

TRANSFER CREDIT

Transfer Credit Policy

All BA candidates are eligible to transfer up to 60 of the 124 points required for graduation. Admitted students may transfer credit only from the institutions listed on the application for admission at the time the application is submitted to the Office of Admissions. Coursework from institutions not listed on the application for admission will not be considered for transfer credit. Transcripts from all institutions previously attended must be listed on the application form and submitted to the School of General Studies. Failure to report and send transcripts from all schools previously attended is considered academic dishonesty and may result in disciplinary action including rescinding the offer of admissions. In all cases, all transfer credit must be finalized within six months of matriculation.

In general, the School grants transfer credit for a course that satisfies the following criteria:

- It was taken at an accredited college or university.
- It is an academic class consistent with the General Studies curriculum. (Please note: as part of the undergraduate degree program, Columbia University does not offer online courses for credit; therefore, online courses are not eligible for transfer credit.)
- It carries a grade of “C” or higher and is documented by an official transcript.
- It is not a “mini” or intersession course (however, coursework completed during a summer session *is* eligible for transfer credit evaluation).
- The course was not taken after the student matriculated at the School of General Studies. This policy does not apply to students enrolled in the Joint Program with the Jewish Theological Seminary or students enrolled in Columbia-approved study abroad programs. In exceptional cases, as specified in [Study Away from Columbia](#), students may petition the Dean of Students Office to accept coursework taken at another institution after matriculation.

The Office of Admissions and the Dean of Students Office determine the award of transfer credit. The Entrance Credit Report (ECR) and the Core Requirements Checklist specify, respectively, the total number of transfer credits awarded and the core requirements to which those credits may correspond. Both the ECR and the Core Requirements Checklist are usually contained within the admissions acceptance packet or sent separately soon after notification of acceptance. As noted on the ECR at the time of admission, some pending transfer credit may require further information such as course descriptions and/or syllabi.

Coursework Completed at Other Institutions During Deferral Period

Students who defer their offers of admission and subsequently receive credit for coursework done elsewhere (between the date of their initial offer of admission and their matriculation at Columbia) may or may not receive Columbia transfer credit for that coursework. In all cases, students must notify the Office of Admissions of their intention to complete coursework at another institution during the deferral period. Failure to do so will result in the student not receiving credit for that coursework, and may also result in the review of the student’s admission status. The Office of Admission reserves the right to rescind the offer of admission based on the results of this review.

Transfer Credit Toward the Major

Credits from other institutions of higher education do not automatically count toward fulfilling the Columbia major, although they may satisfy core requirements or be counted as elective credits. Transfer credits toward the major are accepted at the department’s discretion and are not always approved. The Director of Undergraduate Studies in each department has the discretion to accept GS-approved transfer credits toward the major. Students must check individual department policies concerning transfer credits.

Transfer Credit Toward the Core Curriculum

Transfer credits from previous courses taken in related fields of study can count toward the Core Curriculum requirements. However, what credits will be considered to meet the requirements will be determined by a GS Academic Advisor. The [Core Checklist](#) outlines the potential requirements needed to complete a Columbia degree. **Please note:** Core Curriculum courses, Literature Humanities and Contemporary Civilizations, are required for students entering GS with under 30 transfer credits and who have not already fulfilled this requirement through transfer credits.

Physical Education

While up to 60 transfer credits may be granted, no more than two credits of physical education will be accepted in transfer toward the degree.

Professional Courses

GS students are permitted only six transfer credits of professional studies coursework toward their GS degrees. Professional studies include both pre-professional and professional courses in law, business, or journalism, as well as any other courses clearly professional in orientation. Any professional course that is listed or cross-listed as an undergraduate course with a Columbia Arts & Sciences department or the schools of business, journalism, public health, or international and public affairs, is excluded from the six-credit limit.

Non-Degree Coursework

Of the allowed 60 transfer credits, a maximum of 15 credits may transfer from Columbia’s School of Professional Studies and Special Programs or any other accredited non-degree program.

