

PATHWAYS TO EFFICIENT DEGREE COMPLETION



Credit for Experience and Learning

At Purdue Global, we recognize and articulate eligible skills, knowledge, and previous learning for credit through articulation of corporate/military training, prior learning assessment and portfolio development, and transfer credit and partnerships with community colleges.

Articulation of Corporate/Military Training

When we have a partner that has in-house training that could be articulated as college credit, we follow a structured process to determine whether and how that credit can be applied toward a certificate or degree. To start the evaluation process, we first acquire the syllabi and course and assessment information for each training course run by our partner. The process utilized for a faculty review of curriculum has been vetted through our internal Program and Policy Review Committee as well as our Academic Administrative Council. There are two primary components to a faculty review of curriculum: administrative review and content review.

The **administrative review** examines the structure behind the organization's curriculum. We examine how their courses are developed and updated, we review their quality assurance process to ensure the intended outcomes of their curriculum are being realized, we evaluate how their instructors are selected, trained, and developed, and we assess procedures utilized for documenting course completion. The information is captured by the Registrar's Office and the Academic Solutions team.

The **content review** requires a minimum of three faculty members who are subject matter experts. The review is facilitated by a member of the Registrar's Office who specializes in prior learning theory; however, all final decisions are made by the faculty and then approved by the respective dean. Our priority when conducting a faculty review is the academic integrity of the degrees; therefore, our primary focus is on the course content and learning outcomes. In addition, faculty review and consider other important course elements to guide course credit decisions. They include but are not limited to:

- Course content and learning outcomes
- College level (writing, reading, critical thinking, Bloom's Taxonomy, etc.)
- Instructor qualifications
- Length of course
- Student assessments

- Depth and breadth
- Prerequisite knowledge required
- Appropriate balance between practical and theoretical content
- Content applicable outside the context of the organization

Training and learning provided by corporations are often robust and a review of primary source curriculum documents helps to ensure students receive full recognition of eligible prior learning when they attend Purdue Global.

The following are examples of articulation of outcomes-based training at the credit level (vs. course level) mapped to our modularized courses.

U.S. Armed Forces Medical Education Training Center (METC), Ft. Sam Houston

A customized Associate of Science in Health Science (ASHS) was created for the military to recognize the extensive and substantial medical training servicemembers receive via their various military occupational specialty trainings at METC. Currently, up to 43 semester credits/65 quarter credit hours can be applied toward the ASHS degree.

North Carolina Department of Public Safety — Adult Corrections and Juvenile Justice

Upon review of the North Carolina Department of Public Safety training and assessment processes, we were able to award 17 quarter credit hours for completion of the Basic Corrections Officer Training and provide train-the-trainer credits and military training credit(s).

International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) — Pro Board

A review of the accreditation process for fire service nonacademic certification levels led to certain accredited certification levels being articulated for credit(s). A number of core courses were identified as being met through the review process and even more elective credits to be awarded in the three degrees: up to 15 in the Associate of Applied Science in Fire Science, 32 in the Bachelor of Science in Fire Science, and up to 41 in the Bachelor of Science in Fire and Emergency Management degree programs.

Certified Law Enforcement Officers

A review of the Basic Law Enforcement program standards and assessments led to the identification of five Purdue Global courses that can be applied toward the applicable criminal justice degree.

Montessori Live Educator Training Program

Students who have successfully completed the Montessori Live Educator Training program can transfer in between 22 to 46 quarter credit hours (depending on their level) into the Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Administration degree.

Portfolio Development and Prior Learning Assessment

Portfolio development, course assessments, and professional credential review provide our students with the opportunity to earn college credit for learning acquired at the workplace, volunteering, and in the military.

Portfolio Development: Translating work and life experience into college credit.

Since 2009, more than 2,500 Purdue Global students have completed a rigorous for-credit portfolio development course and submitted an experiential learning portfolio. Last year nonmilitary students earned, on average, 30 quarter credit hours, shaving 2.5 terms off their degree and saving \$9,600 in tuition. Here are a few examples of students who have completed portfolios and earned college credit:

Business

Spanning a 17-year career with a Fortune 500 company, this student started as a data entry clerk and worked his way up the ranks to call center manager and then quality analyst. After being laid off and seeking new employment, he realized he needed a college degree and enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. He earned 35 quarter credit hours toward his degree upon submitting his experiential learning portfolio.

Information Technology

A high school dropout with a GED who had a passion and talent for computer maintenance had bounced around from job to job, never worried about the future but always wanting more. Inspired by his wife to return to college and seek a permanent position as a computer analyst II, this student enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Information Technology. He earned 24 quarter credit hours toward his degree upon submitting his experiential learning portfolio.

Health Sciences

While this student achieved tremendous success in her 26 years of working in health care in the areas of quality improvement, risk management, strategic planning, and budgeting, she knew future advancements were limited without an advanced degree. She earned 33 quarter credit hours toward her Bachelor of Science in Health Care Administration through her experiential learning portfolio.

Legal Studies

A labor relations manager with 25 years in a civil service career, this student wanted to pursue the field of labor law. Without a degree she knew it was not possible. She earned 29 quarter credit hours toward her Bachelor of Science in Legal Studies via her experiential learning portfolio.

