

DOC 700 Doctoral Exam Preparation

A doctoral student may enroll in DOC 700 prior to admission to candidacy under special circumstances (typically, while preparing to sit for doctoral exams) when not registered for regular graduate course work. DOC 700 is a 0-credit course at a fee of \$75 that gives the student all the rights and privileges of a regular student.

Prerequisite: Registration in DOC 700 requires the approval of the student's committee chairperson and the departmental doctoral program director, ~~and the dean of the Graduate School~~. Registration for DOC 700 is limited to any two academic year semesters. Offered credit/no credit only.

Credits

0

Probationary Status

Students will be placed on academic probation if their cumulative graduate GPA falls below 3.0 at any time after completion of 9 credits.

To remove probationary status, a student must have at least a 3.0 graduate cumulative GPA by the time the next 9 graduate credits are completed. Students are not allowed to apply to an additional Ball State graduate program or certificate while on probation.

If probationary status is not removed, the student's admission to graduate study will be canceled, and additional graduate study will not be possible until the student has reapplied for reinstatement, which they may do only if they were not originally admitted through the probationary admission process.

Accelerated Master's Program (AMP)

Ball State offers departments the opportunity to develop an accelerated master's program (AMP) [\(or graduate certificate\)](#) degree plan for their undergraduate students. All such programs must be approved through the normal curriculum approval process. Students who enroll in these programs may be able to count up to 9 credits to both the undergraduate and graduate degrees [\(and/or certificates\)](#) and may be able to earn both ~~degrees~~ [credentials](#) in five years or less.

Admission Procedures and Program Policies

- Upon earning a minimum of 75 credits and a 3.25 cumulative GPA, students may apply to a combined program by completing the application into the desired graduate program and submitting required materials. Students must have earned at least 30 credits at Ball State. Standard master's [\(or graduate certificate\)](#) application and admission procedures as outlined in the Graduate Catalog apply.
- Students who are admitted into the program's AMP must maintain a 3.25 GPA while an undergraduate student to remain in the program, and if their GPA falls below this level, they will be dismissed from the AMP. While a student maintains undergraduate status, the quality points earned in graduate courses will be used to calculate the undergraduate GPA. These courses will also transfer into the master's degree [\(or graduate certificate\)](#) program and will count towards the master's degree GPA. If a student earns below a B (3.0) grade in a graduate course while enrolled in the AMP, the department has the option of not accepting the course into the master's degree [\(or graduate certificate\)](#) program of study.
- As determined by the participating bachelor's program, graduate courses earned as part of the AMP may be applied to the bachelor's degree as electives or by substitution of graduate-level courses for required undergraduate courses in the major.
- The regular six-year time-limit for completing the master's degree [or the five-year time limit for completing a graduate certificate](#) applies to students in a combined program once the student is formally accepted into the AMP.
- Combined bachelor's/master's plan students are not eligible for graduate assistantships until their bachelor's degrees have been awarded and they have achieved graduate student status.

- Students will remain in undergraduate status and pay undergraduate tuition until they have fulfilled all requirements for their bachelor's degree.

For each student enrolled in the accelerated program, the department will fill out the appropriate form and have it approved by the program director and the graduate dean. This form will outline the master's level classes that will count towards both the undergraduate and graduate degrees (or graduate certificates), and the department will update the student's ~~DegreeWorks~~ electronic degree audit to reflect the student's plan.

Students may earn graduate credit both in an AMP and under the Undergraduates and Graduate Work policy. In circumstances where a Ball State undergraduate student earns credit under both policies, they may count 9 graduate credits toward both their undergraduate and graduate degrees (or graduate certificates) in an AMP. Additionally, under the Undergraduates and Graduate Work policy, the student may take an additional 3 graduate credits that may be applied to either the undergraduate or graduate degree (or graduate certificate), but not to both. Under no circumstances will undergraduate students be permitted to take more than 12 graduate credits. If an undergraduate student who takes graduate courses while enrolled in an AMP becomes ineligible to continue or withdraws from the program before earning their baccalaureate, the status of their graduate course work will be dictated by the Undergraduates and Graduate Work policy.

January 22, 2025

To: GEC

From: Adam R. Beach, Chair of Graduate Prior Learning Taskforce

RE: Recommendations from the Graduate Prior Learning Taskforce

During the Fall 2024 semester, the Graduate School convened a Graduate Prior Learning Taskforce to review current best practices in the granting of prior learning credits and to update the Graduate School's [current prior learning policy](#), with the goal of aligning, as much as possible, with the recently updated [prior learning policy for undergraduate students](#). The Taskforce included representation from DOSL (Trudi Weyermann, Nancy Prater, Michelle Carr, Ted Rankin), the Registrar's Office (April Hay, Monica Roberts), Lifetime Learning (Amy Barsha, Sharon Morrissey, Nell Hill), EPM (Katharine Herbert, Brian Barber, Bryce Nowak), Academic Advising (Jennifer Lawson), and the Testing Center (Jeffrey McCoy).

