

# Academic and Non-Academic Credit Rules

## Principia Credit Units

Principia's academic credit unit is the semester hour. Each course is assigned a schedule type, which indicates the ratio between contact time and out-of-class preparation. On the average, students should expect to devote three hours per week for 14 weeks, including in-class contact time and homework, for each semester hour of credit. It is the student's responsibility to devote sufficient time to achieve the outcomes of the course.

One Principia PE non-credit course is equal to a minimum of 42 contact hours.

## Transfer Credit

Principia College accepts transfer credit for courses taken at another institution if it meets the following criteria:

- Courses must be taken at a regionally accredited college or university.
- Courses must be awarded a C- or above in a letter grade system to be considered for transfer, although applying credit toward a major may have a higher grade requirement.
- Courses must be comparable in nature, content, and level of learning while being appropriate and applicable to the learning experience of the programs offered by Principia College.

A student may transfer a maximum of 84 semester hours of credit. One semester hour equals 1.5 quarter hours. One quarter hour equals 0.667 semester hours. Transfer courses may be used to fulfill major or minor requirements at the discretion of the Department Chairs concerned; however, some departments may require a grade higher than a C- for such courses. Transfer credit is not figured into a student's Principia grade point average.

To begin the process of transferring credit, students must provide an official transcript to the Principia College Registrar's Office. Course descriptions, and in some cases a syllabus, may also be required. A transcript is official when it is sent directly to the Registrar's Office from the issuing institution, or when it is sent from a third party provider. Currently enrolled students must receive pre-approval from the Registrar's Office to guarantee that a course they plan to take from another institution will receive transfer credit. For September and January graduates, transcripts from other institutions must be received in the Registrar's Office a minimum of 10 business days prior to the graduation date. See the Academic Calendar for additional information.

For May graduates, an official transcript for all concurrent, pre-approved coursework must be submitted to the Registrar's Office on the day all graduating senior grades are due. In the event the official transcript is not received by the graduating senior grade deadline, the student may apply to Walk Early at Commencement. If the official transcript is received within two weeks after graduating senior grades are due and all degree requirements are thereby met, the student's graduation date will be conferred for May and their diploma released. If the official transcript is not

received or the degree requirements are not met within this timeframe, the student's graduation date will automatically be moved to the next available graduation date.

Official transcripts of all previously completed coursework must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by Friday of Week Two of their final semester.

The Registrar's Office reviews and processes all transfer credit through the use of the online transfer credit resource tool, Transfer Evaluation System, or TES. For transfer courses that have an established precedent in TES to Principia College courses, the Registrar's Office will assign credit for the equivalent Principia course. For transfer courses that are not clearly comparable, the chair of the appropriate department will review the information and determine whether credit can be given. For courses across departments or centers the review will be completed by the Center Director (for courses within a single center) or by the College Curriculum Committee (for courses across more than one center). When a course is reviewed, whether by a Department Chair or the Center Director, a determination is made as to whether the transfer course meets the requirements for a LADR (Liberal Arts Distribution Requirement) designation.

If a transfer course receives credit as a comparable Principia course that has a LADR attribute, the transfer course will also receive the LADR attribute. If the course is received for general elective credit without a LADR attribute, a student may petition the General Education Committee for a LADR attribute. The General Education Committee authorizes general education credit. The committee will review these requests, taking into consideration the recommendation from the Department Chair or Center Director. If either course credit or a LADR attribute is denied, the student will receive a brief written explanation as to which criteria have not been met and how the determination was made.

Transcripts from countries outside the United States must be evaluated by the evaluation service, World Education Services, found at <https://www.wes.org/>. There is an expense for this evaluation which is paid by the student.

- WES will only accept an official transcript sent to them directly from the transfer institution. If the transcript is not in English, a certified English translation must be submitted.
- The report from the evaluation service must be sent directly to the Registrar's Office at Principia College.
- Upon receipt of the report, course descriptions or syllabi in English must be provided to the Registrar's Office before the transfer evaluation process can begin.

## **Fulfillment of General Education Requirements through Transfer Work**

To ensure that students address the Student Learning Outcomes and the Liberal Arts Distribution Requirements (LADR) outcomes, they are expected to complete some of their LADR courses at Principia. Transfer courses may be applied to the Liberal Arts Distribution Requirements as follows:

- For the Bachelor of Arts degree: In each LADR area, a transfer course may be used to fulfill one of the two Liberal Arts Distribution Requirements (LADR). However, the GEB LADR must be earned at Principia College.

- For the Bachelor of Science degree: Students must take one course from each of the different Liberal Arts Distribution Requirements (LADR) areas at Principia, but may transfer in the other two LADR requirements in any of the three other areas, provided they meet other criteria. Any of the 15 semester hours of Math and Natural Science courses outside the major discipline may be met by transfer credit.
- One PE transfer course may be used toward fulfilling the PE distribution requirement, but one PE course must be taken at Principia College.

For use of transfer credit to fulfill the second language proficiency requirement, see Second Languages (<http://catalog.principiacollege.edu/general-education-program/skill-development-proficiency-requirements/#second-language>).

