

Minnesota State University, Mankato University Policy	
Policy Name: Credit for Prior Learning	Effective Date of Last Review: August 1, 2026
Custodian of Policy: Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs	Date of Last Review: September 2025
Date of Adoption: August 8, 2014	Date of Next Review: September 2031 2032

Policy

Section 1: ~~Credits~~Standards and Criteria

- Minnesota State University, Mankato makes no promises to prospective students regarding the awarding of credit for prior learning until an evaluation has been conducted.
- Minnesota State University, Mankato ~~University~~ will allow a maximum of 60 credits of prior learning to satisfy a student's undergraduate degree requirements, of which no more than ~~30~~2 credits may come from credit by examination.
- Minnesota State University, Mankato will allow a maximum of 6 credits of prior learning to satisfy a student's graduate degree requirements, of which all credits must come from credit by examination.
- Minnesota State University, Mankato will award credit for prior learning consistent with University residency and graduation requirements.
 - Credits ~~are~~ assessed through ~~credit by exam~~internal assessment will count toward University residency credit requirements.
 - Credit earned through external assessments (national standardized exams, military credit, corporate training, and other forms of third-party assessments) will not count toward University residency credit requirements.
- Credit for prior learning credit may not be repeated for the same course.
- An official grade of Pass or No Credit will be posted on the transcript. Conventional letter grades will not be used. The transcript will not indicate an unsuccessful attempt to earn credit for prior learning.
- To be eligible to earn credit for prior learning, a student must be enrolled and registered at Minnesota State University, Mankato.
- A student may only be assessed for prior learning one time for a specific course.
- Graduate credit can only be awarded if the student has already completed a bachelor's degree.

Commented [VJ1]: We must adhere to the program requirements in Procedure 3.36.1 (e.g., 30 credits of residency, 40 credits of upper division), but I don't understand how this statement and the next align to System Procedure 3.35.1 and 3.35.2. We should consult the drafter.

Subpart F. Credit limit for CPL external assessments
Colleges and universities shall not limit the total number of credits students may be awarded for CPL external assessments.

<https://www.minnstate.edu/board/procedure/335p1.html>

Subpart F. Credit limit for CPL internal college/university assessment
Colleges and universities shall not limit the total number of credits students may be awarded for CPL internal assessments.

<https://www.minnstate.edu/board/procedure/335p2.html>

Formatted: List Paragraph

Commented [VJ2]: Unclear: If a grade of Pass or No Credit will be posted, then how are unsuccessful attempts NOT indicated?

Commented [VJ3]: This seems redundant with the bullet 4 lines above.

- A student cannot be enrolled in, or have already completed, the course for which prior learning credit is being requested.

Commented [VJ4]: This means a student who failed a course in the past, gets some life experience, and then comes back is not permitted to use CPL. Is that the intent?

Section 2: Methods of Assessment

University credit will be granted for achievement of documented, authenticated, demonstrated university-level outcomes, and not for experience alone. Credit will be awarded based on a method of prior learning demonstrated by the student. All credit for prior learning shall be granted according to the standards and equivalencies of the American Council on Education (ACE), the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), or the equivalent.

For undergraduate students, prior learning can be evaluated using one or more of the following methods:

External Assessments

- National examinations such as Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Thomas Edison College Examination Program (TECEP), Excelsior examinations, the New York University Foreign Language Proficiency (NYUFLP) examinations, the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) assessments, and the DANTES subject standardized tests (DSST).
- Military Course Completion using the American Council on Education (ACE) Guidelines.
- Project Lead the Way (PLTW).

1. Internal Assessments

- Course-specific Assessments ~~as determined~~ developed and evaluated by the appropriate academic department, consistent with Minnesota State ~~University~~ Board of Trustees policy.
- ~~which~~ Internal assessments may include oral interview, essay, credit by exam, portfolio review, written research paper, research project evaluation, skills demonstration or presentations/performance/creative process demonstration. Such assessments must be in accordance with relevant accreditation guidelines and/or other appropriate external requirements.

For graduate students, prior learning can be evaluated only using the course specific assessment of credit by examination. Credit by examination must be approved by the course instructor, academic department, academic dean, and graduate dean, and be consistent with Minnesota State ~~University~~ Board of Trustees policy. Assessments must be made in accordance with relevant accreditation guidelines and/or other appropriate external requirements.

Section 3: Student Appeals

Student appeals for credit for prior learning/~~experiential learning follow the procedure defined in the University's Grade Appeal policy.~~

~~will be guided by the Minnesota State University Mankato grade appeals process.~~

Commented [VJ5]: "Will be guided" Should this be "will follow"? In other words, are we telling students to follow that policy if they disagree with the outcome of the assessment?

Section 4: Exceptions

Any exceptions to this policy require the approval of the ~~Dean~~ of the college in which the credit is being awarded, ~~or of and the University provost~~ Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs (or their designee).

