

Programs, Courses & Credits

In this section:

- Academic Definitions (p. 1)
- Rules for Attaining Multiple Credentials (p. 2)
- Modality Definitions (p. 2)

Academic Definitions

The following definitions are applicable to West Virginia University, WVU Potomac State College, and WVU Institute of Technology.

DEGREE DESIGNATION

The degree, which is an award signifying a rank or level of educational attainment and which is conferred on students who have successfully completed a degree program, is represented by the official degree designation, e.g. B.A. - Bachelor of Arts, B.S. - Bachelor of Science, A.A. - Associate of Arts, etc. The degree designation is noted on the student's diploma and transcript.

DEGREE PROGRAM

A degree program is defined by the combination of its degree designation (e.g., Bachelor of Science) and a program title that represents the overarching content areas the program's major or majors covers (e.g., Chemistry). Degree programs are approved by the institution and the Board of Governors (BOG) and listed on the official inventory of degree programs. An associate's degree program requires a minimum of 60 credits. A bachelor's degree program requires a minimum of 120 credits. A master's degree program requires a minimum of 30 credits. For a doctoral degree, the minimum number of required graduate credits is set by the program. A degree program must include at least one major.

MAJOR

A major is a field of study within an approved degree program with its own curriculum. Typically, an undergraduate baccalaureate major requires a minimum of 30 credits with the majority of credits at the upper-division level. WVU includes majors on the student's diploma and transcript.

MINOR

Minors are only available at the undergraduate level. A baccalaureate minor is an area of study outside of the major that encourages students to pursue a secondary field. A minor comprises at least 15 credits, 9 of which must be upper-division level. Minors are noted on the transcript but not on the diploma.

AREA OF EMPHASIS

An area of emphasis is a focused curriculum within an approved major. An area of emphasis adds a specialization within a major area of study. Undergraduate areas of emphasis comprise 12-18 credits, 9 of which must be upper-division level. Graduate areas of emphasis comprise 6-15 credits. Areas of emphasis associated with certification or licensure requirements may exceed the credit limit. Areas of emphasis are noted on the transcript but not on the diploma.

TRACK

A track serves the purpose of allowing students to select among different pathways to complete their major. Tracks are not included on the transcript or on the diploma.

UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

A baccalaureate certificate program (as distinguished from the one-year Certificate Degree Program offered by community and technical colleges) is a specialized curriculum designed for students seeking a specific body of knowledge for personal/career development. A certificate is awarded with the degree and comprises 12 to 18 credits, which may overlap with other degree requirements. The certificate appears on the student's transcript and the institution issues an official certificate of completion.

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

A graduate certificate program is a specialized curriculum designed for students who have previously earned a baccalaureate degree or who are enrolled in a WVU graduate or professional program and who are seeking a specific body of knowledge for personal/career development. A graduate certificate program can be completed either independently or along with a degree program and comprises 12 to 21 credits. See the Academic Certificate Policies (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/graduatecertificates/>) page for credit limitations applicable to earning a certificate. The certificate appears on the student's transcript and the institution issues an official certificate of completion.

TEACHER SPECIALIZATION

A teacher specialization is a state-approved curriculum that prepares students to meet teaching certification standards in a specialized content area and at a specific programmatic level. Teacher specializations may be an area of emphasis, minor, or major. Teacher specializations are added to a student's transcript only at the time of graduation.

Rules for Attaining Multiple Credentials

UNDERGRADUATE MULTIPLE CURRICULA

Multiple curricula refers to the completion of minors, areas of emphasis, or majors in addition to the primary major. If these areas of study are related, some of the credit hours must be unique to each major or minor.

Requirements for multiple curricula include:

- Each baccalaureate major must have a minimum of 50% unique credit hours. Students pursuing a second bachelor's degree after the conferral of a first bachelor's degree must complete a minimum of 30 additional credits.
- Each associate major must have 15 unique credit hours.
- A maximum of 6 credits may be shared between multiple areas of emphasis.
- Each minor must have a minimum of 6 unique credit hours distinct from any other academic credential.