### **Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), and International Baccalaureate (IB) Examinations**

A student who enters with satisfactory scores in AP examinations (3 or higher), CLEP (scores are evaluated according to American Council on Education standards), and/or in IB examinations (4 or higher in Higher Level examinations) in subjects that are parallel to courses given at Principia may receive college credit with approval of the Department Chairs concerned. Some credit for Standard Level IB may be given. No further examination or fee is required. Transfer credit rules apply to these credits. Some AP credit also meets general education requirements.

### **Credit By Examination**

A student may obtain credit by examination in one of two ways.

1. A student whose instructor determines that the student has demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of a course offered at Principia, either by successful completion of advanced work at a higher level or through an evaluation by an instructor, may petition the Scholastic Committee with the approval of the department to grant credit by examination to the student.
2. A student who feels especially well prepared in the subject matter of a course offered at Principia may, with the approval of the instructor and department, petition the Scholastic Committee for permission to receive credit by examination. All examinations and evaluations must be completed by the end of Week 2 (5:00 p.m. on Friday) of the term the student is graduating.

After approval of the petition, the instructor will administer the examination and/or evaluation of the student's achievement. If the student demonstrates achievement at the grade B level (3.000) or above, credit is granted and recorded on the student's scholastic record, but the credit carries no quality points. Upon approval of the petition, the student will be charged a Credit By Examination fee. See Academic Fees chart (<http://catalog.principiacollege.edu/admissions-finances/costs-fees/#academicfees>).

Credit By Examination may be granted only in courses in which the student would normally be permitted to enroll and for the amount of credit normally assigned to that course. Credit by examination is not awarded for courses from which a student withdrew due to suspension. Students may not take Credit By Examination for a course for which they have received a grade.

Credit By Examination may also be earned in physical education. Students who have developed considerable expertise in an individual activity may achieve Credit By Examination for one of these areas through successful completion of a test at a skill level that is above average or higher. The test for Credit By Examination in physical education may require written as well as practical understanding of the activity. The skill level for aquatic Credit By Examination is determined by the level of mastery required for the American Red Cross Swimmer level. No fee is charged for Credit By Examination in physical education.

See also Fulfillment of Distribution Requirements by Examination (<http://catalog.principiacollege.edu/academic-rules-procedures/graduation-rules/#fulfillment-distribution-by-exam>).

### **Independent Study**

Independent studies may be pursued on an individual basis through a negotiated course contract under faculty supervision. Independent studies are intended for self-motivated students pursuing a rigorous course of individualized study.

To be eligible for an independent study course, students must be in good academic standing. Exceptions must be approved by Scholastic Committee. The academic department sponsoring the independent study course determines the level of writing proficiency required for each specific independent course.

There are two types of independent course work:

*Type A: A student may complete a course that is already in the college catalog but do so independently rather than by attending regular classes. This option is used when a student must take or wants to take a course at a time other than when it is offered as a regular class at Principia. This may be because the student has a time conflict when the course is offered or the student may need to take the class during a term it is not offered.*

*Type B: A student may want to study something that is not currently listed in the college catalog, but that a faculty member is qualified to teach and feels is of value to the student. Type B independent study is generally reserved for students who are far along in their major and have a particular interest in a topic that is outside of current catalog course offerings.*

Both types of independent study can be taken either on or off campus.

### **Procedure**

If a student is planning a Type A catalog course independent study, the proposal must include the course description from the catalog, a syllabus for the course as it was recently taught, and it must match the current catalog offering in every way, including number of semester hours; LADR attribute, if any; outcomes of the course; and assignments required.

If the student is planning Type B independent study, the proposal must include a clear course description and a detailed explanation of why this course is requested. In outlining a study format, the student and instructor should plan at least 42 hours of work for every semester hour or PE credit. For each component of the study, the time required and the grading criteria should be specified. The date by which work

must be completed should be stated if it is other than the last day of the term for which the contract is registered. The proposal should include similar content found in a syllabus for a regular catalog course.

For on-campus independent courses, instructors should meet with students a minimum of one hour per week throughout the term. For off-campus independent courses, the contract should specify both the type and frequency of instructor/student contact.

Contracts must be approved by the student's advisor, the instructor, the Department Chair in which it is offered, and the Center Director. If the course is to be done off campus or during an interterm, the contract also needs approval from the Dean of Academics. Students are charged the regular tuition rate for the number of semester hours specified on the contract for any independent course.

In the case of Type A independent study, the course will only receive a LADR if the course in the catalog receives a LADR. For a Type B independent study course, application may be made for a course to fulfill a distribution requirement with approval of the General Education Committee. This application must include an explanation of how the learning outcomes for the LADR will be met. An additional LADR application must be completed and attached to the Type B Independent Course Proposal Form.

Official forms for Type A and Type B independent study contracts are available on the Principia Internal Registrar's page (<https://internal.principia.edu/college/offices/registrar/forms/>).

For Type A independent study, completed forms must be submitted to the Registrar's Office before the end of the drop/add period for the term in which the coursework will be taken. However, students need to be alert to earlier departmental and unit deadlines.

For Type B independent study, *completed forms are due in the Registrar's Office by 5:00 p.m. Friday of week 11 the term before the proposed course work* (i.e., spring semester contracts are due week eleven of fall semester).