Nursing

A registered nurse with 20+ years in the fields of hospital nursing, public health nursing, and psychiatric and substance abuse nursing, this student submitted her experiential learning portfolio and earned 26 quarter credit hours toward her RN-to-BSN degree. Since graduating from the program, the student has enrolled in Purdue Global's Master of Science in Nursing/ Family Nurse Practitioner program.

Prior Learning Assessment: Leveraging our course assessments and open courses to demonstrate proficiency and earn credit.

Students can demonstrate proficiency in the learning outcomes of specific courses by passing a comprehensive assessment to waive prerequisites, determine class placement, and earn college credit. Additionally, Open College at Purdue Global offers seven free self-paced courses with assessments, providing another personalized option for earning credit. Students pay for the assessment evaluation when they are ready to take it.

Transfer Credit

Community Colleges

Our Community College Alliance Program helps students maximize transfer credits and shorten the path toward a bachelor's degree. Purdue Global has relationships with dozens of community colleges. Students who transfer from one of these colleges often benefit from a shorter path to a Purdue Global degree. Examples include:

Health Sciences

The School of Health Sciences developed a unique 3+1 bachelor's degree format that enables students to take up to 86 semester credits at their community college and then transfer to our health sciences bachelor's degree programs and complete 8 specific major required courses, plus the University's professional development course. Additionally, eligible students may take up to 5 master's-level courses in their bachelor's program to accelerate their path to a master's degree. Part of the uniqueness of this 3+1 format is there are no specific required health sciences courses at the community college level.

Social and Behavioral Sciences

The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences has worked with Fayetteville Technical Community College (FTCC) to design an associate's plus option for multiple Purdue Global degrees to help reduce the cost and time for an FTCC transfer student to earn a bachelor's degree. The associate's plus pathways allow students to generally take between 85 to 88 semester credits at FTCC to fulfill third-year course requirements and transfer those credits to Purdue Global with a clear pathway into a bachelor's degree program for the fourth and final year.

Degree Paths

Our students can leverage their eligible experience and knowledge described above in one of our traditional programs, in a customized degree (through one of our partners), or by creating a personalized degree plan in the Bachelor of Science in Professional Studies (BSPr).

Customized Degrees

For our corporate/military partners, we create customized degrees based on desired outcomes, eligible training, and the experience of their employees.

Case Study: Gundersen Health System

The University mapped out a customized solution that could meet Gundersen's needs and provide return on educational investment (ROEI) models to help Gundersen select the most appropriate course of action. The company partnered with Purdue Global to develop an accelerated medical assistant education program to train members of its current workforce. The solution included:

Repackaging the program to meet time requirements.

- Condensed the 15-month program into a 6-month program.
- Collapsed the program to 20 weeks with two intensive 10-week periods of 33 quarter credit hours each.
- Employed the University's curricular experts to build the course content to fit Gundersen's clinical model.
- Redesigned course sequencing and prerequisite requirements to enable students to move quickly through the program while maintaining curricular efficacy.

Modifying the University's established hybrid model to include Gundersen's expertise and training facilities.

- Utilized Gundersen's existing simulation laboratory and medical clinics.
- Enabled students to fulfill clinical and externship experiences onsite at Gundersen.
- Offered hands-on experience via in-house training opportunities.
- Provided 24/7 access to online courses and resources.
- Participated in weekly discussion board topics.
- Employed convenient online platform for virtual submission of weekly projects.
- Utilized Purdue Global academic support services.

Collaborating with Gundersen on a rigorous selection process to identify a pool of high-potential employees.

- Educated employees about the program via specially designed internal communications and advertising.
- Developed a thorough employee screening process, including an application, interview, and rigorous selection criteria.
- Identified candidates with lower skill levels who would benefit from an upskilling opportunity.
- Identified employees with attributes appropriate for this career path.

Ensuring adequate support services set these students up for success.

- Set a high standard and selected employees who would be able to manage the course load (per above).
- Assigned a highly experienced Purdue Global Student Advisor and admissions staff with health care expertise to be dedicated to the Gundersen cohort.
- Provided on-the-ground support from Gundersen managers and staff.
- Provided a full-time liaison—the University’s School of Health Sciences Associate Dean offered direct student and client support.
- Maintained close contact, regularly meeting as a group to ensure all team members have the information and training to support the cohort.
- Provided ample blended online and onsite support.

BSPr

The Bachelor of Science in Professional Studies (BSPr) at Open College at Purdue Global is an undergraduate program that allows students to bring in credit through transfer and prior learning assessment and then complete requirements from an individualized learning plan (ILP) through assessments of new learning. Students are able to learn wherever they like, using any learning material that they choose, including MOOCs and open education resources.

Unlike a traditional discipline-specific degree program with a predetermined list of required courses, the BSPr degree allows greater flexibility for students to choose courses to meet their chosen major requirements and major elective courses. Students also have the option of earning college credit through a variety of sources including transfer credit, experiential learning credit, course assessments, and open educational resources.