Experiential Learning Credit Policy

Purpose

Harson University recognizes that individuals may acquire college-level knowledge and competencies through learning experiences outside traditional academic coursework. The University provides opportunities for prospective students to receive academic credit for demonstrated prior learning for learning evaluated as equivalent to the learning outcomes of Harson University courses.

Sources of prior learning may include professional employment, military training, industry certifications, continuing education, executive education, professional development programs, domestic or international academic immersion experiences, structured certificate programs, and other documented educational experiences.

Harson University awards academic credit only for demonstrated achievement of established learning outcomes. The University does not award credit solely for participation, attendance, professional experience, training, or the amount of time spent in an activity.

Eligibility

Credit for Experiential Learning (CEL) is available only to individuals seeking admission to Harson University. All experiential learning, continuing education, and other prior learning submitted for academic credit consideration must be completed, documented, evaluated, and approved before admission and enrollment in the equivalent Harson University course or program. Once a student has enrolled in an equivalent course, that course is no longer eligible for experiential learning credit.

Eligible Learning Experiences

The University may evaluate prior learning acquired through educational experiences, including but not limited to:

- Continuing education programs
- Executive education programs
- Professional development programs
- Domestic or international academic immersion experiences
- Employer-sponsored education and training
- Industry certifications and professional licenses
- Military education and training
- Research experiences
- Community leadership or service
- Structured certificate programs
- Other documented learning experiences that demonstrate college-level learning

Participation in an activity does not automatically qualify for academic credit.

Continuing Education

The University may evaluate continuing education coursework completed in English when the coursework includes documented instructional content, stated learning outcomes, and evidence of participant achievement.

Continuing education courses may be considered for academic credit when qualified faculty determine that the demonstrated learning is substantially equivalent in content, rigor, breadth, and depth to a Harson University course.

For example, continuing education coursework in English may be evaluated for equivalency to Harson University's English curriculum when the participant demonstrates achievement of the applicable course learning outcomes, including written communication, reading comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, oral communication, critical analysis, or other competencies addressed by the corresponding University course.

Assessment of Prior Learning

Awarding experiential learning credit relies on assessment of prior learning to verify that the applicant has achieved the learning outcomes of the equivalent Harson University course.

Learning may be assessed through one or more approved methods appropriate to the discipline, including:

- Evaluation of a capstone or applied project
- Portfolio assessment
- Faculty-developed challenge examination
- Performance assessment or demonstration
- Review of professional artifacts or work products
- Evaluation of industry certifications or licenses
- Oral presentation or interview
- Other assessment methods approved through the University's academic governance process

Harson University determines the assessment method based on the learning outcomes of the course under evaluation. The University establishes assessment methods in advance for each eligible course or learning experience and applies them consistently to all applicants. Applicants may not select or substitute an alternate assessment method.

Evaluation Standards

Harson University evaluates prior learning by:

- Awarding academic credit only for demonstrated learning, not for experience, participation, employment, or time spent in an activity.
- Assessing learning to verify achievement of clearly defined course learning outcomes.
- Establishing assessment criteria before evaluation and communicating them to applicants.
- Determining awards of credit by qualified faculty members or subject matter experts with appropriate disciplinary expertise.
- Following assessment practices that promote fairness, consistency, equity, and access while maintaining academic integrity.
- Providing guidance for applicants regarding documentation requirements, assessment procedures, and evaluation expectations.
- Developing assessment policies and procedures through the University's governance process and publishing them for applicants and faculty.
- Implementing any assessment fees reflect the services provided during the evaluation process rather than the amount of academic credit awarded.

- Requiring faculty members and evaluators involved in prior learning assessment to complete appropriate training and ongoing professional development.
- Reviewing the Experiential Learning Policy annually to ensure consistency, effectiveness, academic quality, and alignment with institutional goals and accreditation standards.

Evaluation Process

Applicants seeking experiential learning credit submit documentation specified by the University for the learning experience being evaluated. Documentation may include certificates of completion, course syllabi, learning outcomes, transcripts, assessment results, portfolios, capstone projects, professional artifacts, employer verification, or other evidence demonstrating achievement of the applicable course learning outcomes.

When an educational experience culminates in a capstone project or comparable integrative assessment, qualified faculty may evaluate the capstone together with supporting documentation to determine whether the applicant has demonstrated achievement of the learning outcomes for the equivalent Harson University course.

For continuing education or certificate programs that do not include a capstone or comparable integrative assessment, the University uses the predetermined assessment method established for the applicable course, including a challenge examination, portfolio review, performance assessment, or other approved evaluation process.

Faculty evaluate all submissions using standardized rubrics or other approved assessment instruments aligned with the learning outcomes of the corresponding Harson University course.

Award of Credit

Harson University awards academic credit only when faculty determine that the applicant has satisfactorily demonstrated achievement of the learning outcomes of the equivalent Harson University course.

The University records experiential learning credit on the student's academic record as transfer or experiential learning credit, as appropriate. Credit awarded through experiential learning does not include a letter grade and is not calculated in the student's cumulative grade point average unless otherwise provided by University policy.

Appeals

Applicants who disagree with a Credit for Experiential Learning determination may submit a written appeal to the Associate Dean within 15 business days of receiving the decision. The appeal must include a statement explaining the basis for the appeal and any additional documentation or evidence demonstrating achievement of the applicable course learning outcomes.

The Associate Dean appoints a qualified faculty member or subject matter expert not involved in the original evaluation to conduct an independent review. The Associate Dean communicates the appeal decision to the applicant in writing within 15 business days of receipt of a complete appeal, which constitutes the University's final decision.

Policy Review

The University annually reviews the Credit for Experiential Learning program, including assessment methods, faculty training, applicant outcomes, consistency of credit decisions, and institutional effectiveness data, to ensure continued academic quality, fairness, and alignment with accreditation standards and workforce needs.