

Policy Number	104.002 Academics
Policy Title	TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY
Responsible Officers	Registrar
Responsible Offices	Registrar
Summary	This policy outlines CIU's criteria for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit for transfer, credit by examination, and advanced placement that is consistent with our mission and ensures that course work and learning outcomes are at the appropriate level and comparable to CIU 's degree programs.
Definitions	
Approving Body	Academic Council; Administrative Council
Approval Date	April 22, 2002 104.001 Aca Council (03.13.2020); Admin Council (e-vote to approve – 05.28.2020) 104.002 Aca Council (06.06.2022); Admin Council (6.13.2022)
Last Revision	May 2022
Re-evaluation Date	Fall 2025
Departmental Impact	Office of the University Registrar; Academic Deans' offices, Admissions office

Failure to follow the following policy may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Policy Statement

CIU seeks to conform to the criteria of The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) (*Criteria 4.2.1 and 4.3.1*) and The Association for Biblical higher Education (ABHE). These policies and criteria are further informed by the statements of best practice adopted by The Council of Adult Experiential Learning (CAEL), The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) (*A Statement to the Community: Transfer and the Public Interest*, November, 2000), and the recommendations of the American Council on Education (ACE) (*The National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs; The Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services; Guide to Educational Credit by Examination*). These policies and criteria have three primary objectives: (a) ensure efficient and effective mobility of students between Columbia International University (CIU) and other educational institutions; (b) to facilitate satisfactory student academic progress; and (c) to ensure academic integrity.

1. Governing Policies

The "[Joint Statement on the Transfer and Award of Credit](#)" ratified September 28, 2001 by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), the American Council on Education (ACE), and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) serves as the basis for all of CIU's transfer policies and practices. Coursework transferred or accepted for credit toward any CIU degree must be relevant to the degree program, with course content and level of instruction resulting in student competencies at least equivalent to those of students enrolled in this university's own degree programs. In assessing and documenting equivalent learning and qualified faculty, CIU personnel consult official institutional catalogs and employ recognized guides which aid in the evaluation for credit.

CIU accepts transfer credit from other accredited educational institutions (established based on [CHEA recognition](#)), both civilian and military, subject to the following general criteria:

- a minimum grade of "C"(or equivalent); courses graded "pass/fail" are not transferred unless it is stipulated on the transcript that a "pass" required a grade of "C" (2.0) or above;
- credit is applicable to the CIU program of study in which the student intends to enroll;
- earned transfer credit may be limited by degree program residency requirements;
- transfer credit does not calculate into the student's overall GPA;
- transfer credit may not be awarded if the transfer course's content is essentially equivalent

(50% of the course content or more) to a course already completed.

1.2 Credit with Course Substitution

Normally, qualified hours may be transferred into the program, granting elective hours to the appropriate discipline area. When the number of hours and the content of a required CIU course is evaluated as equivalent, those hours may be specifically designated to fulfill the curricular requirements of the required course and identified as a course substitute. See [transfer supplements/guides](#) for specific equivalencies.

1.3 Residence Requirements

Undergraduate-level: Associate degree students, regardless of previous undergraduate credits earned, are required to complete a minimum of 15 semester hours of coursework through CIU. Bachelor degree students, regardless of previous undergraduate credits earned, are required to complete a minimum of 30 semester hours of coursework through CIU.

Graduate-level: At least one-third of credits toward a graduate degree must be earned at either CIU or a CIU site. Individual programs vary in the permissible amount of transfer credit allowed.

1.4 Non-US Institutions

Credit will be awarded from international institutions based on an official evaluation and recommendation from World Education Services (WES). All standard transfer criteria apply (minimum grade, applicable to degree program, etc.).

1.5 Unaccredited Academic Institutions

Unaccredited institutions are defined as US institutions which are not accredited by an agency officially recognized by the US Department of Education (USDE) or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or non-US institutions not acknowledged by WES as accredited (typically based on the institution's recognition by the home country's ministry of education). Students requesting transfer credit from unaccredited institutions must provide CIU Admissions with a completed [Unaccredited Institution Review](#). This review must include the following accompanying documentation:

- An official transcript (must be in English or a certified translation into English)
- A catalog of the unaccredited institution granting the student's degree or credit (catalog should correspond with the student's dates of attendance). Course syllabi from at least 5 classes appropriate to program must also accompany the catalog. Courses should indicate the number of clock hours required per credit hour earned.
- A document indicating the institutions from which faculty have received their graduate degrees, nature of the degree, and status, full-time or adjunct (if not clearly stated in the catalog). Faculty members should hold graduate or terminal degrees in related fields to courses taught from regionally accredited institutions.
- If the institution is in the U.S., a copy of the document attesting authorization to grant degrees by the state board of education. Such authorization is not equivalent to accreditation, but it does show that the institution has offered evidence of its educational purpose and financial responsibility.
- Letters from accredited institutions which have admitted or accepted graduates of the unaccredited institution or that have accepted courses for transfer credit.