The group reviewed best practices, a helpful report from EAB about national trends around prior learning, and the prior learning policies of many of our peers and competitors, especially those in the online graduate space. These recommendations have already been circulated for comment/review to the Provost's Council, department chairs, and graduate program directors for their recommendations, and these proposals reflect their feedback.

Below is the taskforce's draft for an updated prior learning policy in the Graduate Catalog. We have also attached a draft for an updated transfer policy for the Catalog. Taken together, the two policies treat prior learning as transfer classes, and allow programs to accept up to 50% of the credits required for a master's degree through transfer/prior learning.

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) for Graduate Studies

1. Purpose

Ball State University offers opportunities for students to earn credit toward a degree by providing evidence of knowledge acquired independently, at work, in the military, through certifications, courses, and in other ways.

This policy provides guidance to students seeking to obtain college credit(s) for prior experiential learning or through non-credit training programs that are equivalent to college coursework. The decision to offer CPL is made by the graduate program and department chair, with the approval of the college dean. Departments may elect to not offer CPL opportunities to graduate students.

Credit earned by CPL counts toward graduation requirements, but students do not receive a grade for it. Any credits earned through CPL are considered as “transfer” classes, and students may transfer no more than 50% of the total master’s degree credit hour requirements. (These allowable transfer credits include credits earned through CPL and classes transferred in from other institutions). Departments may set more restrictive limits on the number of transfer credits they accept. No transfer classes are allowed to be applied to a Ball State graduate certificate. Prior learning credit will not be awarded to students who have been enrolled or are currently enrolled in the courses for credit or audit.

There are multiple ways to accelerate your educational journey through previously learned competencies and non-academic prior learning experiences:

- Credit earned through military service
- Credit for work and non-academic prior learning experiences (demonstrated portfolio of skills)
- Credit by credential via Ball State Lifetime Learning or through non-Ball State credential providers.
- Credit by departmental examination

2. Credit for Prior Learning Types and Definitions

Competency or skills-based learning may be determined to be equivalent to credit earned through the completion of graduate courses. Prior learning credits may be based on:

A. MILITARY SERVICE and TRAINING – Credit for prior learning from recognition of military experience and training as documented on a Joint Service Transcript (JST). This is done in conjunction with the American Council on Education (ACE) recommendations and standards.

B. PORTFOLIO – Credit by departmental authorization may be awarded for learning experiences the department believes to be the equivalent of college work. A written narrative document where students explain their prior experiences and describe how these match the expected student outcomes of an existing college course is required. The assessment process adheres to

the high level of academic rigor found at accredited higher learning institutions, which follows the Ten Standards for Quality Assurance in Assessing Learning by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL).

C. NON-CREDIT CREDENTIALS – Credit may be awarded for non-credit certifications and courses offered through Lifetime Learning or another provider where a course equivalency has been established by the relevant academic department with approval from the college dean.

D DEPARTMENTAL EXAM – Any department may, at its discretion and with the approval of the college dean, administer an examination for any course offered in the department. The department also determines the standards for passing these examinations. Students who earn passing scores will be granted credit for the courses. Credit by examination will not be awarded to students who have been enrolled or are currently enrolled in the courses for credit or audit.

3. Responsible Parties

The Graduate School with input from the Registrar, DOSL, and Lifetime Learning , is responsible for establishing procedures under this policy.

4. Assessment Procedures and Fees

The assessment of experiential or competency-based learning will be conducted by the University's designated credit for prior learning (CPL) coordinator in conjunction with qualified faculty within the academic program (as well as the program director) for which credit is desired. Requests for prior learning assessment credit should be made to [Lifetime Learning](#). Lifetime Learning will route requests to the appropriate program based on the student's experience and goals. The Registrar's Office will be notified of all decisions and will maintain records.

Portfolio Evaluation

The CPL coordinator(s) in the Division of Lifetime Learning will initiate the portfolio evaluation process after consulting with the relevant program director. The portfolio will be evaluated by the faculty member or expert most familiar with the course content for which credit is being sought. Portfolio reviewers should base their evaluation on national standards established by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). The evaluation recommendation must be approved by the respective graduate program director, the department chair, and the college dean. If approved, credit will be awarded by the Registrar's Office. If not approved, the portfolio evaluator should provide detailed feedback explaining the reason for the denial.

