Prior learning assessment for course equivalency
General guidelines

Prior learning assessment at IUPUI is used to validate previously acquired knowledge and skills with respect to course expectations and learning outcomes. Assessment is available to transfer students for knowledge and skills gained through study and professional practice prior to admission to one of our undergraduate programs. Objective evidence of the knowledge and skills constitutes a portfolio. The student must present this documentation to demonstrate that the learning objectives and competencies required by an existing course in our program have been met. The equivalence of the documented skills and knowledge to those expected to be demonstrated upon the completion of the course serves as the basis for the decision to accept the documentation.

Examples of prior learning documentation

- Completion of recognized academic programs
- Copies of certifications with their fulfillment criteria
- Creating an animated short film
- Curriculum vitae or résumé
- Designing an Android or iPhone app
- Developing an e-commerce website
- Documentation of project management skills
- Documentation of skills consistent with those expected in the course being reviewed (e.g., artwork, mobile app, a website)
- Job descriptions
- Passing a comprehensive examination on the contents of the course
- Service to an NGO or to the government (e.g., military, diplomatic, volunteer)
- Summary of funded and unfunded research projects
- Syllabi of courses covering similar content
- Testimonials concerning knowledge and skills acquisition pertinent to the course
- Documentation of professional activities clarifying acquired knowledge and skills, such as
  - Developing a website for a community service organization
  - Helping with IT fair projects
  - Mentorship
  - Performance reviews
  - Presenting or publishing scholarship concerning the course’s contents
  - Producing a video
  - Public speaking
  - Volunteer work
- Other evidence to validate that course objectives and learning outcomes have been met by prior learning.
**Guidelines for documenting prior learning**

Prior learning assessment may be granted at the discretion of the instructor, in consultation with the Program Director or Chair, on a case by case basis. The student must either pass an ad-hoc exam administrated by the instructor to assess prior learning or construct a persuasive and comprehensive portfolio demonstrating how course objectives and learning outcomes have been satisfied by alternative prior learning and professional experience. It is also possible to both administer the exam and require a portfolio.

In case of portfolio-based evaluation, the faculty member who teaches the course being challenged and the student meet to determine
- whether the portfolio review is feasible;
- whether the student’s expectations for developing the portfolio are appropriate;
- the role of the faculty member in assisting the student through the portfolio review process; and
- the schedule for portfolio completion, conducting the review, and deciding to accept or reject the portfolio.

The exam or portfolio review should be completed no later than the semester before the course must be taken in the plan of study.

Prior learning assessment is only available to students who are in good academic standing.

**The process**

1. The student and course instructor meet to determine the feasibility of prior learning assessment.
2. Once the students passes the demonstration of knowledge/skills through exam or portfolio review, the examiner (individual faculty) fills out the Special Credit form (available by the Program Director or the Chair), signs it, get is signed by the Chair and the Dean, and send it to the Chair to submit it to the Campus Registrar.
3. A Special Credits fee is then assessed by the Registrar.
4. If the student’s documentation is accepted, the course will be assigned to the academic transcript by special credit (indicated as “S”).

**Contact us**

For more information on assessment of prior learning, please contact the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.