Director and the Dean of the division in which the course resides.

Validation Methods

A. Placement Testing: Nebraska Methodist College accepts the veracity of the following placement tests, provided the student achieves the minimum required score.

1. Advanced Placement Examination Program (AP). Credit will be given for a score of 3 or above.
2. College Level Examination Program (CLEP). Credit will be given for a score of 50 or above.
3. Excelsior College Examinations. Credit will be given for a grade of C or better.
4. DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST). Credit will be given according to the recommendations given by the American Council on Education (ACE).

B. International Baccalaureate: Nebraska Methodist College offers students college credit for International Baccalaureate (IB) programs on a course-by-course basis, depending on the level, subject and score achieved on the appropriate exam. Courses are evaluated on an individual basis, and credit will be given for those exam scores for IB courses deemed equivalent to courses required for the student's chosen program at NMC. Credit is not granted until students have been admitted and the official report of exam results is received and evaluated. Students must request that an official transcript from The International Baccalaureate Organization be sent directly to NMC Admissions for consideration.

C. Professional Certification: Students may hold certifications from professional organizations that reflect a level of competence and cognitive ability. College credit for certifications will be awarded as block credit (i.e., in one lump sum total) after completion of NMC required courses. Those certifications currently approved as valid for credit in specific programs (provided all other requirements are met) are listed below. Students with certifications potentially relevant to their area of study that are not addressed below may request a review of the certification by the appropriate Program Director to determine if the certification can be awarded credit for relevant program requirements.

- Medical Assistant certification (Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) through the American Association for Medical Assistants (AAMA)) as applied to undergraduate degree completion programs
- Phlebotomy Certification (Certified Phlebotomy Technician through the American Society for Clinical Pathology (PBT (ASCP)) as applied to undergraduate degree completion programs
- Physical Therapist Assistant certification (Registered Physical Therapist Assistant through Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy) as applied to undergraduate degree completion programs

- Radiologic Technology certification (Registered Technologist Radiography (R.T.(R)(ARRT)) through The American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT)) as applied to undergraduate degree completion programs
- Respiratory Care certification (Certified Respiratory Therapist (CRT) through the National Board of Respiratory Care (NBRC)) as applied to undergraduate degree completion programs. Having the RRT credential prior to admission to the Bachelors of Science Degree Completion enables students to receive 6 credits for the RRT professional certification.
- Sonography certification (American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonographers (ARDMS)-registered in at least one learning concentration from among general, ob/gyn, adult echo or vascular) as applied to undergraduate degree completion programs
- Surgical Technology certification (Certified Surgical Technologist (CST) through the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA)) as applied to undergraduate degree completion programs

D. Course Challenge: Students can demonstrate that they possess the necessary competence to be awarded credit for a particular course by successfully completing a comprehensive examination for the challenged course. The course challenge must be completed prior to the start of the semester. In the event that the challenge is not successful, the student will then have the opportunity to enroll in the course. The student is required to present to the appropriate Program Director a rationale (e.g., related on-the-job learning, certification training) for why a course challenge is plausible. The following courses are not challengeable: Professional courses at the 200- level for associate degree students; COM252, COM352, HUM152, and SSC465 in the Division of Arts & Sciences. The Program Director makes a determination as to the legitimacy of the request in consultation with appropriate faculty. If valid, the appropriate faculty will create a comprehensive examination designed to assess the student's knowledge of the subject matter in the challenged class. The fee for a course challenge is 25% of the current tuition rate.

E. Credit for Military Service: Transfer credit based on military service may be awarded for equivalent courses required for the student's program of study, and in accordance with recommendations from the American Council on Education (ACE). Credit may be awarded for formal courses and occupations offered by all branches of the military, as indicated on an official transcript. Official transcripts must be received from either Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) or Joint Services Transcript (JST). JST is the Joint Services Transcript that has replaced the Sailor/Marine American Council of Education Registry Transcript (SMART), Army/American Council on Education Registry Transcript System (AARTS), and Coast Guard Institute Transcript (CGI). The Dean and/or Program Director will determine which course(s) or occupation(s) listed on the military transcript may be equivalent to required courses within the student's program of study.