To get started, students must fill out the online eligibility form, provide a resume, unofficial transcripts, and evidence or documentation of prior learning. Evidence includes sample work products, projects or work-based experiences, training certificates, certifications, or digital badges, workplace evaluations, letters of recommendation, multimedia – photographs, videos, published articles, essays, blogs, etc.

Fees: All students requesting portfolio review will pay a \$150 processing fee. These fees cannot be paid for with federal financial aid and will not be refunded if the portfolio receives no credit.

Portfolio Review Appeals Process: There is no guarantee that a submitted portfolio will result in an award of credit. Portfolio reviewers base their evaluation on national standards established by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) and on expertise in the subject matter. Appeals may occur when the program director denies the student credit for their claim. The department chair of the relevant department will review appeals. The decision of the department chair is final. To be eligible for an appeal, the student must demonstrate that one the following criteria applies:

- The standard assessment process was not followed.
- Feedback from the portfolio assessor was not sufficient.
- The student demonstrates evidence of bias in the review process.

Credit by Credential

Ball State recognizes that there is value to providing credit for noncredit programs that may increase access to our current credit programs. Memorandums of Understanding will be developed between Lifetime Learning and one or more of the seven academic colleges. Student earns the articulation credential through Lifetime Learning (articulation badge), and it is submitted through a secured link to the Registrar's Office.

For credentials and certifications earned outside of Ball State University, competencies will be verified, and a credit award recommendation will be achieved by either The American Council on Education (ACE) National Credit Registry, verification from the issuing organization/institution; and/or assessment by qualified faculty. The graduate program director is responsible for authorizing the equivalency to Ball State graduate credit, with approval of the department chair and the college dean.

For more information, visit bsu.edu/admissions/credit to learn how Ball State awards advanced credit. Ball State University will accept courses for transfer evaluation and advanced standing credit transcript posting only if the student is currently enrolled.

TRANSFER AND EXTENSION WORK

All off-campus courses offered by Ball State University are considered residence or campus credit.

Transfer Policy for Superintendent or High School Principal Licensure: A Ball State master's graduate who is working on the superintendent's license or high school principal's license (a 60-credit program) may take up to 15 of the 30 graduate credits beyond the master's degree at other institutions of higher education. Of these 15 credits, a maximum of 8 may be earned in extension.

Transfer Policy for EdS Degrees: Candidates for specialist in education degrees may take a maximum of 6 graduate credits beyond the master's degree at another institution of higher education. The remainder of the 30 graduate credits required for the degree must be earned in residence at Ball State.

Transfer Policy for Master's Degrees: Upon recommendation of the program director and with the approval of the dean of the Graduate School, work taken for graduate credit at other institutions may be transferred in partial fulfillment of degree requirements under the following conditions:

- All work must have been completed within the time limit of six years allowed to complete a master's degree at Ball State University.
- Transfer work is not eligible for revalidation.
- Only graduate courses in which a student has earned a grade of B or better may be considered for transfer credit. A grade of B- is not transferrable.
- Credits may be transferred, but grades earned in courses taken at another institution do not transfer and are not used in computing the student's GPA at Ball State University.
- When a graduate course is taken at another university on a credit/no credit or pass/fail option, "credit" or "pass" are not accepted as transferrable unless approved by the appropriate academic unit.
- ~~A master's degree candidate may transfer as many as 9 credits toward a degree program with a total of 44 or fewer credits. A master's degree program that requires a total of 45 or more credits may allow a student to transfer as many as 15 credits. Any credits earned through Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) are considered as "transfer" classes, and students may use transfer classes to satisfy up to (but no more than) 50% of the total master's degree credit hour requirements. (These allowable transfer credits include credits earned through CPL and classes transferred in from other institutions).~~ -Departments may set more restrictive limits on the number of transfer credits they accept.
- No credits earned on any graduate degree will be eligible for transfer to a Ball State master's degree.
- No credits earned for a baccalaureate degree may be counted for credit toward a graduate degree at Ball State University.

Transfer of credit will be considered for graduate work taken only at institutions or programs accredited by one of the USDE federally-recognized institutional accrediting commissions or program accrediting agencies, provided the courses meet institutional requirements and are appropriate for the student's planned and approved program.

~~Transfer of credit will be considered for graduate work taken only at USDE accredited institutions provided the courses meet institutional requirements and are appropriate for the student's planned and approved program.~~ The research requirement must be taken at Ball State University.

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