

Acceptance of Academic Credit

Central Alabama Community College provides opportunities for students to earn credit toward an Associate of Science Degree, Associate of Applied Science Degree, and Associate of Occupational Technology Degree, Certificate, and Short-Term Certificate. The institution evaluates a student's transfer credit upon receipt of all official transcripts. Coursework from another institution of higher education will be considered for transfer if the institution is accredited by a Regional Accrediting agency. Transfer courses are accepted and credit is awarded for coursework with equivalent course content and equivalent credit hours from regionally accredited colleges for all passing grades as determined by the Alabama State Board of Education. This policy is adjusted for transfer students who are transferring into the College with a cumulative grade point average of less than 2.00. As directed by Alabama State Board of Education Policy 801.01, transfer students with less than a 2.0 grade point average cannot transfer credit hours for a course in which the student earned a grade of "D." These policies are available on the Alabama Community College System website and in the College Catalog.

The Admissions Office uses the *Accredited Institutions of Postsecondary Education* manual published by the American Council on Education, and the SACS Accredited Non-Public Schools in Alabama publication to determine if the credit is eligible for transfer.

The College's Transcript Evaluator evaluates credit and completes the Transfer and Nontraditional Credit Awarded toward a Certificate or Associate Degree form and sends it to the Dean of Instruction for evaluation and approval. The College follows Alabama State Board of Education Policy 706.01 and the Guidelines for Policy 706.01 in awarding non-traditional credit. The methods for validating credit for experiential learning are outlined in this policy. The Partnership for Accelerated Learning through Engagement, Visualization, and Simulation (PAVES) process for evaluation of Prior Learning Assessment must be completed by the Evaluator. The process includes such things as a review of related work experience, test scores, project completion, certification, on the job training, and other schooling or training. Portfolio reviews involve the departmental faculty review. Ultimately, the Transfer of Nontraditional Credit Award Form is referred to the Dean of Instruction for approval. The PAVES method for Prior Learning Assessment has been recommended by the Department of Postsecondary Education who has been on campus to train College faculty on the process. The College has recently utilized this process for awarding non-traditional college credit. The attached forms and transcript demonstrate the College's use of the PAVES method.

Central Alabama Community College awards advanced placement credit through credit by exam, such as College Board Advanced Placement (AP) and College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams, in compliance with Alabama State Board of Education Policy 706.01. Credit by exam may be awarded only if the credit equates to a course within the current curriculum of the College or if the credit may be used as elective credit. Students may not earn credit through nontraditional sources for any course in which a passing grade has been previously received. As evidence of compliance, examples showing the application of credit for AP Scores and a student's transcript where the College awarded AP credit and CLEP credit are attached.

If the Transcript Evaluator questions a student's transfer credit upon receipt of all official transcripts, the Dean of Instruction is consulted prior to completion of the Transfer and Nontraditional Credit Award form. The Dean of Instruction must approve and sign the form before credit is awarded. Students wishing to transfer work completed at a foreign college or university must provide a course-by-course evaluation from an acceptable foreign credentials evaluation firm. Appropriate firms are recommended upon student requests. This is required to verify the authenticity and level of the credential as well as the course-by-course review. After receipt of this review, acceptability of the coursework is reviewed by the Dean of Instruction.

The methods for validating credit for military training are outlined in Alabama State Board of Education Policy 706.01 and the Central Alabama Community College Catalog. The College adheres to policies prescribed by the *Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services* published by the American Council on Education, in granting credit. Once the Military Transcript is received, it is reviewed for credit recommended by the American Council of Education and military coursework is then reviewed by the Dean of Instruction who must sign the Transfer and Nontraditional Credit Award form before the coursework is applied to the transcript and credited toward a Certificate or Associate Degree.

The policies for evaluating, awarding, and accepting academic credit for transfer, experiential learning, credit by examination, advanced placement, and professional certificates are the same for all campus locations, the Talladega Center, Talladega City High School Career Technical Center, Sylacauga High School, distance education, and all modes of delivery.

Traditional Credit

- I. Coursework transferred or accepted for credit toward an undergraduate program must represent collegiate course work relevant to the formal award, with course content and level of instruction resulting in student competencies at least equivalent to those of the students enrolled in Central Alabama Community College undergraduate formal award programs.
- II. A course completed at other regionally or Council on Occupational Education accredited postsecondary institutions with a passing grade will be accepted for transfer as potentially creditable toward graduation requirements. A transfer grade of "D" will only be accepted when the transfer student's cumulative grade point average is 2.0 or higher at the time of admission. If the student has a cumulative 2.0 or above, the "D" grade will be accepted the same as for native students.
- III. Awarding of transfer credit to fulfill graduation requirements will be based on applicability of the credits to the requirements of the degree sought.
- IV. Credit may be extended based on a comprehensive evaluation of demonstrated and documented competencies and previous formal training.

Non-Traditional Credit

Credit for prior learning can be awarded only after the assessment of prior learning experiences and only for documented learning that demonstrates achievement of all terminal objectives for a specific

course(s). Before receiving credit for a course, a student must meet enrollment requirements for the course. Students may not earn credit through non-traditional academic work for any course in which a grade has previously been received. Applicants must have official documents sent directly to the Office of Enrollment Services from the appropriate agency.

- I. **CLEP (College Level Examination Program- sponsored by the College Board)** – Central Alabama Community College will award credit for satisfactory performance on CLEP tests. CLEP is a national program of credit by examination that offers the student the opportunity to obtain recognition for college level achievement. Upon receipt of official results from a CLEP testing center, Central Alabama Community College will grant credit based on state guidelines and the American Council on Education (ACE) recommendations. ACE recommendations may be found at <http://clep.collegeboard.org/develop/ace-credit>.
- II. **Advanced Placement Test (AP)** – Central Alabama Community College awards credit for advanced placement courses taken in high school with scores of 3 or higher earned on the national examinations of the College Board Advanced Placement Program. Upon receipt of official results, Central Alabama Community College will grant credit based on state guidelines.
- III. **Credit for Experience in the Armed Services** – Central Alabama Community College grants credit for appropriate educational experiences in the armed service in accordance with recommendations from the American Council on Education’s Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services. Interested students may contact the Office of Enrollment Services.
- IV. **Statewide Articulation** – Students can receive college credit for technical high school courses listed on the statewide articulation memorandum of agreement between the Alabama Community College System and Alabama State Department of Education. Students must complete the articulation criteria as outlined by the state to receive college credit for any course.
- V. **Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)** – Credit for experiential learning through portfolio review may not be awarded for academic transfer courses and may be used only when items I-IV cannot be used. Central Alabama Community College awards credit for previous training and work experience in career and technical programs only by the student providing a portfolio with relevant materials to determine college equivalent learning. Any student interested in obtaining PLA credit should contact the appropriate college faculty member or Ms. Jane Boos in the Office of Student Services on the Alexander City Campus in order to obtain the appropriate paperwork and advisement of the PLA process. The student will be responsible for any costs associated with granting of PLA credits.

Central Alabama Community College may use one or any combination of the above non-traditional methods in evaluating previous training and work experience. Not more than 25 percent of the total credit required for any program may be awarded through non-traditional means. Credit awarded through non-traditional means is not applicable toward the minimum of 25 percent of semester credit hours that must be completed at Central Alabama Community College for graduation requirements. Acceptance of non-traditional academic credit by CACC does not guarantee that other institutions will accept such work. Students are responsible for verifying acceptable course work by contracting the respective transfer institution.