

POLICIES AND NORMS UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL FOR VALIDATION OF TRANSFER CREDITS AND COURSES TAKEN OUTSIDE OF PONTIFICAL CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico (PCUPR), in its interest to recognize studies under taken at other institutions of post-secondary education duly accredited by the corresponding authorities and at foreign universities, accepts the validation of credits for undergraduate transfer students. It has established norms and procedures to aid in the process of validating credits. It also recognizes and grants authorization for regular enrolled students to take classes outside of the institution and these COURSES will be validated as long as the student complies with the norms and procedures established at PUCPR.

I. DEFINITIONS:

Transfer Student

The Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico defines a transfer student as: *Every student who has taken university courses at another accredited post-secondary institution who desires admission to a degree program at Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico*¹. Transfer students can request validation of credits if they comply with all admission requirements.

Foreign institution:

An institution of higher education outside the jurisdiction of the United States of America.

International student:

A student coming from a foreign institution of higher education

Norm of Residency²:

A requisite for graduation which requires that at least 25% of the credits leading to a degree have been completed at any PCUPR campus. Fifty percent of credits in the concentration must have been taken within the PCUPR system.

¹ Definition of a transfer student [page 64 of the Undergraduate Catalog 2011-2014], amended November 5, 2013.

² Approved by the Academic Council on September 27, 2001 and revised on December 3, 2009. Taken from Form R021 (Authorization for Inter-institutional Studies) of November, 2009.

Granting of honors³

The transfer student may graduate with honors if he or she has taken 75% of the credits required for the degree at PCUPR.

Undergraduate Transfer Credits⁴

Deans of the colleges or campuses will evaluate applications for transferring credits to determine which courses will be validated.

1. All courses passed with a grade of C or better will be considered transferrable which the Dean considers to be the equivalent or a substitution for, one or more of the curricular requisites at this Institution.
2. Courses will not be transferrable if more than ten years have passed by since they were approved.
3. The Dean will determine the exact number of credits required for the degree. It is mandatory that 25% of the credits required for the degree be taken at the PUCPR. The Dean will determine how many of these credits should be requisites of the college or major field of study.
4. Students who have been suspended for deficient academic achievement at the university of origin do not qualify for transfer until one semester since they were dropped has gone by. However, if the institution of origin suspends the student from the college or program, the student may apply for transfer to a different college or program.
5. Some courses taken at other post-secondary institutions which have no equivalent at PCUPR may be counted as electives, as long as the corresponding Dean considers these appropriate courses.
6. Any student may appeal in writing to the Vice-President of Academic Affairs the decision made regarding credit transferral within 45 days of having received the validation⁵.

³ From page 90 of the Undergraduate Catalog 2011-2014 and page 59 of the Graduate Catalog 2011-2014
Approved by the Academic Council on September 25, 2008.

⁴ From page 64 of the Undergraduate Catalog 2011-2014.

⁵ Approved on October 4, 2013 by the Academic Council

Transfer credits at the graduate level⁶:

Credits Corresponding to courses taken at another institution that have been approved with a minimum grade of B that the Dean considers to be equivalent to or substitutable for requirements in the student's curriculum of PCUPR. These courses will be accredited without a grade and will not be included in the determination of the grade point average but will be considered for completing the degree.

II. POLICY OF CONVALIDATION OF CREDITS AT THE UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL⁷

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico validates credits for courses taken at other accredited institutions of higher learning for transfer students and regular students at the Institution. Regular students of the Institution may complete their academic program with courses taken at other accredited institutions of higher learning with prior authorization from the corresponding Rector or Dean, as long as the Residency Norm is complied with. Transfer students may be considered eligible to take courses at another accredited institution of higher education as long as they comply with the Residency Norm.

1.0 Norms for the validation of Credits for Undergraduate Transfer Students

- 1.1 It shall be the student's responsibility to request in writing from the Dean of his/her College the validation of credits and to submit the necessary evidence for this process at the beginning of his/her studies at PCUPR and no later than the end of his/her first year at the Institution.
- 1.2 It shall be the responsibility of the student's College Dean or equivalent officer at the branch campuses to evaluate the courses approved at another institution and complete the form validation of credits for transfer students, ensuring that the following requirements are complied with:
 - a. The course is equivalent in content and level to a course required in the student's curriculum.
 - b. The course was approved with a grade not less than "C", except in those cases requiring a higher grade.
 - c. The course was approved within the time limit established by the norm for the expiration of courses at PCUPR.
 - d. If the number of credits assigned to the course at the other institution is greater than at our PUCPR, the number of credits assigned by PUCPR shall prevail. If it is less than at our Institution, it shall be left to the Dean's discretion to determine the number of credits to be accepted for the course.
 - e. The total number of credits convalidated shall be subject to the Residency Norm.

