

Transfer Credit

Penn State will evaluate for possible transfer course work that is equivalent to course offerings at Penn State.

Courses completed at other colleges or universities in the United States

To see if specific courses from another university will transfer, please check our [transferring credits tool](#).

Course work successfully completed at other colleges and universities that are recognized by the six regional accrediting associations will be considered for transfer credit.

To be eligible for review:

- The grade received in the course must be equivalent to a “C” (2.0) or higher at Penn State.
- Penn State must have a similar program or course offering.
- The course should be useful in the student’s program of study at Penn State.
- College level course work completed at colleges or universities that are licensed by state boards of education to award associate degrees (or higher) but that are not members of one of the six regional accrediting associations may be eligible for credit by validation.

Penn State credits are expressed in semester hours. Courses evaluated for transfer from colleges and universities with different credit systems (quarter hours, units) are converted to semester hours of credit.

The Undergraduate Admissions Office determines which credits will transfer to the University, whereas the academic unit to which the student has been admitted determines how credits will be used to fulfill degree requirements in a student's program of study.

CREDIT BY TRANSFER FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS

(Senate Policy [42-80](#), [83-80](#))

Penn State students may elect to schedule courses at another institution and transfer the credits to Penn State in order to meet degree requirements. Before a student schedules course work at another institution, he/she should have the credits approved for transfer and should work with an adviser to determine how the credits will apply to his/her academic program.

If a student has already taken a course at another institution, then he/she should read [General and Specific Credits](#) and follow steps 2-4 in [Student Action for Transferring a Course](#).

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ADVISABILITY OF TAKING COURSE WORK ELSEWHERE

A student considering taking a course at another institution should consult with an academic adviser to decide if it is to his/her advantage. For example, it may not be advisable for a student to take a course at another institution if he/she needs to improve his/her [cumulative grade-point average](#), if the student would be better served by work or an internship experience, if taking the course does not expedite degree completion or significantly reduce an overwhelming semester workload, or if the course lays a foundation for a more advanced course that will be taken at Penn State.

Limitation

A student must earn at least 36 of his/her last 60 credits required for a baccalaureate degree and at least 18 of the last 30 credits required for an associate degree in courses offered by Penn State or in cooperative degree programs that have been approved by the University Faculty Senate.

IDENTIFYING A COURSE

[Undergraduate Admissions](#) evaluates all transfer credits according to [specified criteria](#). When a course is evaluated, it becomes part of a database that students and advisers can use to research opportunities at other institutions. Courses may transfer as [general or specific credit](#).

Penn State's Database of Evaluated Courses

Using the Transferring Credits application on eLion, a student can check Penn State's database to determine (1) what institutions offer a course that is equivalent to a Penn State course of interest or (2) what equivalent courses are offered at a particular institution. Authorized advisers can access this information using either the [Transfer Course Evaluation Guide](#) or [ISIS](#).

ISIS is helpful when a student has identified a particular institution and asks what courses offered there will transfer to Penn State. Use the AMIQ screen to search for the institution by typing its name. To select the institution from the list, type a character in the "SEL" column, and then move to the AUII screen, which lists all courses that have been evaluated for transfer, or to the AUIT screen, which lists *only* courses that transfer as [specific courses](#) ([general credit](#) and nontransferable courses are not included).

If a course of interest is found in the database, the student should follow the instructions in [Student Action for Transferring a Course](#). If a course is evaluated as general credit or not transferable, a student may challenge this evaluation by following the instructions for Courses Not Included in Penn State's Database (below).

Courses Not Included in Penn State's Database

If a course is not included in the database, then it may be considered for transfer if it meets [specified criteria](#). A student may use another institution's catalog and schedule of courses to identify a course that he/she would like to have evaluated. The student should provide a course description and completed [transfer course evaluation form](#) to an admissions counselor (by mail or appointment) for evaluation. [Undergraduate Admissions](#) will evaluate the course and contact the student regarding its transferability.

Criteria Used to Consider Courses for Transfer to Penn State

The following criteria are used by Undergraduate Admissions to evaluate courses for transfer to Penn State:

- The institution must be accredited by one of the six regional accrediting agencies listed below. Member institutions are listed on the appropriate Web sites below:

[Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools](#)
[North Central Association of Colleges and Schools](#)
[New England Association of Schools and Colleges](#)
[Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities](#)
[Southern Association of Colleges and Schools](#)
[Western Association of Schools and Colleges](#)

- The course discipline must be taught at Penn State. Courses such as business education or theology/church doctrine cannot be considered for transfer because Penn State does not offer equivalent courses.
- The course must be appropriate for the student's level: students in four-year programs must take baccalaureate-level courses, and students in two-year programs must take courses at the associate level or higher.

