

# PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT AT PURDUE UNIVERSITY GLOBAL

## Minimizing Time, Maximizing Credits

Purdue Global has a commitment to honoring students' prior learning, but is equally committed to academic rigor and systemic consistency.

Many people come to Purdue Global with significant academic experience. To help students complete their programs as quickly as possible, we permit them, where appropriate, to transfer academic credit earned at other accredited institutions. Under our credit transfer program in 2015–2016, 13,788 students received a total of 783,469 transfer credits, representing a total student savings of more than \$256 million.

In addition to the standard transfer credit, we review and accept prior learning credit from military, professional training, and other sources of learning via a variety of means:

**Articulation:** Through articulation, a Purdue Global faculty member compares a student's previously completed training (such as corporate or military training) against the learning outcomes of a specific University course or program. Should that training fulfill Purdue Global learning outcomes, the student may receive credit.

**Experiential Learning:** For students who wish to apply for undergraduate academic credit for competencies gained through work and life experiences, we offer the opportunity to prepare a comprehensive portfolio describing their experiential learning. Faculty from each discipline for which credit has been petitioned review portfolios. Credit is awarded for evidence of learning, not merely experience. This approach is consistent with the [Ten Standards for Assessing Learning](#) developed by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL).\* During the 2015–2016 academic year, Purdue Global students who presented portfolios and received credit for experiential learning earned a total of 10,083 credits, an average of 28 credits per student.

**Course Assessment:** For specific Purdue Global courses, course assessment provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of learning outcomes by attaining predetermined scores on comprehensive examinations.

We also employ our course modules to maximize the awarding of credit for prior learning by awarding credit for partial Purdue Global courses. Within some course assessments, for example, each learning outcome is assessed separately, and the student receives credit for each outcome assessment passed rather than passing or failing the entire course. For any outcome assessment not passed, the student may take the corresponding outcome module.

Purdue Global adheres to its own strict guidelines, conforming to accreditation criteria and representing industry best practice in the assessment and application of prior learning. Undergraduate students may receive credit for prior learning, in any combination of types, for up to 75% of their program; the remainder represents learning they must complete at Purdue Global to earn the degree. Graduate students may transfer in only 50% of their credits, although this is uncommon, given the unique structure of graduate coursework at every institution.

In the review of prior learning, Purdue Global closely aligns its practice with the best practices outlines by American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) and CAEL.

Purdue Global has also made significant IT investments in the administration of prior learning. Because of the enormous volume and variety of credit presented for review, and given the priority we place on giving students credit for what they already know, we needed a system that housed our credit equivalencies in a reliable and efficient system. Our homegrown system, called Blueprint, is an innovative, integrated degree planning and credit-articulation management system that ensures efficient and, above all, consistent handling of credit articulation and the application thereof to students' degree plans.

\*<http://www.cael.org/ten-standards-for-assessing-learning>