⁶ From page 54 of the Graduate Catalog 2011-2014.

⁷ Policy approved by the Academic Council on April 24, 2008.

- 1.3 If the student decides to take the course validated at PCUPR, the grade of the course taken at THIS Institution shall prevail.
- 1.4 The Dean shall inform the transfer student concerning the Residency Norm, the Validation Policy, and the Norm concerning the Granting of Honors published in the current PUCPR Undergraduate Catalog, by means of Form R016 (*Information relating to the validation of Credits for Transfer Students*).⁸

2.0 Norms for the validation of Credits for Authorized Inter-institutional Studies for Regular and Transfer Undergraduate Students⁹

- 2.1 The student shall be responsible for requesting in writing from the Dean the authorization to take courses in a post-secondary institution outside of PCUPR prior to the beginning of the semester and for submitting the necessary evidence for this process.
- 2.2 Authorization to study at another institution will be granted under the following conditions:
 - a. Having satisfactory academic progress according to the current institutional norms.
 - b. Needing to complete the course(s) in order to graduate not which is/are being offered during the semester for which authorization is requested.
 - c. Having difficulty in attending the campus at which the student studies due to change of residence or other special circumstances
 - d. Not having registered previously in the course at the institution.
 - e. Needing to complete a prerequisite of the academic program.
- 2.3 It shall be the responsibility of the Dean of the College to which the student belongs or the Dean of Academic Affairs at the Branch Campuses to evaluate the courses requested by the student and to complete Form R021 (*Authorization for Inter-institutional Studies*), ensuring that the course is the equivalent in content and level to a course required by the student's curriculum. If the number of credits assigned to the course at the other institution is greater than that at PUCPR, the number of credits assigned at PUCPR shall prevail. If it is less than the number at THIS Institution, the Dean shall have the discretion to determine how many credits shall be accepted for the course.

⁸ Form R026 was revised in May, 2012.

⁹ Approved by the Academic Council on December 3, 2009. Available on page 74 of the Undergraduate Catalog 2011-2014

- 2.4 No authorized course may be substituted for another. Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico is not responsible for courses taken without authorization and reserves the right to validate them.
- 2.5 The total of credits authorized to be taken and subsequently validated should comply with the Residency Norm of PCUPR.
- 2.6 The Registrar's Office shall complete Form R021 (*Authorization for Inter-institutional Studies at the Undergraduate Level*) authorizing the courses to be taken at the other institution.
- 2.7 Credit shall be granted for courses passed with a grade of “C” or better in undergraduate courses. The course shall be considered as transferrable, and the grade shall not be considered in determining of the grade point average.
- 2.8 The student shall be responsible for requesting that two official transcripts be sent to the Registrar's Office, which shall be indispensable for accreditation of the courses in the student record.

III. POLICY FOR VALIDATION OF COURSES TAKEN AT FOREIGN INSTITUTIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS¹⁰

PCUPR accepts validation of courses for undergraduate students who have transferred from a foreign university as long as there are collaborative agreements with the institution or the interested international student complies with the admission requirements for this type of student. The student should complete the necessary paperwork using the services of agencies for validation of credits such for foreign universities as the *Educational Credentials Evaluation* or *World Educational Services*.

1.0 Procedure for validation of Courses for Students from Foreign Institutions

- 1.1 The student presents the admissions application and the official transcript of credits bearing the seal of the corresponding government organism in the country of origin or of the consulate of his/her country in Puerto Rico. If he she has studied at more than one institution, an official transcript from each one should be submitted to the Admissions Office of PCUPR.
- 1.2 The Admissions Office refers the academic file to the Dean of the College to which the international student shall pertain.
- 1.3 In the case of institutions with which PCUPR has established collaborative agreements, or if the international student has complies with the admissions requirements, the Dean may proceed with the validation of courses.
- 1.4 In the case of institutions with which PCUPR does not have collaborative agreements, or in which there is insufficient information to admit the potential

¹⁰ Approved by the Academic Council on April 29, 2010.

international student, the student will be requested to use the services of the *Educational Credentials Evaluation* or *World Educational Services*.

