

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

Office of Academic Affairs

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UW POLICIES FOR TRANSFER AND DISTANCE-EDUCATION CREDIT 27 September 2012, revised 9 October 2012

UW maintains a system for accepting transfer credits from other institutions and prides itself on forward-looking approaches to distance education. Several issues in these arenas deserve clarification. They include the following:

- UW's policy for accepting transfer credit from Wyoming's public community colleges
- The policy for accepting transfer credit for students transferring to UW from other institutions
- The policy for accepting transfer credit for students enrolled at UW
- Policies regarding UW credits earned through distance delivery.

Transfer credit from Wyoming's public community colleges

For any student, UW will accept credit earned at any Wyoming public community college in accordance with the Wyoming Higher Education Course Transfer Guide. This policy applies to students transferring to UW and to students enrolled at UW who take courses at one of these community colleges while they pursue degrees at UW.

UW maintains an active regimen of institution-wide and discipline-specific articulation with Wyoming community colleges. These discussions, together with department-driven decisions about which courses to list in the statewide common course-numbering system, provide mechanisms that can ensure appropriate levels of course equivalency.

Transfer credit for students transferring from other institutions

The UW registrar's office maintains a list of course equivalencies and courses accepted for general credit from other institutions of higher learning. In maintaining this list, the registrar, in consultation with academic departments as necessary, determines which outside courses:

- are equivalent to specific UW courses when students transfer to UW
- count for general university-level credit when students transfer to UW
- are not transferable for university-level credit when students transfer to UW.

For course beyond the 1000-2000 level and in cases where questions arise, the registrar relies on academic departments to make the assessment.

For any student transferring to UW from another institution of higher learning, UW will adhere to the registrar's equivalency and general transfer list on the date that the transcript is evaluated. If a course in question doesn't appear in the list, the registrar will follow the normal protocol, in consultation with academic departments, to make a determination. If an academic department determines that an outside course improperly appears on the list, the registrar will correct the list according to the department's guidance. The corrected list will apply to subsequent transfer students but not retroactively.

Transfer credit for students enrolled at UW

The university's faculty and administration expect UW students to earn credits by taking courses at UW. Exceptions may be appropriate in some instances. For example, the university encourages students to pursue opportunities to study abroad, whether through UW course offerings or through other approved programs. As another example, a student who spends a summer in another university town may also have a compelling case for taking a non-UW course and applying the credits to the UW transcript. There are many other possibilities.

For any student enrolled at UW, the university will guarantee transfer credits only for courses for which the student has received prior, course-specific approval from an academic advisor and the affected academic department head. A Transfer Guarantee Form should be submitted prior to enrolling for a transfer course. See the following URL:

http://www.uwyo.edu/registrar/students/forms_and_petitions.html

The only exceptions are transferable credits from Wyoming community colleges, as discussed above. In considering requests of this type, academic department heads may take into account the student's circumstances, department- and university-level learning outcomes such as global awareness, and the department faculty's assessment of the course's content, level, and academic rigor.

This policy has no effect on such programs as WICHE's Internet Course Exchange and other inter-institutional arrangements through which courses taught elsewhere count as credit-bearing UW courses.

UW credits earned through distance delivery

Unlike some institutions, UW delivers courses at a distance through its mainstream academic departments, not through a separate academic unit. Academic department heads have the authority to assign instructors to distance-delivered courses, including online courses. They also have a responsibility to ensure that those courses are comparable in rigor and effectiveness to courses delivered face to face.

For this reason, ***when a department offers a UW course both face to face and at a distance, any UW student may satisfy any relevant university-, college-, and department-level requirements or elective credit by taking the course in either format.*** This policy applies to Laramie-based students as well as students taking courses delivered through the Outreach School.

Exceptions may arise when it is necessary to reserve space in a distance-delivered course for off-campus students, who can't take the face-to-face version. In these cases, departments may reserve spaces for off-campus students. But to the extent that spaces remain available after all interested off-campus students have enrolled, these spaces must be available to interested on-campus students.

A more general observation about distance-delivered courses is in order. Judgments about course credit should rest on intellectual content, the level of the material being taught, and honest assessments of expected learning outcomes. Superficial distinctions based on course delivery mode alone no longer suffice: thanks to many creative colleagues, the array of effective techniques and technologies for delivering university-level coursework is growing rapidly in virtually every discipline, both at UW and nationwide.

Responsibility for these decisions properly resides with the faculty who have expertise in appropriate disciplines. At the same time, these faculty members have a responsibility to students to base their decisions on good-faith judgments about the real academic merits — not simply the delivery mode — of the coursework in question.