

COLLEGE POLICY

Policy Title Aligning Military CPL to ACE Military Guide Recommendations

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Responsible office(s)	Academic Affairs
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Policy purpose

Awarding Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) for students with military experience is a priority for the state of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Technical College System, and Madison College as a 'Military Friendly' institution. However, evaluating military training and occupations for equivalency to Madison College course competencies is difficult because it is challenging for students with military experience to procure sufficient documentation and evidence that would allow Madison College faculty to adequately evaluate prior learning. The historical outcome of this reality is that Madison College has approved very few military training and occupational experiences for CPL. Students with military experience have found CPL processes burdensome and frustrating, and they are frequently dissatisfied that their learning experiences are not being recognized and dignified by Madison College. This outcome runs contrary to the college's values, including its Equity and Inclusion goals of 'making every student feel welcome at Madison College'.

Scope

Definitions

- **Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)**

This is the process by which students are awarded Madison College credit for learning that happened in previous life, educational, career, and volunteer experiences. CPL is subdivided into two categories: 1) Transfer of Credit, which awards credit directly for having successfully participated in a previous learning experience, such as a college course taken at a prior higher education institution. Transfer of credit is determined by evaluating how well the learning outcomes of the prior learning align to the competency statements of a Madison College course. Prior Learning Assessments (PLAs) are assessments of individual students to determine if a student has proficiency in the competencies contained within a specific Madison College course. Most Madison College PLAs are internally developed by faculty subject matter experts.

- **Critical Competency**

A course competency meeting two criteria: 1) Essential to that particular discipline/industry by way of requirements imposed upon an academic program for purposes of that program's accreditation and/or instances where legal or safety requirements specific to their discipline create substantial risk or liability should students lack proficiency in that competency; AND 2) the competency is only introduced, practiced, and assessed within that particular course within the program curriculum, offering the academic program no further opportunity to ensure student proficiency in that competency. A critical competency is NOT a competency considered a pre-requisite for a subsequent competency, learning activity, or assessment within the academic program using an 'integrated' program curriculum.

- **Military Training**

Is a scheduled training for military personnel in which specific objectives and learning outcomes are developed. These trainings are evaluated as transfer courses and must show reasonable corresponding duration and learning outcomes to college coursework to receive recommendations.

- **Military Occupations**

These are military occupational fields for which military personnel perform defined job duties. These occupations are evaluated as experiential learning and must show regular performance of knowledge, skills, and abilities that would correspond to learning outcomes for recommended college coursework to receive recommendations.

Policy

This policy would improve Military CPL outcomes for students with military experience and bring Madison College into closer alignment with Wisconsin statutes regarding the awarding of military CPL credit. The American Council on Education (ACE) organizes evaluating panels of faculty subject matter experts to make college and university course equivalency recommendations for military training and occupations. Evaluating panels have access to training materials, training sites, and training personnel. The depth and breadth of the ACE evaluating panels' access to military resources and personnel would be too burdensome to be replicated by individual colleges and universities. Therefore, best practices in Credit for Prior Learning include accepting these ACE Military Guide recommendations on their face and without prejudice. Wisconsin state statutes, noted below, further compel this proposed policy. Supporting procedures inform submission requirements for students and evaluating considerations for faculty and administrators.

Finally, also in accordance with state statutes, this policy would also allow students with military CPL the opportunity to reject military CPL credits should this best meet their academic and financial planning and decision-making. Corresponding procedural documentation would outline this process.

Madison College will align Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) transfer of credit decisions to American Council for Education (ACE) Military Guide Recommendations. Evaluating Madison College faculty and academic affairs administrators will accept Ace Military recommendations without requiring additional documentation or evaluation either of the prior learning or of an individual student with military experience. Exceptions for when Madison College faculty or academic affairs administrators reject an ace military guide recommendation must be substantiated with a documented justification of a constraint imposed upon the academic program for purposes of program accreditation or legal or safety requirements specific to their discipline or industry. Rejections will require confirmation by a panel of academic program faculty and academic affairs administrators to ensure that rejection decisions are a bona fide application of the exceptions clause within this policy.

In addition, students with military experience awarded military CPL credit will have the right to reject the awarding of that military CPL credit should they provide appropriate notification of their desire to reject the credit to the registrar's office.

When military training credit recommendations can extend to two or more Madison College courses, the training hours must be sufficient to equate to multiple courses to receive credit for multiple courses; otherwise, students will be required to select the course(s) that is/are most applicable to their academic program or plan.

Links to state/federal regulations

1. Wisconsin Statute **36.31.(4)** notes as follows:

(am) Except as provided in par. (bm), upon receiving from the federal department of defense a student's official joint services transcript or Community College of the Air Force transcript, the institution or Madison College 1701 Wright Street | Madison, WI 53704

college campus in which the student is enrolled shall do the following:

1. Accept all American Council on Education credit recommendations included in the official joint services transcript and award academic credit to the student in accordance with these recommendations.
2. Accept all credits included in the Community College of the Air Force transcript and award academic credit to the student accordingly.

(bm) An institution or college campus may not award academic credit to a student under par. (am) for each course for which the student, upon consultation with the institution's or college campus's staff, objects to the awarding of credit for that course.

Supporting documents

Related policies