All materials must be received no later than one month prior to the published deadline for admission for the term. Decisions are not made on incomplete files.

Following review of the school's material and any advisory consultation of the dean's own choosing, the dean determines if work is acceptable from the school. Work that is accepted from the school will be awarded at two-thirds of the award normally given to an accredited institution following computation of

equivalent hours converted to CIU's semester hours. A limit of one year, or 31 semester credit hours, of work from a non-accredited school may be applied toward a CIU undergraduate degree.

1.6 The European Council for Theological Education (ECTE)

Transfer credit may be awarded from ECTE accredited institutions based upon the following:

- ECTE accreditation meets international standards promulgated by the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQUAHE).
- ECTE is a recognized accreditor and core member of the International Council for Evangelical Theological Education (ICETE -- www.icete-edu.org). ICETE formally reviews and recognizes the accreditation of member associations and EEAA has earned this recognition based upon extensive documentation and peer review.
- ECTE accreditation is recognized and reciprocated by the Association for Biblical Higher Education in Canada and the United States (ABHE—www.abhe.org).

2. Additional Policies for Undergraduate Study

2.1 Transfer Credit Previously Used for another Undergraduate Degree

CIU will accept undergraduate transfer credit previously used for the award of the same degree or its equivalent if it does not exceed 50% of the CIU degree, and all curricular requirements are met including satisfaction of required upper division hours, field education requirements, and residency requirements.

2.2 American Council of Education (ACE) Recommendations

CIU recognizes credit on a limited basis with official ACE recommendation. An original, official transcript must be received directly from ACE indicating the organization's recommendation of credit. See 1.2 Military Education for policy specific to military credit.

Exception (beginning May 2020): ACE recommendation of StraighterLine courses (or similar agencies) is accepted on a limited basis. A maximum of nine (9) total hours may be accepted for these courses and may only apply toward free electives.

2.3 Military Education

Transfer credit is evaluated on the basis of discharge papers (Form DD214, identifying the Military Occupation Specialty) or Form DD2586 which includes American Council of Education (ACE) transfer credit award recommendations. The *Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services* (ACE publication) is employed in establishing transfer credit awards. A maximum of 31 total credit hours may be awarded based on ACE recommendation.

2.4 Torchbearer Schools

Based on CIU's extended history of successful relationship with Torchbearer schools and their students, transfer credit may be awarded from Torchbearer schools based on the following procedure. Student must provide the following for evaluation: an official transcript and a 1,000-word essay (typed, double spaced) summarizing the educational experience at the Torchbearer School. In the essay, students should explain how their experience at the Torchbearer School helped them grow in the areas of Old Testament study, New Testament study, Bible doctrine/systematic theology, spiritual formation, and ministry skills. The student will be notified of credit evaluation within 30 days of student submission. Policies on maximum credit to be awarded from unaccredited institutions (31 total hours) and the 2/3rd conversion applies.

2.5 Credit by Examination

Competency/Proficiency Examination: A student, when authorized by the student's advisor, the instructor of record, and the dean, may prove competency in the knowledge and/or skills of designated courses within the curriculum, similar to the structure established for CLEP or DSST. If the student passes the instructor's comprehensive "competency" exam with a minimum of a 2.0 ("C") grade or above, the student may either accept the credit for the course based on established proficiency or have the course waived so that a more advanced course or a Faculty Directed Study may be substituted within the program. For a list of qualified courses students should contact their academic dean's office. Students will pay a testing fee whether or not they are granted credit. All examination scores and documentation must be submitted to the Office of the University Registrar before credit can be granted. No credit can be earned through a competency examination if the student has started a designated course and/or finished and failed said course at CIU. No more than 12 semester hours of Competency Exam credit can be used in an undergraduate degree program