GRADUATE MULTIPLE CURRICULA

Graduate and professional students may simultaneously or sequentially pursue more than one degree or major (although no more than one PhD degree), one or more certificates in addition to degrees or majors, or more than one area of emphasis within their major(s) according to rules specified below and elsewhere in the Graduate/Professional Catalog. Applicability of courses and credits to degree, major, certificate, or area of emphasis requirements is the decision of the program offering the curriculum. Individual course credits may be applied to no more than two degrees, majors, or certificates.

Students pursuing multiple curricula are urged to consult with their advisor(s) to ensure adherence to credit sharing limitations.

Credit Sharing Limitations for Graduate Degrees and Majors

No more than a total of 12 of the credits required for a graduate degree (other than PhD degrees, which are not dependent on credit accumulation) can be:

- earned prior to admission to the degree program,
- earned prior to graduation with another WVU degree,
- earned at another institute, OR
- simultaneously applied to other degree programs or certificates (e.g., while enrolled in the degree program).

Students who simultaneously earn credits toward two or more WVU degrees must, in most cases, graduate with all degrees in the same term to ensure that all credits, including up to 12 credits shared by the degrees, can be applied. Once a student is awarded a graduate degree, only 12 credits earned to that point in time can be applied to a subsequent degree or major.

Exceptions: Doctoral programs that require or allow students to earn a master's degree in the same discipline may count the courses earned in the master's degree program toward the doctoral program without credit limitations. In addition, some approved dual degree programs (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/advisingcoursesdegrees/#programstext>) are allowed to share more than 12 credits.

Credit Sharing Limitations for Graduate Certificates

See Academic Certificate Policies (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/graduatecertificates/>) for credit limitations applicable to earning a certificate. See Credit Sharing Limitations for Graduate Degrees and Majors (p. 2) for limitations on applying credits earned as part of a completed certificate to a graduate degree or major.

Credit Sharing Limitations for Areas of Emphasis

Normally, students may share a maximum of 3 credits between areas of emphasis with the same major.

Modality Definitions

<https://online.wvu.edu/>

DISTANCE AND EXTENDED EDUCATION PROGRAM DEFINITION

At WVU, Distance Programs are categorized in one of the following three ways:

- Fully Online – (100% distant) – No residency requirement - All required credit-bearing and any non-credit bearing courses and activities are conducted at a distance with NO required campus attendance and/or visits to designated locations. Optional campus visits and/or visits to designated locations are permissible.

- Low residency (75-99% distant) – Limited residency requirement - A majority of the credit-bearing and non-credit bearing courses and activities are either entirely online or mostly online. Some credit- or non-credit-bearing activities may require campus visits and/or visits to designated locations. Example activities could be program orientations or cohort-based site visits.

- Blended (50-74% distant) - Extensive residency requirement - More than 50% of the credit-bearing and non-credit bearing courses or activities are delivered entirely online. The remaining credit-bearing courses may be offered as face-to-face, partially at a distance, or as distance delivery courses.

DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSE DELIVERY

Distance Education Courses are credit-bearing courses in which 50% or more of the course is delivered through distance learning technologies.

- Entirely Online Asynchronous – (100% online + asynchronous only) 100% of class sessions are delivered via distance education technologies. There are no campus visits or visits to designated sites. No synchronous events can be required.

- Entirely Online Synchronous – (100% online + synchronous events) 100% of class sessions are delivered via distance education technologies. There are no campus visits or visits to designated sites required. Synchronous learning events may be required throughout the course.

- Mostly Online – (75-99% online) More than 75% of class sessions are delivered via distance education technologies. A course may require students to travel to campus or other designated sites to attend an orientation, take exams, or participate in other on-site experiences.

- Hybrid- (50-75% online) More than 50% and less than 75% of class sessions are delivered via distance education technologies, but some visits to a classroom or designated instructional site are required.

