Alternative Credit Opportunities

Students at Idaho State University have the opportunity to earn undergraduate credit for prior learning through a wide variety of means:

Credit by Examination

- College Entrance Examination Board Advanced Placement Program (AP)
- College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
- Credit through the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES)
- Credit by Challenge Examination

Other Alternative Credit Opportunities

- Credit for Military Service (JST)
- Experiential Learning Assessment (ELA)
- Study Abroad

Credits earned through any of the above means affect total credits toward a particular degree but generally do not impact the student’s grade point average. Grades for all said credits, except challenge, are recorded as Satisfactory (S). The student is responsible for providing Idaho State University with an official copy of grades/scores from the appropriate educational, testing, or reporting agency.

When the credit awarded is dependent upon evaluation by Idaho State University faculty, such as Experiential Learning Assessment and Challenge, credit will be counted as resident credit; that which is standardized or not evaluated by Idaho State University faculty will be counted as non-resident credit.

College Entrance Examination Board Advanced Placement Program (AP)

Idaho State University affirms the principle of advanced placement and acknowledges the accomplishments of students who have taken college-level courses in high school. The university encourages participation in the College Entrance Examination Board Advanced Placement Program.

Advanced Placement Examination credit will not be posted on an official Idaho State University transcript to other agencies or institutions until the student is accepted to Idaho State University. Credit from Advanced Placement is classified as non-resident credit.

Advanced Placement Scores Required for Credit

Idaho State University will grant credit for approved AP exams and scores. An “S” grade is entered on the student’s record for credit earned in this way. Credit for AP examinations when an official score report from College Board is received. Please see https://isu.edu/registrar/credit-by-exam/ for information regarding what course credit will be awarded for each AP score accepted by ISU.

Credit by Challenge Examination

Enrolled Idaho State University students may obtain credit by course-specific examinations only with permission of the department and the college. Other relevant policies are as follows:

- Students may challenge a course through examination by 1) obtaining approval through petition, and 2) passing the challenge examination.
- Students must procure the petition from the office of the dean of the college of their major.
- If the petition to take the examination is approved, students must pass the examination at the level required by the course in order for challenge credits to be awarded.
- A student may sit for a challenge examination only in a course in which s/he has not yet registered. Students may not receive credit by challenge examination either for courses already completed or for courses that are prerequisite to courses already completed.
- Only one challenge examination for the course in question is allowed.
- When a challenge examination is taken, whatever grade is earned is recorded. Should the grade from a challenge examination be undesirable to the student, the student may take the course for credit to exclude the challenge grade.
- Credits obtained by challenge examination are not used in determining a semester’s credit load or for financial aid purposes in the semester in which the examination is taken.
- Grades obtained by challenge examination are not used in determining grade point average for that semester, but are used in calculating the cumulative grade point average.
- The cost of each credit earned by challenge examination is 33% of the current cost per credit hour, payable to the Idaho State University Cashier’s Office prior to the examination.
- Credits earned by passing a challenge examination are considered resident credit.

Credit through DANTES

The College Level Examination Program (CLEP) general and specific subject-area examinations administered through Defense Activity for Nontraditional Education Support (DANTES) are treated in the same manner as those taken through the traditional CLEP. Please see https://isu.edu/registrar/credit-by-exam/.
Examinations for information regarding what course credit will be awarded for each CLEP score accepted by ISU.

Credit for Military Service (JST)

Students who have earned Military Service credit through a regionally accredited Military school must provide ISU with an official transcript during the admission process.

Students who received military training, recorded on their Joint Service Transcript (JST), may ask to have these training modules assessed and evaluated for college bearing credit using ISU’s ELA policy. If a student wishes to initiate this process, please provide the Veteran’s Coordinator with an official JST after official acceptance to ISU and an official declaration of a major.

Experiential Learning Assessment

Experiential Learning Assessment (ELA) is an avenue by which a student may be awarded undergraduate credit for work, volunteer, or lived experiences outside of the university curriculum. The program assists in the process for requesting academic credit through the portfolio method. In a portfolio, a student thoroughly describes and documents knowledge gained experientially and also demonstrates how knowledge gained outside the classroom is related to college-level learning.