- 1.5 The student shall pay the costs of the services of the *Educational Credentials Evaluation* or *World Educational Services*.
- 1.6 According to the evidence presented by the potential student, the Deans shall determine whether the convalidation or substitution of courses can occur. If this is the case, the documents required according to the institutional policy for validation of credits (Form for Evaluation of Credits)¹¹ will be filled out.
- 1.7 Each Dean will determine which courses will be validated according to the academic norms of their programs.
- 1.8 In the case of the branch campuses, the term "Dean" refers to the Dean of Academic Affairs.

IV. NORMS FOR THE CONVALIDATION OF CREDITS OF THE COLLEGE BOARD EXAMINATIONS

PCUPR, in the interest of offering options to its potential students, recognizes and evaluates the results of the Academic Achievement Tests (*PACH*, for its initials in Spanish) in the subjects of Spanish, mathematics, and English; the Advanced Level Tests (*PNA*, for its initials in Spanish) of the College Board or its equivalent¹²; and the Advanced Placement Program of the SAT in order to validate credits. The placement of the level of the courses approved by validation will depend on the academic program of the student. The maximum number of credits to be on the *PACH* and *PNA* will be the equivalent of two courses per subject for to a maximum of 18 validated credits, and up to a maximum of six (6) for the *Advanced Placement Program* tests. The validated credits will appear as transfer credits in the student record.

1.0 Norm on the Validation of Academic Achievement Tests (*PACH*, in) and Advanced Level Tests (*PNA*) of the College Board

The Institution will evaluate the results of the Academic Achievement Tests (*PACH*) in the subjects of Spanish, mathematics, and English. The tests for which the student obtains a score of 700 or more will be validated for six (6) credits. Likewise, if the same student takes the Advanced Level Tests (*PNA*) in subjects equivalent to the *PACH* tests and obtains a score of 3, 4, or 5, six (6) credits will be validated in each subject. If the student takes both examinations in the same subject, the higher

¹¹ Each College has its own Form.

¹² The SAT (Student Aptitude Test) tests.

placement will be accepted¹³. A maximum of 24 credits will be validated for students who approved in all three subjects.

For the detailed procedure, refer to the following documents:

- *Procedure for Validation of Credits for Results of the Academic Achievement Tests (PACH, for its initials in Spanish) with Results of 700 or more on the College Board*
- *Procedure for Validation of Advanced Level Tests of the College Board*

2.0 Norm on the Validation of *Advanced Placement Program* Examinations of the SAT

The Institution will evaluate the results of the examinations of the *Advanced Placement Program* of the SAT of the College Board up to a maximum of two examinations with scores of 3, 4, or 5 to validate courses in various subjects. In cases where the student passes the Academic Achievement Tests (PACH), the Advanced Level Tests, and the *Advanced Placement Program* examinations, the Institution will validate the corresponding subjects for a maximum of 24 credits.

For the detailed procedure, refer to the document *Procedure for Validation of Advanced Level Tests (PNA) of the College Board*.

V. NORMS FOR VALIDATION OF WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND MILITARY SERVICE

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico (PCUPR), in the interest of offering options to potential students who have not completed their university studies and who are working, recognizes and validates, in certain programs, the knowledge acquired through workplace experience, professional development, or military service.

1. For the Bachelor in Business Administration in Business Experience, PCUPR validates as elective elective courses for the major up to 12 credits for experience and 6 credits for professional development, for a total of 18 concentration credits as long as the potential student is eligible and complies with the criteria established for validating experience described in the *Manual of Norms and Procedures for the Bachelor Degree in Business Administration with a Major in Business Experience*.
2. For the Bachelor Degree in Science with a Major in Liberal Studies, PCUPR validates a maximum of 30 credits for experience and professional development as long as the

¹³ Order of the convalidation of English courses approved and certified by the Academic Council on December 13, 2012, and the Order of the convalidation of Mathematics courses was approved by the Academic Council on October 22, 2013.

potential student is eligible and complies with the criteria established to validate experience as described in the *Policy to Register Credits for the Acceptance of Workplace Experience, Continuing Education, and Military Training*.

- a. For workplace experience, military training, or work accepted as practicum, the student must have had significant experience of at least three (3) months. Fifteen hours of significant workplace experience will be convalidated for one credit (fractional credit will not be awarded).
- b. For Professional development or Continuing Education, the student should have a minimum of 15 contact hours which shall be equivalent to one (1) credit.

Revised by the Academic Council on November 5, 2013