In this section:

- Degree Programs (p. 3)
- Honors Programs (p. 4)

Degree Programs

The **Associate of Arts (A.A.)** degree/transfer program is designed to parallel the first two years of a liberal arts education at a four-year college. Credits earned usually can be transferred to West Virginia University or another four-year school granting the baccalaureate degree. The degree encourages students to:

- explore, discover and develop their special aptitudes and interests and to reach beyond their own perceived limitations;
- acquire the knowledge, critical thinking, problem solving, communication, teamwork, ethical, and social skills needed to support their immediate educational goals, as well as life-long learning in a world characterized by change;
- nurture social responsibility and receptive attitudes compatible with citizenship within a global society.

The **Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.)** degree/career and technical program offers students the opportunity to gain the technical and occupational skills needed for employment. Some four-year colleges accept a portion of A.A.S. degree credits as part of a bachelor's degree. The degree encourages students to:

- explore, discover and develop their special aptitudes and interests and to reach beyond their own perceived limitations;
- acquire the knowledge, critical thinking, problem solving, communication, teamwork, ethical, and social skills needed to support their immediate educational goals, as well as life-long learning in a world characterized by change;
- nurture social responsibility and receptive attitudes compatible with citizenship within a global society;
- acquire and develop skills necessary to enter the workforce.

Bachelor of Applied Science (B.A.S.)

This baccalaureate completion degree allows students holding an Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree to earn a bachelor's degree upon completion of a prescribed curriculum of 60 credits. Emphases are currently offered in Business Management, Computer Information Systems, Criminal Justice, and Sustainable Agriculture Entrepreneurship (SAGE). The degree encourages students to:

- explore, discover and develop their special aptitudes and interests and to reach beyond their own perceived limitations;
- acquire the knowledge, critical thinking, problem solving, communication, teamwork, ethical, and social skills needed to support their immediate educational goals, as well as life-long learning in a world characterized by change;
- nurture social responsibility and receptive attitudes compatible with citizenship within a global society;
- acquire skills necessary to enter the workforce;

- experience leadership;
- experience opportunities for defining relationships between the student's degree program and post- baccalaureate goals;
- apply acquired skills and knowledge in a capstone experience involving a simulated business (Business Management) or in discipline-related research (Criminal Justice).

The **Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)** degree program is a 122-credit program designed to prepare students for practice as a registered professional nurse. All courses are completed on the Potomac State (Keyser) campus. The BSN program outcomes are:

- **CRITICAL THINKING:** Employ scholarly inquiry and evidence-based reasoning and creativity in the process of assessment, interpretation, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and inference as a basis for professional nursing practice.
- **NURSING INTERVENTIONS:** Ensure quality care by applying theory, evidence-based clinical judgment and decision-making, and patient care technology in the delivery of safe and skilled nursing therapeutics with individuals, families, communities, and populations across the health-illness continuum.
- **PROFESSIONAL ROLE:** Demonstrate knowledge, attitudes, professional values, personal qualities, and behaviors consistent with the nursing roles of health care designer and coordinator, organization and system leader, and advocate for consumers and the nursing profession.
- **CARING:** Provide empathetic, culturally sensitive, and compassionate care for individuals, families, communities, and populations that upholds moral, legal, and ethical humanistic principles.
- **COMMUNICATION:** Integrate therapeutic, interpersonal, intraprofessional, interprofessional, and informatics communication processes in professional nursing practice.

Regents Bachelor of Arts Degree (RBA)

The Regents Bachelor of Arts (RBA) degree is an innovative baccalaureate designed to be a foundational bachelor's degree for adult students. It makes use of flexible methods of degree completion including the use of prior learning as credit. The RBA is designed to provide a broad set of core competencies that support general education while allowing students to develop skills and knowledge for the next step in their career, education, or life. Through the guidance of their academic advisor, RBA students design a curriculum that meets their current and future academic and life needs.

The Regents Bachelor of Arts (RBA) degree program will;

- provide ability to communicate effectively in various contexts;
- build on past life experiences for a well-rounded curriculum of knowledge;
- promote development of core competencies;
- demonstrate connections between general education courses and career goals;
- provide a flexible path to an undergraduate degree;
- serve as a foundation to graduation education.