General and Specific Credits

Transferred credits are recorded as general or specific credits on a student's transcript.

Specific Credit: Courses essentially equivalent to Penn State courses may be considered for transfer as specific Penn State courses, provided they are below the [400 level](#), (e.g., a 3-semester-credit Introductory Psychology course could be transferred as [PSYCH 100](#); however, a 3-semester-credit advanced Abnormal Psychology course could be transferred as general credits in psychology, but not as [PSYCH 470](#)).

General Credit: Courses that differ in content, differ in number of credits, or are equivalent to 400-level courses are only considered for transfer as general credit. If a student believes that a course evaluated as general credit is identical to a Penn State course, he/she can have the course evaluated by the department that offers the Penn State course. For this evaluation, the student will need an official course description for the semester/session that the course was completed, and a course syllabus may also be necessary. If a representative of the department verifies that the course should be transferred as specific credit, then a [transfer course evaluation form](#) should be completed and submitted to Undergraduate Admissions so that the evaluation can be revised and the database can be updated.

Fulfilling Degree Requirements: A course evaluated for transfer as specific credit is viewed as equivalent to a Penn State course and can fulfill a degree requirement. General credits can be electives, or they can be reviewed by a student's college or department as a substitution for a specific degree requirement. To initiate this review, students should contact their academic adviser. An official course description for the semester/session that the course was completed is necessary, and a course syllabus may also be needed.

Credits Earned

Penn State credits are awarded on a semester-hour basis. Courses evaluated for transfer from colleges and universities with different credit systems (quarter hours, units) are converted to semester hours of credit.

GRADE REQUIRED FOR TRANSFERRING A COURSE

A course will be transferable with a [grade of C \(2.00\)](#) or higher. Courses taken for pass/fail or satisfactory/unsatisfactory grades may only be transferred if the registrar at the other institution verifies that a pass or satisfactory grade is equivalent to at least a C or higher. Although a grade of C or higher is required for the credit to transfer, only the credit will be transferred. The course grade will not transfer, and the student's Penn State grade-point average will not be affected.

A student should be reminded that, although a grade does not appear on his/her Penn State transcript, he/she may be asked by prospective employers or graduate schools to provide a transcript from all institutions attended.

STUDENT ACTION FOR TRANSFERRING A COURSE

1. If you find the course you want on Penn State's database, print the chart (showing that course's transfer information) as documentation that Penn State will accept that course for transfer. (No further approval is required!)

If you would like to take a course not included in Penn State's database, see instructions in [Courses Not Included in Penn State's Database](#), and then follow the instructions in 2 below.

2. After taking a course at another institution, request that the school send an official transcript to the following address: Undergraduate Admissions Office, The Pennsylvania State University, 201 Shields Building, University Park, PA 16802-1294.
3. When you receive notification from Undergraduate Admissions indicating that your transcript has been received, pay the evaluation/recording fee in person or by mail to Undergraduate Admissions (see address above).
4. Verify that the transfer has been processed by checking your academic record using Transcripts on eLion.

IMPACT ON A STUDENT'S PENN STATE RECORD

Courses are recorded on a student's transcript as [general or specific credit](#). In the example that follows, a student earned specific credit for MATH 021 and general credit for a precalculus math course:

MATH 021 COLLEGE ALGEBRA I 3.0
MATH PRECALCULUS 3.0 GEN

The institution at which the student enrolled is noted on the transcript.

Fractional transfer credits created in the conversion of quarter-hour credits or units to semester-hour credits are typically coded as GMISC, general miscellaneous credits, on a student's transcript.

Credits are transferred; grades are not. The credits transferred from another school do not affect a student's grade-point average. They are included in [total credits](#) on the student's Penn State [transcript](#); however, they are not included in [cumulative credits](#).

PROVISIONAL STUDENTS

If a provisional student has transferred credits to Penn State, a conditional evaluation of these credits is available to authorized advisers on [ISIS](#) screen AUB. Credits will not appear on the Penn State transcript until the student is admitted to degree status.

NONDEGREE STUDENTS

A nondegree student may request an evaluation of transfer credit for advising purposes by contacting the Undergraduate Admissions Office and having official copies of his/her postsecondary school transcript sent there. Authorized advisers may view this evaluation on [ISIS](#) screen AUB. Credits will not appear on the Penn State transcript until the student is admitted to degree status.

The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. Please consult a Penn State academic adviser for more detailed information.

This page is part of the [University Undergraduate Advising Handbook](#), which is maintained by the Division of Undergraduate Studies, DUS@psu.edu.

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