

CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) is an external experience gained outside of CU Denver and the college classroom. CPL may include work, industry-recognized certifications, trainings, or exams. In some cases, there is no traditional transcript of what the student completed. Where a record exists, there may not be an assessment or grade of the level of success in that particular learning space or experience. The experience or exam may or may not be backed by a verifiable agency.

Depending on the judgement of the faculty in the content area, a CPL experience, training, or exam may result in one of the following outcomes:

- No credit awarded,
- No credit awarded, but a requirement may be waived with the hours deficit being completed by an alternative class,
- Credit is awarded and applied as an elective toward the degree or credential, or
- Credit is awarded and applied toward the degree or credential as a required course.

CPL limits include:

- At least twenty-five percent (25%) of credits applied to a degree or credential must be successfully completed at CU Denver.
- Degree or credential requirements must be met according to CU Denver rules and policies, including but not limited to upper division minimums and specifically required coursework.

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL), Prior Learning Assessment (PLA), military credit, and course challenge exams are regulated by Colorado Law. Please reference the CDHE website for more information.

Four Types of CPL

1. MOU – A Preauthorized agreement with a provider of an experience or training:

1. These agreements can be found at CU Denver Specialized Transfer Agreements (<https://www.ucdenver.edu/transfer/planning/cu-denver-specialized-transfer-agreements>). Scroll to the bottom to find the “Workforce and Community Partners” list.
2. Credit is awarded when the CU Denver school or college communicates completion of the experience with documentation to the Registrar’s Office, or when the appropriate documentation is submitted through an admissions application in the case of a student who is new to CU Denver.
3. The grade will appear as a “T” or transfer, and there will be no affect on CU Denver gpa

2. Case-by-case portfolio:

A portfolio is a compilation of documents or other evidence that demonstrates college-level learning at the level of “C” grades or better.

Portfolio assessment is used when a student is seeking credit for experience or training that is not transcribed or has not been previously assessed.

- The experience must be verifiable by a third party. For example, if the request is for work experience, the work supervisor must be able to make a verifiable statement that includes number of hours, level of work, knowledge and skills learned.

- The student requests a portfolio review by contacting TATeam@ucdenver.edu. Basic information about the experience, knowledge, and skills along with the requested CU Denver course credit is important to include at that time.
- The Registrar’s Office will identify a school/college and faculty member in the appropriate content area.
- The Registrar’s Office will connect the student with the faculty member so that required materials can be agreed upon, submitted, and the faculty member can assess the experience. Required elements of the portfolio provided by the student and required by the faculty member may include but are not limited to:
 - Timing of the experience (dates) and the number of hours completed,
 - Description of the experience with specific skills and knowledge listed,
 - Demonstration of related competencies,
 - Syllabus,
 - Curriculum,
 - Written essay(s),
 - Exam(s), and
 - Assessment mechanisms.
- The portfolio is reviewed by the faculty member who determines if there is sufficient college-level learning at the earned grade level of “C” or better and determines the number of credits to be awarded based on contact hours.
- The faculty member communicates the outcome with the Registrar’s Office in all cases. A record is kept in the case that the student is successful, and also in the case that the student has attempted but has not passed the portfolio requirement.
- If credit is awarded, it is applied to the student’s transcript as CPL credit in the transfer credit section. The grade will appear as a “T” or transfer, and there will be no affect on CU Denver gpa.

3. Course Challenge Exams:

A challenge exam is a request from a student to be given an institutionally-devised exam or standard national exam to assess college-level knowledge and skills related directly to a specific CU Denver course.

- The student sends a request to the Registrar’s Office at TATeam@ucdenver.edu to be provided an exam for a specific CU Denver course, based on reasonable demonstration of the student’s existing knowledge and/or experience in that subject.
- The Registrar’s Office identifies the appropriate school/college and faculty member to provide the exam and assessment.
- The faculty member provides the student with an institutionally-devised challenge exam, a comprehensive final exam, a standardized national exam, or an equivalent comprehensive assignment that would allow the faculty member to assess the student’s knowledge and determine that the student has achieved an equivalent grade of “C” or better.
- The faculty member communicates the outcome with the Registrar’s Office in all cases. A record is kept in the case that the student has passed the exam, and also in the case that the student has attempted but has not passed the exam.
- If the exam or assignment is passed successfully, the number of credit hours remain the same as the CU Denver course. Credit is applied to the student’s transcript as CPL credit in the transfer credit

section. The grade will appear as a “T” or transfer, and there will be no effect on CU Denver gpa.

- Administrative fees for course challenge exams may not be charged in excess of half the tuition of the course. Fees must be coordinated with the Bursar’s Office.

4. Standardized Exams and Experiences:

CPL can also include standardized local or national exams and experiences. These exams and experiences are communicated by records similar to official transcripts and are ordered from the organization providing the exam or experience. These include but are not limited to:

- Advanced Placement (AP),
- International Baccalaureate (IB),
- College-Level Examination Program (CLEP),
- DANES Subject Standardized Test (DSST),
- Military transcripts, or
- Joint Service Transcripts (JST) describing military occupations.

Credit for prior learning policy links:

1. CU System-wide Administrative Policy Statement (APS) on Acceptance of Credit for Prior Learning, specifically related to International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced Placement (AP), and military credit: <https://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/8006>
2. CU Denver Policy 7007 - Awarding Graduate Credit from Prior Learning Sources: https://www.ucdenver.edu/docs/librariesprovider284/default-document-library/7000-student-affairs/7007--awarding-graduate-credit-from-prior-learning-sources.pdf?sfvrsn=7555fdb2_2