Honors Programs

There are two honors programs available at Potomac State College. The AA/AAS Honors Program is for students completing an Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Applied Arts (AAS) degree. The AA/AAS Honors Program involves completing honors courses while obtaining an AA or AAS degree. The BAS Honors Program is for students completing a Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree. The two programs are separate, and students can complete either one of the programs or both. Students do not have to complete or be in the AA/AAS Honors Program to be eligible for the BAS Honors Program. Enrollment in the Honors Program is by invitation only.

To be declared an Honors Scholar obtaining an Associate's Degree, students must complete a minimum of five honors courses (at least 13 honors credit hours), including an Honors Orientation course, and obtain at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA and 3.5 honors credit GPA. To be declared an Honors Scholar obtaining a Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) Degree, students must complete two honors contract courses of 300 or 400 level courses, an honors project, 30 hours of community services and obtain at least a 3.2 GPA.

In this section:

- Abbreviations Used in Course Listings (p. 4)
- Course Number Guide (p. 5)
- Common Course Numbers and Descriptions (p. 5)
- Independent and Directed Study Classes (p. 5)
- Last week of Classes and Final Exam Policy (p. 6)

Abbreviations Used in Course Listings

Abbreviation	Description
HR	credit hours per course
Lec	lecture period

Rec	recitation period
Lab	laboratory period
GLAB	graded lab
WEB	web-based course
CONC	concurrent - listed with PR meaning the course may be completed at the same time as enrollment in the course for which it is listed
PR	prerequisite - course must be completed in a term prior to enrollment in the course for which it is listed
Coreq	co-requisite - courses must be taken in the same term
Consent	consent of instructor required
CR	credit but no grade

Course Number Guide

For convenience, each course of study is designated by the name of the department in which it is given and by the number of that course. The plan for numbering courses is as follows:

Courses 100 Freshman/Underclassmen: Intended primarily for freshmen, although upper-division students may take them if needed to complete degree requirements.

Courses 200 Sophomore/Underclassmen: Intended primarily for sophomores. These courses may have 100 or 200-level prerequisites.

Courses 300 Juniors/Upperclassmen: Intended primarily for juniors. These courses may have extensive prerequisites or be limited to specific majors.

Courses 400 Seniors/Upperclassmen: Intended primarily for seniors and selected graduate students. These courses are typically limited to advanced undergraduates within a particular major or degree program and selected graduate students.

Undergraduate Common Course Numbers & Descriptions

199. Orientation to [subject/field]. 1-2 Hr. Orientation to degree programs and requirements, departmental resources, curriculum options, student responsibilities, and opportunities.

293. Special Topics. 1-6 Hr. PR: Consent. Investigation of topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

298. Honors. 1-3 Hr. PR: Students in Honors Program and consent by the honors director. Independent reading, study, or research.

393. Special Topics. 1-6 Hr. PR: Consent. Investigation of topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

490. Teaching Practicum. 1-3 Hr. PR: Consent. Teaching practice such as a tutor or assistant.

491. Professional Field Experience. 1-18 Hr. PR: Consent. (May be repeated up to a maximum of 18 hours.) Prearranged experiential learning program to be planned, supervised, and evaluated for credit by faculty and field supervisors. Involves temporary placement with public or private enterprise for professional competence development.

492. Directed Study. 1-3 Hr. Directed study, reading, and/or research.

493. Special Topics. 1-6 Hr. PR: Consent. Investigation of topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

494. Seminar. 1-3 Hr. PR: Consent. Presentation and discussion of topics of mutual concern to students and faculty.

495. Independent Study. 1-6 Hr. Faculty-supervised study of topics not available through regular course offerings.

496. Senior Thesis. 1-3 Hr. PR: Consent.

497. Research. 1-6 Hr. Independent research projects.

498. Honors, 1-3 Hr. PR: Students in Honors Program with consent by the honors director. Independent reading, study, or research.

499. Global Service Learning. 1-3 Hr. PR: Consent. Theory and practice of global service-learning. The main objective will be to pair the experiential aspects of meaningful and sustained service in the host community with work from the student's anchor course by offering a methodological framework for cultural immersion and community service as well as adding to the content of the anchor course.