Other Columbia Divisions

SEAS and Columbia College students considering a transfer to the School of General Studies should meet with their class deans to consider the implications of such a transfer. Students currently enrolled within CC or SEAS, or students who have been away from CC or SEAS for less than three years, must have the support of their academic deans before applying for admission to the School of General Studies; transfer applications to GS from CC or SEAS students will not be accepted without the written endorsement of the relevant school dean. The appropriate academic dean from CC or SEAS should consult with the GS dean of admissions in cases where the student is returning after a break of less than three years. In cases where the student has been away from CC or SEAS for more than three years, express support from the CC/SEAS academic dean is not required, but may be helpful in the admission process. In all cases, applicants to the School of General Studies must have a break of at least one academic year to be eligible to apply for admission, or have compelling personal or professional reasons to attend on a part-time basis.

Students transferring from another division of Columbia University (Columbia College, Barnard College, or the Fu Foundation School of

Engineering and Applied Science) may receive up to 94 points in transfer credit toward Columbia GS degree coursework.

For information about taking courses in another division of the University while matriculated at the School of General Studies, see [Study Within Columbia's Graduate and Professional Schools](#).

Students interested in transferring to other Columbia University divisions should consult the [Transfers within Columbia](#) policy under Academic Policies.

Online Courses

As part of the undergraduate degree program Columbia University does not offer online courses for credit; therefore, online courses are not eligible for transfer credit. Courses will be understood as "online courses" if they are fully transacted online, with no face-to-face contact with the instructor.

Note: Online courses will be offered and accepted to the degree, as necessary, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Repeated Courses

Students who have received credit for a course at Columbia may not receive credit toward the degree for repeating the course unless the specific course description authorizes such repetition. A course taken at another college or university may be repeated at Columbia, but transfer credit for that course will be lost.

Advanced Credit by Examination

Advanced Placement

As determined by Columbia, undergraduate students who have achieved satisfactory scores on the College Entrance Examination Board tests used in the Advanced Placement Program may be granted credit or be exempted from certain courses or requirements. Any credit will be considered part of the 60-credit transfer maximum. The following conditions apply:

- The relevant departments must approve the use of these examinations.
- Credit so earned is not granted until a student has demonstrated a capacity to do satisfactory advanced work in the overall program.
- Credit awarded under the Advanced Placement Program does not constitute part of the 64 points earned at Columbia required for the GS degree.

Specific details about subject test areas, scores, advanced credit, and placement status can be found under [Advanced Placement Credit](#).

International Baccalaureate

International Baccalaureate (IB) exams are offered at both the Higher and Subsidiary levels. The School of General Studies awards transfer credit only for exams taken at the Higher level. Transfer credit for O-level or AS-level exams is not awarded. No transfer credit is awarded for the "Theory of Knowledge" exam.

Students are awarded the equivalent of one year of transfer credit (typically 6 points) in the relevant discipline for any Higher level exam in which they receive a score 6 or 7. Any transfer credit received, as determined by Admissions, will appear on the student's ECR and will be considered part of the 60-credit transfer maximum. The following conditions apply:

- The relevant departments must approve the use of these examinations.
- Credit so earned is not granted until a student has demonstrated a capacity to do satisfactory advanced work in the overall program.
- Credit awarded for International Baccalaureate Exams does not constitute part of the 64 points earned at Columbia required for the GS degree.

Advanced Standing for Postbac Premed Students

Credit is not transferred for students in the Postbac Premed Program; however, upon matriculation in the program, students may satisfy course requirements with previously completed courses if the courses were completed recently with grades of C or better and they bear credit at least equal in weight to the corresponding Columbia coursework. The advisor determines such course clearances in consultation with the incoming student, usually at the initial program planning appointment.

Contact Information

Applicants seeking further information or clarification about advanced placement and credit should contact the Admissions Office at 212-854-2772. Students who have matriculated at GS should consult their GS advisor.