Eligibility

- Credit by ELA is awarded only for experiential learning in subject areas and curricula offered at ISU.
- Student must be currently enrolled at ISU as a degree-seeking student in good academic standing to be considered for ELA credit in a given semester.
- Each college and department may determine which courses, if any, in their curricula may be met through experiential learning portfolios.
- Students must submit petitions and portfolios by the deadlines published on the ELA website.

Application of Credits

- Credit by ELA may be used to meet a maximum of 25% of credits required for an associate or bachelor’s degree or an undergraduate certificate.
- Up to 30 credits by ELA can be used toward meeting the graduation requirement of 120 undergraduate credits for a baccalaureate degree. Up to 15 credits by ELA can be used toward meeting the 60 credits required for an associate degree.
- Credit by ELA can be used to meet the graduation requirement for 36 upper-division credits if awarded as upper-division credit.
- Credit by ELA is not allowed toward graduation if it is discovered that the ELA credits are duplicated by specific courses taken before or after ELA has been awarded. The Registrar will correct the transcript to show duplicated ELA credits are not counted toward cumulative credits earned.
- Credit by ELA is considered resident credit.
- Credit by ELA may be used to meet general education requirements.

Process

- Students must submit the ELA Petition form requesting permission to submit a Portfolio to the department and college that house the courses for which the student wants ELA credit, and the petition must be approved prior to preparation and submission of ELA Portfolio. Petition and Portfolio deadlines are posted on the ELA website.
- Each college and department may develop additional policies and procedures to further define their own internal processes for ELA evaluation.
- A single portfolio may include multiple courses from the same department or program, but separate portfolios must be submitted for courses from multiple departments or programs.

The department and college that house the courses for which the student requests ELA credit determine if the experiential learning demonstrated in the portfolio meets the learning outcomes of those courses.

- If the Portfolio is not approved, the department and college evaluation report must include an explanation.
- A student may request one time only, within 45 business days after ELA credit has been denied, reconsideration of an ELA evaluation by department/college. A revised portfolio addressing the reasons provided for denying credit must be submitted to ELA Coordinator for reconsideration.

Transcription

- Upon official notification of approval of ELA credit from the Dean of the appropriate college, the Office of the Registrar will record the credit with a note identifying the credit as “Experiential Learning Credit by Portfolio.”
- The grade posted for ELA credit is “S” for satisfactory. If no credit is awarded, nothing will be added to the transcript regarding the ELA request.

For more information about the ELA process please visit this page: http://www.isu.edu/academicaffairs/academic-information/Experiential%20Learning%20Assessment

Study Abroad

The Idaho State University International Programs Office provides information and assistance to students who wish to augment their education with study outside the United States. Study abroad is a viable option for students to enhance their curriculum and professional prospects. A study abroad program is an excellent way to develop foreign language skills. An international educational experience also helps students gain a competitive edge in the global marketplace. And since many programs are taught in English or located in English-speaking countries, students without foreign language skills may also study abroad in a wide range of disciplines.

Idaho State University participates in a wide variety of quality study abroad programs, providing students access to programs in more than 50 countries. Coursework in these programs is recognized as resident credit at Idaho State University and allows students to use financial aid to support their study abroad. Idaho State University also has cooperative agreements with The University of Plymouth in England, Al Akhawayn University in Morocco, The University of Valencia and The Polytechnic University of Valencia in Spain, Paderborn University in Germany, Kansai Gaidai University and KCP International in Japan, Umea University in Sweden, the University of Burgundy in France, ITESO University in Mexico, InHolland University in The Netherlands, and Universidad ORT in Uruguay.

The International Programs Office assists students in identifying appropriate programs, works with academic advisors and departments in preparation for transfer of study abroad credit, and advises students on financial aid and other related matters. For more information on study abroad and related opportunities, contact the Office of International Programs and Services at (208) 282-4320 or at ipomail@isu.edu.

Students may register for Study Abroad credits after their program is approved by an advisor and the International Programs Office. The course description is as follows.

Study Abroad Courses

STUA 2200, STUA 3300, STUA 4400 Study Abroad 12-18 credits each. Pre-arranged, planned courses of study at selected academic institutions outside of the United States. Student is responsible for resident credit arrangements with department(s) and the Office of International Programs and Services prior to
departure. Prefix and course name will be replaced on Idaho State University transcript when study abroad transcript arrives. Graded S/U, F, S, Su