

ACADEMIC CREDIT TRANSFER

Once your nomination has started, you should consult with an advisor in your department, and take a proposed plan of study to your home faculty along with photocopies of available course descriptions, course hours, and institutional information. This information will help your faculty decide how credit will transfer for completed course work while on the exchange program. You should understand that there is an element of academic risk involved in studying abroad. Transfer credit cannot be entirely guaranteed. It is important to understand that courses approved for transfer credit by your home faculty at U of A only indicate your proposed course of study at the Host Institution. U of A faculty approval, however, does not guarantee access to the courses at the Host Institution – only the Host Institution can guarantee registration in their courses. Final registration in courses may only be guaranteed once you arrive on campus and proceed through the Host Institution's regular on-site registration process (which may involve getting special permission from departments and professors).

While many exchange program institutions offer access to courses in English this may not be the case for all institutions. If you are considering participating in an exchange program that offers courses in another language you must meet the language proficiency requirements of the Host Institution in order to undertake course work other than language upgrading. Where possible, U of A will provide a pre-departure assessment of your foreign language proficiency using placement tools and recommendations from the Host Institution. The Host Institution is solely responsible for determining your foreign language proficiency. If, upon arrival it is determined by the Host Institution that you do not have the language skills necessary you may not be able to take normal academic courses in the foreign language.

Also, you may not have access to some courses once you arrive at the Host Institution and as a result you may not receive full transfer credit for all work done abroad. You should plan on having a selection of both first choice and alternative courses to register in at the Host Institution. If changes in circumstance require altering the academic program or plans originally approved by your home U of A faculty, then it is your responsibility to contact your home U of A faculty directly as soon as possible. The ultimate authority for a U of A program rests with your home faculty. You should ensure that any concerns regarding your participation in an exchange program are satisfied before you leave. If you feel you must receive credit for a specific and limited number of courses while on the exchange program, you should recognize the risks and carefully consider whether or not to participate.

Transfer credit is dependent on courses available at the Host Institution and faculty approval of the courses you take. It is **your responsibility** to ensure you are aware of and understand your home faculty's policies on credit transfer. It is also your responsibility to ensure an official transcript is forwarded to U of A as soon as the results are available. No credit will be given until transcripts are received. Transcripts are required whether or not course work is completed. Transcripts from the Host Institution are normally sent directly to the U of A Exchange Programs Coordinator. The Exchange Programs Coordinator will forward original transcripts to the student's Home Faculty. Participants should bring back all course materials including course outlines, texts, tests, written materials, etc. for consideration in awarding transfer credit. Credit transfer decisions can take up to several months to be finalized.

Where a course has been approved for credit transfer to U of A from the Host Institution the course will appear on your U of A transcript as transfer credit with the granted course weight. No grade or assessment for the course will appear on your U of A transcript. The U of A transcript will note you participated in a formal U of A Study Abroad Program and the name of the Host Institution.

In order for courses to be considered for credit transfer you must:

1. receive permission in advance from your home faculty
2. be in good standing in your ongoing degree program
3. not have exceeded the maximum amount of transfer credit allowed by your faculty

In some instances your Home Faculty may need to make a 'grade conversion' for one or more of the courses you undertook while on the exchange. The mark you received for a course at the Host Institution is converted into U of A's 4-point scale. This may be required if you are in an honours program, if you are eligible to graduate with distinction, if you are applying for some U of A Awards, or if you leave while in one faculty and intend to change to another faculty upon your return. You should consult your Faculty Programs Office if there is a chance you may fall under one of these categories. The intent of the grade conversion is to compare your performance in the exchange to a level of comparable academic performance at U of A. Most students do not require grade conversions.

Most faculties normally award credit for approved courses in which a grade of "C-" or its equivalent, is achieved, but final approval is up to the discretion of the home faculty. U of A policy for credit transfer does not permit credit transfer of courses completed at another institution and in which "D" or less has been obtained. Courses with a grade of "D" will not be credited towards a U of A degree. Credit for such courses will be considered on a pass-fail basis only and will not be included in any grade point average calculation. Consult the section of the U of A calendar for your home faculty to find out if your faculty has any other requirements.