Programs, Courses & Credits

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.

The Bachelor of Applied Science (B.A.S.) 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 61 to 62 credits. Emphases are currently offered in Business Management, Computer Information Systems, and Criminal Justice. 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).

Regents Bachelor of Arts (RBA)

Potomac State College makes it possible for adults to complete a bachelor’s degree through the Regent’s Bachelor of Arts (RBA) program in the University College of West Virginia University. Students design their degree in conjunction with an adviser at Potomac State. West Virginia University confers the baccalaureate degree.

The College of Education and Human Services instills high expectations for personal academic achievement in students, along with the skills, experience and confidence to succeed. Through nontraditional degree programs, students gain empowerment to set and accomplish personal academic success goals. 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 of an undergraduate degree;
- serve as a foundation to graduate education.
In this section:

- Abbreviations Used in Course Listings (p. 2)
- Plan for Numbering Courses (p. 2)
- Common Course Numbers and Descriptions (p. 2)
- Independent Study Classes (p. 3)
- Final Exams (p. 3)
- Last week of Classes (p. 3)

Abbreviations Used in Course Listings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>credit hours per course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lec</td>
<td>lecture period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rec</td>
<td>recitation period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>laboratory period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLAB</td>
<td>graded lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEB</td>
<td>web-based course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONC</td>
<td>concurrent - listed with PR meaning the course may be completed at the same time as enrollment in the course for which it is listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>prerequisite - course must be completed in a term prior to enrollment in the course for which it is listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coreq</td>
<td>co-requisite - courses must be taken in the same term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consent</td>
<td>consent of instructor required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>credit but no grade</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Plan for Numbering Courses

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/Lower Division: Intended primarily for freshmen, although upper-division students may take them if needed to complete degree requirements.

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

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

Courses 400 Seniors/Upper Division: 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 may occasionally be contracted between a student and Potomac State College when:

1. The student has achieved good academic standing (GPA of 2.0 or higher),
2. The course requested for independent study is a requirement for graduation under the student's major, and
   a. There is no possibility of taking the course before the expected graduation date, or
   b. 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 his or her program in two years.

Independent study courses may also be contracted between a student and Potomac State College to provide enhanced educational opportunities for students enrolled in the Potomac State College Honors Program or to provide enhanced educational opportunities not regularly available to Potomac State College students.

Students should consult with their advisers. All requests for independent study classes require the approval of the Dean of Academic Affairs.

Final Exams

A final exam schedule will be developed each fall and spring by the Office of Academic Affairs. Final examinations for the summer sessions are given on the last day of classes.

If enrolled in a section of a multi-section course, students may be required to take the departmental final examination given during the regular final examination period.

Last Week of Classes

Practical laboratory tests, make-up examinations, and regularly scheduled short quizzes are the only tests permitted for day classes during the five days of classes preceding the beginning of final exams. Evening classes have their final exams on the last meeting of the class preceding the final exam schedule for day classes.

In this section:
- Classification of Students (p. 3)
- Course Overload (p. 4)
- Credit Hour Definition (p. 4)
- Credit by Examination (p. 4)

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>1-28 Earned Credit Hours, Inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>29-58 Earned Credit Hours, Inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>59-88 Earned Credit Hours, Inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>89 or More Earned Hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Classification of students will be updated starting Summer 2018.

The normal semester load for a full-time college student varies from 12 to 18 hours according to the curriculum selected. A college credit or semester hour represents the amount of work done in one recitation hour per week for the duration of a semester. As a rule, two to three hours of laboratory work are equivalent to one hour of recitation.
Course Overload

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

Credit Hour Definition

Potomac state college course 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 with 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 home work. 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

In experiential learning, including opportunities representing laboratory/lecture courses, professional development internships, and service learning, a total of three hours of classroom and preparation time per week over a period of fifteen weeks for one credit hour or the equivalent amount of work over a shorter period of time is required. Courses must incorporate adequate opportunities to document student progress and student completion of the stated learning objectives for each experience.

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 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 foundations courses and 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.