

# Credit for Prior Learning

## About Credit for Prior Learning

Credit for prior learning (CPL) is college credit awarded for validated college-level skills and knowledge gained outside of a college classroom. CPL may be earned for eligible courses approved by MiraCosta College for students who satisfactorily pass an authorized assessment. An authorized assessment is a process that faculty undertake with a student to ensure the student demonstrates sufficient mastery of the course outcomes as set forth in the course outline of record. "Sufficient mastery" means having attained a level of knowledge, skill, and information equivalent to that demonstrated generally by students who receive the minimum passing grade in the course.

Grading for CPL is in accordance with MiraCosta College's regular grading system and all related policies and procedures (see [Grades & Grading Policies \(https://catalog.miracosta.edu/academicpolicies/grades/\)](https://catalog.miracosta.edu/academicpolicies/grades/)). Credit earned by an assessment of prior learning will be clearly annotated on the student's academic record.

Students who are veterans or active duty members of the armed forces, who hold industry-recognized credentials, or who request credit for a course based on their prior learning will be referred to the college's appropriate authority for assessment upon completion of their educational plan.

Units earned for CPL cannot be counted for federal financial aid payment purposes, Selective Service deferment, veterans' benefits, or Social Security benefits. CPL may be counted for pace of progression and maximum unit calculations.

## Determination of Eligibility for Credit for Prior Learning

Credit may be awarded for prior experience or prior learning only for individually identified courses ([https://catalog.miracosta.edu/admissionsenrollment/alternativecredit/CPL\\_Courses\\_2026-2027.pdf](https://catalog.miracosta.edu/admissionsenrollment/alternativecredit/CPL_Courses_2026-2027.pdf)) with subject matter similar to that of the student's prior learning and only for a course listed in the MiraCosta College Catalog.

Award of credit will be made to general education or program requirements when possible and to electives for students who do not require additional general education or program credits to meet their goals. Units for which credit is given shall not be counted in determining the 12 semester units in residence required for an associate degree.

Note: University of California and California State University faculty will determine if and how CPL can be used to meet major-specific requirements upon a student's admission to these campuses.

## Approved Methods for Awarding Credit for Prior Learning

Students may demonstrate proficiency in a course eligible for CPL and receive college credit through the approved alternative methods for awarding credit listed below:

- ▶ Achievement of a satisfactory score on any of the following standardized examinations: Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and College Level Examination Program (CLEP).\*
- ▶ Evaluation of Joint Services Transcripts (JST).\*
- ▶ Satisfactory completion of an institutional examination, known as credit by exam, administered by discipline faculty.\*
- ▶ Evaluation of industry-recognized credential documentation.
- ▶ Evaluation of a student portfolio or other assessment approved or conducted by proper authorities of the college.

\*AP, IB, CLEP, JST, and credit by exam can be used by MiraCosta College to certify specific general education requirements.

## Credit for Standardized Examinations

### Advanced Placement (AP) Examination Program

MiraCosta grants credit to high school students who attain scores of 3, 4, or 5 on AP exams administered by the College Entrance Examination Board. Credit earned through an advanced placement exam will be specifically notated as such on the student's academic record. The Advanced Placement Guide (<https://catalog.miracosta.edu/advancedplacementguide/>) identifies how specific AP exams can be used for CPL.

### International Baccalaureate (IB) Examination Program

MiraCosta grants credit toward the associate degree for most high level exams passed with a minimum score of 5. However, individual departments may also determine course equivalency. The International Baccalaureate Guide (<https://catalog.miracosta.edu/table2/>) identifies how specific exams can be used for CPL.

### College Level Examination Program (CLEP)

MiraCosta grants credit for the successful completion of certain CLEP general examinations and subject examinations with a minimum score of 50. The CLEP Guide (<https://catalog.miracosta.edu/table1/>) identifies how specific exams can be used for CPL.

### Credit for US Military Service/Training

MiraCosta College grants experience credit of three elective units for submission of any DD214, 295, or other military transcript.

Military service school training will be evaluated and awarded associate degree credit in accordance with the recommendations contained in the American Council on Education (ACE) Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Forces. In most circumstances, the units awarded will be elective credit. Students may also receive credit for USAFI/Dantes subject standardized tests and USAFI

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courses by submitting an official transcript to the Admissions and Records Office. Students should submit a verified copy of their DD214/military transcript to the Admissions and Records Office for evaluation.

### Credit by Exam

Credit by exam is a process whereby discipline faculty administer a locally developed exam to determine whether a student can demonstrate sufficient mastery of the learning outcomes of that course. The determination to offer credit by exam rests solely on the discretion of the discipline faculty. A separate exam shall be conducted for each course for which credit is to be granted.

Credit by exam will be offered only under the following conditions:

1. A departmental or program credit by exam policy is on file with Student Services.
2. An instructor designated by the department eligible to give credit by exam in the course agrees that credit by exam is appropriate. The instructor is responsible for selecting an appropriate exam.
3. The student must be currently enrolled at the college and in good standing (see Academic Progress and Notice (<https://catalog.miracosta.edu/academicpolicies/academicprogress/>)).
4. An exam may be taken only one time for a specific subject and will not be given in a subject previously completed unsatisfactorily (D, F, or NP).
5. The deadline for returning a completed CPL Assessment petition is the thirty (30) percent deadline of a regular semester or the third week of classes during summer intersession.
6. Students have until the seventy-five (75) percent deadline to withdraw their intent to take the exam in writing to the Admissions and Records Office; after that, they must take the exam or they will automatically be issued a grade of "F."
7. Credit by exam will not be offered for a course the student is currently enrolled in or for a course that is a prerequisite to a more advanced course in the same subject for which the student has already received college credit.
8. A maximum of 15 units will be granted as credit by exam at MiraCosta College. Note: This number does not include credit for standardized tests.

### Credit Using Industry-Recognized Credentials

The determination to offer CPL using industry-recognized credential documentation rests solely on the discretion of the discipline faculty. Students shall receive credit if the discipline faculty who normally teach the course for which credit is to be granted determine the industry certification adequately measures mastery of the course outcomes as set forth in the course outline of record.

Students who wish to demonstrate proficiency in a course eligible for CPL using industry certification and receive college credit must file a CPL Assessment petition to the Admissions and Records Office by the thirty (30) percent deadline of a regular semester or the third week of classes during summer intersession.

### Credit Using Other Assessments

The determination to offer CPL using other types of assessment rests solely on the discretion of the discipline faculty. The nature and content of other types of assessment, such as student portfolios or skills demonstrations, shall be determined by faculty in the discipline who normally teach the course for which credit is to be granted. Students shall receive credit if the faculty determine that the assessment adequately measures sufficient mastery of the course outcomes as set forth in the course outline of record.

Students who wish to demonstrate proficiency in a course eligible for CPL and receive college credit using a faculty-approved assessment method must file a CPL Assessment petition by the Friday of the thirty (30) percent deadline of a regular semester or the third week of classes during summer intersession..

*(Source: MCCD Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 4235. All MiraCosta College board policies and administrative procedures are located on the Board of Trustees webpage (<https://www.miracosta.edu/office-of-the-president/board-of-trustees/board-policies-and-administrative-procedures.html>)).*