



2.26 Credit for Prior Learning Policy

Category: Administration

Name of Responsible Office: Academic and Student Affairs

Title of Responsible Executive: Provost and Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs and Vice President, Economic and Workforce Development and Career Technical Education

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Policy Statement

The Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) policy at Monroe Community College (MCC) allows students to receive academic credit for knowledge and skills gained outside of the traditional classroom. This policy supports student success by accelerating degree completion, lowering educational costs, and increasing access to higher education.

Policy

By broadening the recognition of verifiable, college-level learning, MCC aims to make higher education more accessible, shorten the time it takes to complete degrees and reduce education costs. This practice is especially beneficial for diverse student populations who may have acquired valuable knowledge through various life experiences.

MCC recognizes several types of prior learning for credit, including but not limited to standardized published examinations; military training and education; and other forms of learning, such as professional work experience, industry credentials (e.g., certifications or licenses), community service or volunteer work, and/or formal training programs.

To receive credit, students must demonstrate that their prior learning experiences meet MCC's academic standards.

Core Tenet of the Policy

The evaluation and award of credit for prior learning is based on the same criteria used to evaluate credit awarded for courses in registered degree and certificate programs:

- **Student Responsibility:** Students are responsible for presenting evidence of their learning.
- **Faculty Oversight:** The evaluation of student learning for the award of academic credit must be conducted by faculty or approved by faculty in the case of evaluation by a non-faculty subject matter expert.
- **Award Level:** The evaluation of student learning for the award of academic credit can be applied to associate programs and certificate programs.
- **Evaluation Award:** Credit, not a grade, will be awarded upon evaluation of prior learning.

Credit for Prior Learning in Practice

Faculty and staff involved in the assessment of prior learning must be adequately trained in assessment procedures and pursue continuing professional development for the functions they perform, e.g., portfolio assessment, assessment of industry certifications, etc.

The award of academic credit for prior learning may incur an operational cost for the institution in instances where direct evaluation by faculty is necessary. Students will be charged a fee to cover these costs. The fee structure will be re-evaluated and updated, if necessary, before the start of each academic year. In accordance with SUNY guidance to Presidents on the *Award of Academic Credit by Evaluation*, dated 3/11/2024, MCC will consider waiving the fee on a case-by-case basis.

Credits approved by MCC may not be transferable to other institutions. Students should meet with a representative of the transfer institution to determine if credits are transferable.

Types of Prior Learning to be Assessed Include, but are not Limited to

A. Standardized Published Examinations

The award of credit for published examination applies (but is not limited to) the following published examinations:

- Advanced Placement (AP);
- International Baccalaureate (IB);
- Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) Subject Standardized Tests (DSST);
- College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) Subject Examinations; and
- American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) proficiency assessments.

B. Military Education and Training

For students who have served or are currently serving in the United States military, academic credit may be awarded for college-level knowledge and demonstrated competencies acquired through documented military training based on recommendations from the American Council on Education (ACE). Upon submission and internal review of an official Joint Services Transcript (JST), military training that is substantially equivalent to a course offered will be accepted and applied toward a program of study. Credit may also be applied as elective credit in certain degree programs. Students with transcripts from the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) will have their transcripts reviewed for transfer credit in accordance with other regionally accredited colleges.

C. Other Forms of Learning

For credits earned through training, such as that which leads to professional and industry certifications, apprenticeships, and licenses or other credentials, as well as non-credit and continuing education study and on-the-job training/education and work experience, the methods of evaluation shall be conducted or approved by faculty and may include third-party review by appropriately-qualified reviewers. Examples of such assessment methods include:

- Faculty/department-developed challenge exams and portfolio review processes; and/or

- Assessments by a nationally-recognized external body such as:
 - American Council on Education (ACE)
 - Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)
 - National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS)

Policy Administration

Eligibility Requirements and Credit Limits:

- MCC's residency requirement dictates that students must earn at least 24 credits through MCC coursework in order to be granted an Associate degree. While students can apply up to 36 CPL credits towards their degree, it is important to note that students must meet MCC program requirements and SUNY General Education requirements to graduate; these requirements may not always be fully satisfied through a combination of 24 MCC credits and 36 CPL credits. Students are encouraged to work closely with their advisor to ensure all degree requirements are met.
- Students must earn at least 50% of the credits required for a certificate program through MCC course work in order to receive a certificate. For this reason, a maximum of 50% of a certificate program's credit requirements may be earned through CPL.

Background

Credit for prior learning allows students to earn college credit for knowledge or skills they acquire outside of traditional coursework and provides the following benefits:

- **Accelerating Degree Progress:** Students can bypass certain courses if they prove they already know the material, potentially shortening their time to graduation.
- **Cost Efficiency:** It can be a cost-effective way to earn credit as students may avoid paying for courses in subject areas where they can demonstrate achievement of course outcomes.
- **Flexibility:** It provides a way for students to tailor their education to their individual learning paths and experiences.
- **Recognition of Non-Traditional Learning:** Many underrepresented students may have acquired significant knowledge or skills through work, life experiences, or community involvement. Credit for prior learning acknowledges these non-traditional learning experiences, allowing students to receive credit without having to repeat engagement with material they already know.
- **Encouraging Return to Education:** For adult learners or those returning to education after a significant time away, credit for prior learning provides a way to build on existing knowledge and skills, making it easier to re-enter and succeed in higher education.
- **Supporting Diverse Backgrounds:** By validating a wide range of learning experiences and achievements, credit for prior learning creates a more inclusive educational environment. It ensures that students from diverse backgrounds, including those who may not have had access to traditional educational resources, can have their prior learning and experiences valued and recognized.

Applicability

This policy applies to all current and future matriculated Monroe Community College Students. All members of the College community should be familiar with this policy.

Definitions

- **Subject matter expert:** a person who has a high level of knowledge and expertise in a specific topic or field.

Related Information

College Documents

2.17 Transfer Credit Policy

Other Related Documents

[SUNY Memorandum to Presidents, March 11, 2024, Policy and Guidance: Award of Academic Credit by Evaluation \(PDF\)](#)