

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)

Category: *Academic Affairs*

Policy Number: 2801

Policy Manager: *Office of the Registrar*

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PURPOSE

This policy outlines Virginia State University's requirements for awarding academic credit to students for knowledge and skills acquired through non-traditional learning experiences.

TARGET AUDIENCE

This policy applies to all undergraduate and graduate students at Virginia State University seeking academic credit for prior learning experiences.

AUTHORITY

- A. The University's Board of Visitors, pursuant to Virginia Code § 23.1-1301, may delegate administrative authority to the University President, who may in turn delegate authority to other university personnel.
- B. The University's Provost, through presidential delegation, shall oversee the development and implementation of policies related to the University's academic affairs.

DEFINITIONS

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL): Curriculum credit awarded for college-level learning acquired through non-traditional experiences.

Credit-Granting Department or Credit-Granting College: the department and college from which credit for prior learning is sought to be awarded.

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA): The process of evaluating previous learning experiences for academic credit through methods such as portfolios, examinations, or demonstrations, based on course-specific learning outcomes.

Degree Program: An academic program, including graduate and undergraduate programs, that leads to a degree and consists of a specified number of credit hours. Refer to the Undergraduate and Graduate Academic Catalogs for program specifics.

Virginia State University (VSU): Refers to the institution as a whole.

POLICY STATEMENT

Eligibility for Credit for Prior Learning

1. Eligibility for Credit for Prior Learning

To be eligible for CPL, students must:

- a. Be currently enrolled at Virginia State University;
- b. Be in good academic standing;
- c. Be registered for the approved undergraduate or graduate *Seminar in Experiential Learning* course; and
- d. Submit a formal request for a prior learning assessment to both the CPL Coordinator and their degree program chair.¹

2. Types of Prior Learning Experiences

Students must demonstrate satisfactory mastery of specific established course learning outcomes through one or more of the following:

- a. Paid and unpaid work experience;
- b. Military training and education;
- c. Professional certifications and licenses;
- d. Non-academic courses or workshops;
- e. Other relevant life experiences aligned with course outcomes.

3. Assessment Process

Students must submit evidence of their prior learning using an approved method, as determined collaboratively by the student, the CPL Faculty Advisor, and the credit-granting academic department. The college dean (or designee) of the credit-granting department will review the student's submission. Each submission is evaluated based on how well the evidence aligns to and demonstrates mastery of the course learning outcome.

¹ The CPL request applies only to knowledge and skills relevant to the chosen degree program, including general education courses.

4. Credit Limitations

Credit awarded for prior learning may not exceed 25% of the total required credit hours in a degree program. For example²:

- **Undergraduate (120 credit hours):** Up to 30 credit hours;
- **Graduate (36 credit hours):** Up to 9 credit hours;
- **Graduate (30 credit hours):** Up to 7.5 credit hours.

5. Documentation and Record Keeping

All PLA submissions and outcomes will be recorded according to university policies. Students will receive official written notification of the decision, including awarded credits and the rationale for approval or denial.

6. Appeals Process

If a CPL request is denied, students may appeal by submitting a written request to the department chair and CPL Faculty Advisor within five (5) business days of receiving the decision. The College Dean will review the appeal and issue a final decision. Appeals may only contest the denial, not the amount of credit awarded.

RELATED PROCEDURES

For more detailed procedures associated with this policy, refer to the *Credit for Prior Learning Procedures Handbook*.


RELATED MATERIALS/REFERENCES

SACSCOC Standard 10.8 (Evaluating and awarding academic credit)

Virginia State University Academic Catalogs

² This list of example program options is not exhaustive and is intended to demonstrate the mathematical calculation only.

APPROVED BY:



Makola M. Abdullah, Ph.D.
President

5/9/25

Date

REVISION HISTORY

This policy supersedes the following archived policies:

Enter Month, Date, and Year here.

N/A

Enter previous policy title here.

N/A