Alternative Credit Opportunities

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

- College Entrance Examination Board Advanced Placement Program (AP)
- College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
- Credit by Challenge Examination
- Credit for Military Service (JST)
- Credit through the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES)
- Experiential Learning Assessment (ELA)
- Correspondence and Extended Learning Online Courses
- Study Abroad
- Individualized Degree Programs
- Cooperative Education Programs

A maximum of 32 credit hours granted through any combination of the means listed above may be counted toward an associate degree; a maximum of 64 credit hours may be applied to a baccalaureate degree. 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 and correspondence/distance learning, 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, such as Experiential Learning Assessment and Challenge, credit will be counted as non-resident credit.

An explanation of each program is given below. For additional information on these programs, contact:

The Office of the Registrar,
Museum Building Room 319
921 S 8th Ave Stop 8196
Pocatello, ID 83209-8196
(208) 282-2661

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.

The CEEB Advanced Placement Examinations are administered each May at most high schools. For more information about the tests, students should contact their Advanced Placement instructor or high school counselor. The tests and students’ ratings are sent to the university at the individual student’s request.

Advanced Placement Examination credit will not be posted on an official Idaho State University transcript to other agencies or institutions until the student is a registered Idaho State University student. 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. Contact the Office of the Registrar or academic departments for further information. An “S” grade is entered on the student’s record for credit earned in this way. Credit for AP examinations transferred from another institution is subject to evaluation based on the rules and regulations of Idaho State University. Please see http://isu.edu/registrar/transfer-credit/credit-by-exam/ for information as to what course credit will be given for each AP score accepted by ISU.

College Level Examination Program (CLEP)

Elective credit only is granted toward graduation for achievement of satisfactory scores on any of the four CLEP general examinations: humanities, natural science, mathematics, and social science/history. A student may earn a maximum of 16 elective semester hours toward an associate degree, 32 elective semester hours toward a baccalaureate degree on the basis of the general examinations.

Scores on the general examinations range from 200 to 800. The point of test proficiency is fixed at 500 for the purpose of granting credit.

Subject-area CLEP examinations may satisfy specific objectives in the General Education Requirements at the discretion of the departments whose courses satisfy those objectives. Similarly, at the discretion of the department, credits earned on the CLEP subject-area examinations may be allowed toward that department’s major program. Students may earn a maximum of 48 semester credit hours by CLEP subject-area examination with department approval, and scores of 50 or higher are accepted for credit award.

An “S” grade is entered on a student’s record for credit hours earned through CLEP examinations. Credit for CLEP examinations transferred from another institution is subject to evaluation based on the rules and regulations of Idaho State University. Transfer students need to submit official CLEP score reports for Idaho State University evaluation. CLEP credits cannot be granted for college courses previously taken. Credit from CLEP is classified as non-resident credit.

Information including costs may be obtained from the website http://www.isu.edu/ctc/ or by contacting the Counseling and Testing Center at Idaho State University at (208)-282-2130.

Counseling and Testing Center,
Graveley Hall, 3rd Floor South
921 S 8th Ave Stop 8027
Pocatello, ID 83209-8027

Subject-Area CLEP Scores Required for Credit

Idaho State University will grant credit for approved CLEP exams and scores. Contact the Office of the Registrar or academic departments for further information.

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.
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.

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. Only elective credits may be granted to those completing the general examinations, while subject-area CLEP examinations may satisfy specific objectives in the General Education Requirements. Refer to the College Level Examination Program above for details.

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.

1. 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.
2. Credit by ELA is awarded only for experiential learning in subject areas and curricula offered at ISU.
3. Student must be currently enrolled at ISU as a degree-seeking student to be considered for ELA credit in a given semester.
4. Credit by ELA can be used to meet the graduation requirement for 36 upper-division credits if awarded as upper-division credit.
5. 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.
6. Credit by ELA is considered resident credit.
7. Credit by ELA may be used to meet general education requirements.
8. Credit by ELA is not allowed toward graduation if it is discovered that the ELA credits are duplicated by credits in 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.

9. Students must receive approval to submit a portfolio from the department and college that house the courses for which the student wants ELA credit. Each college and department may develop additional policy and procedures to further define their own internal processes for ELA evaluation.

10. Each college and department may determine which courses, if any, in their curricula may be met through experiential learning portfolios.

11. Students must submit the Undergraduate Student Petition form requesting permission to submit a portfolio, and the petition must be approved prior to preparation and submission of ELA portfolio.

12. 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 the courses which are being requested for ELA credit.

13. 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.

14. The department and college evaluation report must include reasons for approving or not approving ELA credit for each course requested.

15. 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.

16. After a student has had an ELA portfolio denied for credit, the student may submit an entirely new portfolio for the same classes after a year or more of additional experience.

17. 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.”

18. 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 Office of International Programs and Services 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. Course work 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 Office of International Programs and Services 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 Office of International Programs and Services. 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