F. Professional Portfolio: Credit for Life Experience

Undergraduate and Graduate Validation of Prior Learning Policy

Validation of prior learning can be used to satisfy outcomes specified in a course in their program of study. The student must complete a Professional Portfolio that a Dean, Program Director, and/or designated faculty member will review to award the student either a grade of credit (CR) or no credit (NC). Each program determines whether validation of prior learning can be used for full or partial credit in a course, or if the validation is given for a combination of courses within the program.

Process for Validation of Credit for Life Experience:

1. A prospective student who anticipates using the validation method of the Professional Portfolio: Credit for Life Experience policy will discuss this possibility early in the admissions process with an admissions representative and/or academic advisor.
2. The course validation is requested upon admission or 10 weeks prior to when the course is offered.
3. The student completes the application form for Validation of Credit for Life Experience.
4. The admissions and/or academic advisor notifies the Dean and/or Program Director about the request for validation and sends the completed application form to the Dean and/or Program Director.
5. The Dean and/or Program Director will conduct an interview with the student and review the appropriate course syllabi/course outcomes in relationship to the request on the application to determine if validation is possible.
6. The Dean and/or Program Director will grant permission for the amount of credits available to pursue for validation. If only partial credit for a course is determined to qualify for validation, the completion of any remaining credits for the course will be determined by the Dean.
7. The student will be registered in a Validation of Prior Learning Course for the designated number of credits being pursued and charged 25% of the regular tuition rate. Payment of fees related to the validation process does not guarantee the validation of credit. If applicable, the student(s) should check with their employers to see if the validation charges will be covered by the tuition remission program.
8. The Dean and/or Program Director will develop a plan with the student for how to complete the Professional Portfolio to validate the credits in the Validation of Prior Learning Course.
9. In the Validation of Prior Learning Course, the student will complete a Professional Portfolio. The Dean and/or Program Director and/or a designated faculty member from the student's program will be available for periodic consultation on how to complete the professional portfolio. The Professional Portfolio is neither a biographical sketch, nor a research paper, nor a collection of documents. The accumulation of continuing education units or participation in conferences and training seminars alone will not qualify for validation. In accord with the Higher Learning Commission's *Assessment of Prior Learning Principles*, credit is offered for the demonstration of *learning*, not the identification of learning experiences. The validation is an opportunity to demonstrate mastery of current college-level work (not outdated information) and the application of that knowledge to lived experiences.

Components of Professional Portfolio:

A. Writing Assessment of Credit for Life Experience: To accomplish this requirement, students must clearly articulate in writing how each course outcome is met. The structure and length of the writing assessment in the professional portfolio will be determined by the Dean and/or Program Director and/or a designated faculty member from the student's program.

B. Supporting Evidence of Credit for Life Experience: In addition to the writing assessment, documentation must be provided to verify learning experiences. Evidence may include but is not limited to the following:

- Previous academic coursework
- Published articles, research, evidence-based practice
- Special accomplishments (musical, artistic, audio-visual)
- Membership in professional organizations, leadership roles within organizations
- Professional conferences/ seminars/ awards
- Certifications
- Community service with a letter of support
- Letters of verification that speak to the mastery of outcomes (*not* a letter of reference)
- Thesis, dissertation
- Continuing education
- Other scholarly/academic evidence

10. After completion of the Professional Portfolio in the Validation of Prior Learning Course, a committee of two faculty members with content expertise in the area will evaluate the Professional Portfolio and make a recommendation to the Dean for a grade of credit (CR) or no credit (NC).
11. The Academic Dean will grant final approval for validation. If a credit (CR) grade is granted, the student's transcript will list the course(s) validated. This will be done by listing the course number(s) with a "VA" in the credit type column. These credits do not count toward NMC residency requirements and are not included in the calculation of a student's GPA. NMC does not guarantee that other institutions will accept validation credits for transfer credit.
12. The Validation of Prior Learning policy and Professional Portfolio process are overseen by the Academic Standards Committee of the Faculty Senate. This committee conducts periodic audits of validation material submitted to assure consistency of standards.