

Senate Policy

Prior Learning Assessment, Undergraduate

1006

Description:

The Prior Learning Assessment Policy describes the process by which an undergraduate student may obtain credit for learning acquired outside of and prior to admission to an OCAD University degree program.

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Approval Authority: Senate

Signature: h.h. Yael, Chair

Policy

Prior Learning Assessment is the method by which an undergraduate student may, with appropriate evidence and documentation, be able to obtain credit for learning acquired outside of and prior to admission to an OCAD University program.

There are three broad categories of prior learning:

- 1) Upper Year Admission: admission into the second or third year of a program through the

- awarding of block credit based on a portfolio review and/or evidence of work completed at an accredited post-secondary institution or under the terms of an articulation agreement.
- 2) **Transfer Credit:** the awarding of credit, usually on a course by course basis, for work completed at another accredited post-secondary institution, or in another program at OCAD University, or for International Baccalaureate or Advanced Placement courses completed at the secondary school level.
 - 3) **Course Challenge:** the awarding of credit for knowledge acquired outside of formally accredited educational programs that coincides with a specific credit course or courses offered at OCAD University.

General Principles for all Categories

- The combined credit recognized by any one or all of the above methods may not exceed 50% of the total credit required to complete an OCAD University bachelor's degree program.
- Eligibility for Prior Learning Assessment does not constitute entitlement to credit.

Upper Year Admission

Applicants who have completed one or more years of study in an accredited post-secondary program may be eligible to apply for admission to the second or third year level of a program. Eligibility is dependent on the level attained and the particular program of study.

- Applicants awarded upper year admission will be admitted into second or third year of a specific major/program.
- Students may be required to take specified courses at a lower year level in addition to their second or third year program requirements

Transfer Credit

Students who have attended an accredited post-secondary institution or who have completed International Baccalaureate or Advanced Placement courses at the secondary school level may apply for transfer credit, subject to the following:

- All academic transcripts and required documentation must be submitted to Admissions & Recruitment at the time of admission for assessment; however, applications for transfer credit may be considered up to 12 months after admission or, for courses not previously considered for transfer, up to 6 months after admission to a new program. Students may not request transfer credit for courses they have failed at OCAD U.
- Decisions are made in consultation with the appropriate Dean or designate.
- Only those post-secondary credits with a minimum final grade of 60% to 70% (depending on the source institution) will be eligible for consideration for transfer credit.
- Courses passed at OCAD U for a first program may be transferred to another program subject to the residency requirement, with no minimum grade requirement.
- Designated advanced placement courses with a minimum grade of 4 and international baccalaureate courses with a minimum grade of 5 may be eligible for consideration of transfer credit.
- Normally, a maximum of 1.5 studio credits will be awarded to first-year students.
- Normally, a maximum of 1.5 transfer credits will be awarded for advanced placement and/or international baccalaureate courses
- Contact hours must total a minimum of 36 hours for 0.5 OCAD University credit, with a minimum of three weeks of instruction.
- The minimum credit granted for transfer is equivalent to 0.5 credit.

Applicants must submit the following documentation. All documentation in a language other than English or French must be accompanied by a certified English translation:

- Official transcript(s)
- Detailed course outlines (syllabi).

Students may appeal transfer credit decisions by submitting additional information with a formal request for reconsideration to the Admissions & Recruitment Office no later than 20 business days after the date on their notice of transfer credit.

Course Challenge

Students who can demonstrate that they have acquired – through informal or unconventional means – the knowledge covered by a specific course offered at OCAD University may apply for course challenge, subject to the following:

- Course challenge is only available to students who have been admitted to OCAD University.
- A request for permission to challenge a course must be submitted before the end of the first week of the course.
- Students may normally challenge no more than 2.0 credits.
- Not all courses may be challenged. Students must consult with the relevant Faculty Office before submitting a request for permission to challenge a course.
- Students must present evidence of prior learning and receive permission to challenge a course for credit from the Dean or designate of the Faculty offering the course.
- Credits gained through course challenge cannot be used to fulfill the university's residency requirements.
- Students who are successful in challenging a course for credit will receive a grade of Pass (P) on their transcript. The grade of P has no numerical equivalent and is not included in the calculation of grade point average. The grade of P may not be applied in any way toward application for scholarships, bursaries or loans.
- Credit will only be awarded for work meeting the standard expected of students who successfully complete the course with a grade of 60% or better.
- Students may not challenge a course for credit if they have previously registered in that course or its equivalent at OCAD University or any other post-secondary institution. Exceptions to this rule may be made for students who have withdrawn within the first two weeks of a course or whose former university no longer possesses the official records required for transfer credit (i.e., universities in war zones).
- If the student does not receive credit after challenging a course, a note to this effect will be placed in the student's file but will not be entered on the official academic transcript.
- Students who believe their challenge credit was not evaluated correctly may submit a formal grade appeal.
- Students may challenge a course only once.