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to provide all ~~undergraduate~~ students at Minnesota State University, Mankato with opportunities to obtain ~~undergraduate~~ college credit for prior ~~college~~ undergraduate or graduate-level learning acquired through noncredit or experiential settings. Students must demonstrate prior ~~college~~ undergraduate or graduate-level learning according to the procedures established for evaluating and granting credit for such learning.

The authority for this policy shall be Minnesota State Board Policy 3.35 (Credit for Prior Learning), Minnesota State Procedures 3.35.1 (Credit for Prior Learning - External Assessments) and 3.35.2 (Credit for Prior Learning - Internal Assessments), Minnesota State Policy 3.21 (Undergraduate Course and Credit Transfer and the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum), Minnesota State Procedure 3.21.1 (Transfer of Undergraduate Courses, Credit, Associate Degrees, and the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum), and the IFO Minnesota State Master Agreement. The university shall grant credit for prior learning for a veteran's military training or service in compliance with Minnesota statute 197.775, Subd.2 Higher Education Fairness.

Definitions

American Council on Education (ACE)

The American Council on Education is a coordinating body for the nation's higher education institutions. ACE provides a third-party evaluation of student learning accomplished through workplace, military courses and occupations, corporate training, or other types of nontraditional forms of training taken outside traditional degree programs. ACE provides recommendations for the number of credits that colleges and universities may award.

Commented [VJ6]: Definitions are needed for internal and external assessment of prior learning.

Certification

A credential earned by an individual through various study, training and assessment programs that are sponsored by educational, community or work-based, professional or industry agencies or organizations, and recognized as a standard in the related field. This may include but is not limited to assessment that is governed by a board and determined to meet specific competencies.

Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)

CAEL is a national nonprofit organization that works at all levels within the higher education, public, and private sectors to make it easier for people to get the education and training they need. CAEL is a leader in linking learning and work to enhance learning opportunities for adults around the world.

Credit by Exam

Course-specific examinations that assess prior learning and are developed by college or university faculty or college or university departments.

Credit for Prior Learning

Academic credit awarded for demonstrated college and university-level learning gained through learning experiences outside of the college or university classroom, assessed by academically sound and rigorous processes.

External Assessments

Assessment methods that could result in credit for prior learning achieved and assessed through a nationally recognized third-party assessment organization, accredited postsecondary institution, or noncredit instruction. Students demonstrate a level of proficiency that is recognized through curriculum, instruction, program, or a standardized exam. CPL external assessment types may include, but are not limited to, AP, IB, CLEP, and other national standardized assessments, world languages seals and certificates, industry recognized credentials, licenses, and certifications, and noncredit instruction in programs such as registered apprenticeships, work-based training, continuing education, and customized training. For military training and occupations, see System Procedure 3.35.3 Military Training and Military Occupations.

Internal Assessments

Assessment methods and processes used by Minnesota State faculty members to assess students' demonstrated learning and/or competence. Such assessments determine competence-to-credit comparability, course-equivalency or individualized subject status, and application to degree requirements or electives. CPL internal assessment types may include, but are not limited to, portfolio assessment, interview,

skills and/or knowledge demonstration, individualized subject-area assessment, group or seminar assessment, credit by exam, and competency-based assessment.

Military Occupational Training

Military occupational training provides an opportunity for an active member of the military or a veteran of the armed forces to have their occupational training aligned with college level learning.

My Credit for Prior Learning (MyCPL)

My Credit for Prior Learning (MyCPL) is a Minnesota State platform that helps students earn credit for demonstrating college/university level knowledge. The platform is used by students and faculty to create CPL assessment requests, upload documents for review, complete assessments, and communicate about the process and outcomes. Common assessments housed in MyCPL are credit by examinations, skills demonstrations, interviews, and portfolios.

National Exams

Standardized examinations administered and scored by nationally recognized third-party assessment organizations that are criterion referenced including, but are not limited to Advanced Placement (AP) examinations, International Baccalaureate (IB) examinations, College Level Examination Program (CLEP) examinations, Thomas Edison College Examination Program (TECEP), Excelsior examinations, New York University Foreign Language Proficiency (NYUFLP) examinations, The National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) assessments, and DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST).

Prior Learning

Prior learning is a term that educators use to describe learning that a person acquires outside a traditional academic environment. This learning may have been acquired through work experience, employer training programs, independent study, non-credit courses, volunteer or community service, travel, or non-college courses or seminars.

Prior Learning Portfolio Assessment

A process that provides students the opportunity to demonstrate their college level learning through the completion of a portfolio evaluated by a college or university faculty member to determine credit equivalence.

Summary of Changes: Expanded CPL opportunities to graduate students. Defined external and internal assessments of prior learning.

Policy:		
Formal Review Process	Date Submitted	Date Reviewed
✓ Vice President's Recommendation		Date
✓ President's Approval		Date

Credit for Prior Learning Policy Review Process

- Policy Consultation Committee Review [add date]
- Informal Review [add date]
- Formal Review [add date]

Vice President's Recommendation

Signature and Date

President's Approval

Signature and Date