Independent Study Classes

Independent study classes are offered to students in order to provide opportunities for content exploration not typically offered via the normal course rotation.

Students interested in pursuing independent study should contact their academic advisers to determine if independent study is a viable option for them and to identify the process specific to their college and major.

Directed Study Classes

Directed study classes may occasionally be contracted when:

1. The student has achieved good academic standing (GPA of 2.0 or higher),
2. The course requested for directed study is a requirement for graduation under the student's major, and
 1. There is no possibility of taking the course by the expected graduation date, or
 2. Unavoidable schedule conflict between required courses that are part of a sequence for which a real hardship would occur for the student to be able to complete their program within the expected time frame.

Students should consult with their academic advisers to see if directed study is a viable option for them. All requests for directed study classes require official approval.

Last Week of Classes and Final Examination Policy

In undergraduate courses greater than 8 weeks in duration, no substantial examinations or quizzes may be given during the last week of classes preceding finals with the exception of practical laboratory tests and make-up examinations. An examination or quiz is considered substantial if it counts for 20 percent or more of the final course grade. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the dean of the college or school.

When the calendar permits, a preparation day for finals will be added to the academic calendar. Preparation days for finals are not to be used as dates on which papers are due, quizzes or examinations are administered, or for any other class-related activity, other than office hours.

The final examination period is reserved for scheduled final examinations. No other class-related activity, with the exception of office hours, may be scheduled during the final examination period. No final examinations may be given before the examination period begins, with the exception of evening courses.

Final examinations for evening classes (classes meeting at 6 p.m. or later, or classes meeting at 4 p.m. or later if the class meets once a week) are scheduled during the last week of class. Final examinations for evening classes at WVU Institute of Technology occur during finals week and are on the undergraduate final examination schedule from the Office of the Registrar at WVU Institute of Technology.

The undergraduate final examination schedule for each academic term is determined by the Office of the University Registrar at the Morgantown location, the Office of Academic Affairs at the WVU Potomac State College, and the Office of the Registrar at WVU Institute of Technology. The final examination date and time for a class is determined by the class meeting time. No change in time from the published official examination schedule is permitted without approval of the dean of the college or school and the Provost's designee at the Morgantown location, Dean of Academic Affairs at the WVU Potomac State College or the Campus Provost at WVU Institute of Technology. Finals are held in the location of the regularly scheduled class meeting unless students are otherwise notified.

Assignments given in place of a final exam or "take-home" final examinations, excluding projects or assignments that are intended to be completed across the entire semester, may not be due before the final examination date and time for that class.

Common examinations are scheduled for certain courses that administer examinations at the same time for all students enrolled in the course. Common examinations may only be administered during the specified common examination time slot in order to minimize conflicts in the students' schedules and help ensure room availability. No courses other than those listed on the final examination schedule may use a common examination time. Common examinations given at the Morgantown location may only be administered for courses in which the total course enrollment exceeds 500 students or there are more than 20 sections of the course.

In a course extending over two semesters, when the subject matter is continuous, the second-semester final examination may include the subject matter of the first semester.

If a student has more than three final examinations on any one calendar day of the final examination period, the student may make arrangements to take the last examination of the day during the make-up examination time period. If a student has two final examinations scheduled during the same common examination time period, the student must contact the departments administering the common examinations to make arrangements for a make-up examination.

A student may address complaints related to the final examination procedures in a course to the dean of the college or school in which the course is offered, or to the Provost's designee.

In this section:

- Classification of Students (p. 7)
- Course Overload (p. 7)

- Credit Hour Definition (p. 7)
- Credit by Examination (p. 7)

Classification of Students

Students are classified as freshmen, sophomores, juniors, or seniors. These classifications are based upon the number of hours completed. The classifications are as follows:

Classification	Hours
Freshman	1-29 Earned Credit Hours, Inclusive
Sophomore	30-59 Earned Credit Hours, Inclusive
Junior	60-89 Earned Credit Hours, Inclusive
Senior	90 or More Earned Hours

Course Overload

Students may not enroll for more than 18 credit-hours of course work in a fall or spring semester or 14 credits in a summer semester without first receiving permission from the Dean of Academic Affairs.