Standardized Tests: All standardized testing must be completed within one calendar year of a student's matriculation to CIU. A maximum of 30 credits of standardized test credit may be earned toward a bachelor's degree; a maximum of 15 credits of standardized test credit may be earned toward an associate's degree. CLEP and DANTEs credit must be earned prior to the student's graduating semester. CIU will accept credit by examination through the College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) Program; Cambridge International Examinations (AICE); the International Baccalaureate Program, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, the College Board's College-Level Examination Program (CLEP); and the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTEs) consistent with fair and equitable application of these policies. Credits earned by examination are not counted toward residency requirements for graduation. See the [Undergraduate Standardized Test Acceptance and Test Score Criteria](#) for additional detail.

2.3 The International Baccalaureate Program

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma and its subject achievement examinations are recognized by many colleges and universities worldwide as indicative of superior academic achievement at the baccalaureate level. CIU awards credit for higher-level IB examination scores upon receipt of official transcript sent directly from IB.

3. Additional Policies for Graduate Study

3.1 General Graduate-level Policies

Graduate-level students seeking to transfer credit from another institution after matriculation must seek prior permission through academic petition. Coursework taken from another institution may be credited up to 2/3rds of a graduate-level degree if not used previously for the award of the same degree or its equivalent. See academic catalog for degree-specific transfer policies.

3.2 Policies of the Seminary

Seminary transfer policies comply with the standards outlined by The Association of Theological Schools (ATS). Transferred courses may be applied to the free elective category of a degree only if a comparable course is offered at CIU at the graduate level.

3.3 Advanced Standing/Proficiency Examinations

In the case of prior non-academic experience or unaccredited institution credit not approved for transfer, a student may request advanced standing with credit through a proficiency examination (for appropriate courses offered by CIU; does not include CoE courses). Advanced standing may be

awarded either with or without credit. Advanced standing without credit entitles the student to replace a curricular requirement in a field previously studied at an unaccredited school or other non-academic experience with a higher-level course at CIU. Advanced standing with credit satisfies the graduation requirement for which advanced standing is awarded and is awarded only on the basis of a written or oral examination administered at CIU. Advanced Standing is available under the following conditions:

- With the exception of internship courses, advanced standing with credit may be granted for any course offered at CIU appropriate to the student's degree program, including free electives.
- Application for advanced standing must be made within one year of matriculation into CIU.
- No more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the requirements of any degree program may be credited through advanced standing.
- An approved Proficiency Exam Authorization form must be submitted to the Office of the University Registrar with all required signatures indicating approval by the instructor, faculty advisor, and academic dean.
- Competency must be demonstrated by scoring at least 77 percent on a one-time-only written and/or oral assessment to be administered by the professor of record of the given course.
- Students may not receive advanced standing credit for courses they have audited or attempted previously at CIU.

3.4 Standardized Tests

Standardized test credit can be utilized to satisfy prerequisite requirements for graduate-level programs if documented on the student's undergraduate transcript. Scores of 3-5 on AP courses, a score of 50 on the CLEP or 55 on the DAN TES examinations can be credited to satisfy M.A. in Counseling, M.A. in Teaching, and Master of Education undergraduate prerequisites. Standardized test credit is not accepted for graduate level credit.

Policy Procedures:

Individual, official transcripts must be received from the original awarding institution in order for transfer credit to be applied on a student record.

Undergraduate

All eligible transfer is entered on the student's record at the time of admission. For students pursuing a second bachelor's degree, only applicable hours are entered, up to 90 credits. For students with 90+ earned prior hours, a maximum of 90 credit hours is entered, notating on the student's advising worksheet that additional credit is available and can be found in the student's file. For credit earned after matriculation at CIU, students are encouraged to request pre-approval for any transfer courses via a transient letter issued by CIU's Registrar's office.

Upon formal request, CIU allows a student to disavow credit previously awarded as advanced placement or transfer credit. This credit must have been earned prior to attending CIU. Students may repeat courses for which credit has been disavowed. Under no circumstance may credit earned at CIU be declined.

Graduate and Advanced

Any transfer at the graduate-level must be approved by academic petition (or the program's academic dean) prior to entry on the student's record. For credit earned after matriculation at CIU, students are required to request pre-approval for any transfer courses via a transient letter issued by CIU's Registrar's office.

Hyperlinks

www.ciu.edu/policy