

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** June 25, 2021

**TO:** UA Faculty, Academic Advisors, Student Support Personnel, and Students

**FROM:** Maggie Pitts, Associate Dean, Academic Affairs, Graduate College  
Abbie Sorg, Assistant Registrar, Academic Catalog & Policy

**RE:** **Amendment to Credit for Prior Learning Policy**

In Spring 2021 the Graduate Council, Graduate College Academic Administrators Council, and Faculty Senate approved a proposal to update the Credit for Prior Learning policy. The updated policy can be found at <https://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/credit-prior-learning-prior-learning-assessment-policy>.

**The new policy is effective beginning with the Summer 2021 semester.**

**Updates to Credit for Prior Learning** (full policy can be found in the General Catalog):

**Graduate certificate seeking students may receive 1 credit maximum toward a graduate certificate, as determined by the program Director of Graduate Studies. Master's degree seeking students may receive up to 3 credits maximum, as determined by the program Director of Graduate Studies.** In addition, the prior learning credit must be deemed graduate level by the Director of Graduate Studies and must meet or exceed "B" level work. Moreover, units earned for prior learning credit are considered "coursework taken outside degree program." Credit earned for prior learning will count against the 12 total units of coursework taken outside of the degree program allowed to apply to the master's degree requirements. **Certificate and Master's degree requirements** can be reviewed here.

Further restrictions on Graduate prior learning credit:

- It must be earned through a verifiable non-credit learning opportunity offered by a University of Arizona department, college, or affiliate.
- It cannot be used to satisfy course or program pre-requisites or required, core coursework.
- It will only count as elective credit.
- In general, graduate credit for prior learning completed over four (4) years ago for graduate certificates and six (6) years ago for Master's degrees may not apply to a student's current degree program unless otherwise approved by the program Director of Graduate Studies (as reflected in the **Graduate Time Limitation for Graduate Certificates** and the **Graduate Time Limitation for Master's Degrees** policies).

### **Graduate Procedure:**

Graduate students interested in receiving credit for prior learning must first consult with their faculty advisor or program Director of Graduate Studies for degree applicability. Prior learning materials (proof of verifiable learning) should be submitted to Graduate Student Academic Services via **GradPath** Transfer Credit Form for evaluation of credit by the Director of Graduate Studies in an appropriate department or college. Prior learning materials should detail the content learned (i.e. hours, subjects, texts, relevant documents, completed work, etc.). Graduate Student Academic Services will notify the student on the outcome of the evaluation process.

## **Justification/Rationale**

- To meet the needs of 21st Century education, community, and workplace opportunities, the Graduate College proposed a revision to the Credit for Prior Learning (Prior Learning Assessment) Policy. The old policy pertained only to undergraduate students; the revision includes graduate students seeking certificates and Master's degrees. Especially targeted are professional Master's programs designed to teach 21st Century skills (e.g., communication, critical thinking, collaborative problem-solving, and cultural competency) to students who will soon enter the workforce. This revision dovetails the old policy for undergraduates, but is restricted to learning opportunities offered at a graduate level by a University of Arizona Department or College.

**Questions about the Graduate-level updates to the Credit for Prior Learning policy** should be addressed to the Graduate College at [Grad-Dean@grad.arizona.edu](mailto:Grad-Dean@grad.arizona.edu).