Credit Hour Definition

WVU Potomac State College courses offered for credit are based on semester hours. Semesters are fifteen weeks long plus one week for final exams. A single credit hour is equivalent to fifty minutes of guided instruction within the classroom. An hour of preparation, or related activity outside of the classroom, is equivalent to sixty minutes.

FACE-TO-FACE CLASSROOM LEARNING

One credit hour is equivalent to one hour of guided instruction (fifty minute class) and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time such as during the summer sessions, which may vary in duration. One credit hour in other academic activities, as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practicums, studio work, study abroad, experiential learning opportunities, online learning, and other academic work must include an equivalent amount of required work listed in the preceding paragraph and is outlined in more detail below.

ONLINE CLASSROOM LEARNING

One credit hour of online learning is equivalent to fifteen hours of direct instruction and thirty hours of student work. Direct instruction can occur via computer-assisted (modules), multi-media interaction, discussions, and/or completion of exams/quizzes/assessments as documented in the course syllabus and approved to meet best practices in online learning. Student work includes activities like readings and supplemental assignments. Students must fulfill these hours to complete the course requirements as set forth by the course instructor. Online courses developed from existing face-to-face instruction adhere to the defined learning outcomes and assessments of the original face-to-face format for the course.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Experiential learning, includes opportunities associated with laboratory/lecture courses, undergraduate research (with or without laboratory), professional development internships, clinical experiences, and service learning. Three hours of experiential learning per week over a period of fifteen weeks receives one credit hour. Students are required to document progress during the course and completion of the stated learning objectives for each experience. Experiential learning courses are expected to adhere to and follow the institutional policy for reporting midterm and final grades. All credit-bearing courses require a syllabus.

STUDY ABROAD

One credit hour is equivalent to fifteen hours of guided instruction and thirty hours of cultural, linguistic or other types of engagements as described by the syllabus and approved by the faculty, Division Chair, Dean, and President. Exceptions to this general rule would need to be justified and approved on an individual basis.

Credit by Examination

After admission to WVU Potomac State College, students may elect to take examinations demonstrating competence in specific coursework. While PSC administered credit by examination and placement credit will be excluded from PSC residence credit, it does not interrupt the final fifteen credit hours in residence if earned during this period.

GUIDELINES

1. The student must be enrolled at Potomac State College during the semester that the credit is being sought.
2. The student must never have been enrolled in the class after the first week of the semester. Under unusual circumstances, this requirement may be waived by the Dean of Academic Affairs in consultation with the appropriate Division Chair.

3. No student may attempt institutional credit by examination more than once for the same course.
4. The student must demonstrate a background sufficient to warrant an exam.
5. The student must attempt institutional credit by examination prior to the last day to withdraw from a class.

COURSES NOT ELIGIBLE FOR CREDIT BY EXAMINATION

Due to their particular purposes and content, some courses may not be eligible for credit by examination at Potomac State College. These include ENGL 101 and ENGL 102.

PROCEDURE

1. The student must submit in writing to the appropriate Division Chair an explanation of how the competency was achieved. The Division Chair will determine if the student is eligible and whether the course is appropriate for institutional credit by examination. The Chair's decision can be appealed in writing within five working days to the Dean of Academic Affairs.
2. The Division Chair will procure an appropriate faculty member to develop, administer, and evaluate the exam. The Chair and the faculty member share responsibility for assuring the appropriate level of difficulty of the exam. In order to pass the exam, the student must show proficiency at a level comparable to that of a student receiving a grade of C in the course.
3. Upon successful completion, the student will receive credit for the course with no letter grade designated. Institutional credit will not affect the grade point average of the student.
4. A student who believes that a non-passing grade on the exam was due to capricious, arbitrary, or prejudiced academic evaluation or reflects discrimination based on race, color, creed, sex or national origin, may appeal the decision. The appeal will follow the same procedure as used for the appeal of a grade.