

## EXPERIENTIAL CREDIT GUIDELINES

1. What prior experiential credit is. Experiential credit is formal academic credit awarded to a student who has learned, outside of school, certain competencies which are genuinely equivalent or superior to that which would have been acquired in college. Such competency is expected to be related to the student's present degree program.
2. Eligibility. To receive experiential credit, a student must be currently enrolled as a degree candidate at North Central College.
3. Timing. Though reasonable care will be taken to avoid delay, applicants should anticipate intervals of several weeks or longer between application and final report.
4. Credit rules.
  - a. Experiential credit will not be awarded for a lower-level demonstration made after a student has passed a higher-level academic course in the same area; nor may any student be tested or assessed in the same credit area more often than once in 12 months or more than twice overall.
  - b. A maximum of 28 credit hours earned through CLEP and/or experiential credit may be applied toward the 120 credit hour requirement for graduation. Such credit may count towards the residency requirement only if the student completes at least 36 credit hours at North Central.
  - c. At least nine credit hours in the student's major and six credit hours in the student's minor must be earned at North Central. CLEP and experiential credit may not be used to meet these two requirements.
  - d. The minimum unit of experiential credit is **one credit hour**.
5. The preliminary inquiry. A student interested in experiential credit should first seek an interview with the department chairperson involved. An informal discussion will help both to decide whether the student's experience warrants a formal assessment. Criteria to be considered are: whether the experience has produced genuine competence; whether the competence is related to the student's degree program; how the competence can be measured and documented.
6. The application. If the preliminary contact is encouraging, the student will apply by letter directly to the Office of Academic Affairs for a formal assessment. Students are urged to apply promptly to allow accurate planning of their programs and to avoid problems caused by taking upper level courses in the same field (see 4a) or problems with the residency requirement in the last nine courses (see 4b). An assessment fee of \$150.00 is payable upon submission of the application. (See item 8, Credit Fee, for

additional charge per credit hour.) The application is forwarded to an appropriate evaluator who applies the criteria under item 5, above, more rigorously. Such criteria will usually consist of one or more of the following:

- a. A portfolio containing a specific request for credit as related to degree plans; a written report describing the competencies and skills achieved in various types of experiential learning; a collection of documentary letters, certificates, evaluations, and other evidence that may be helpful in supporting the claim.
- b. A performance test.
- c. An essay examination.
- d. An interview with an outside expert.

Since b, c, and d are not expected to be commonly used, the Associate Academic Dean will issue special guidelines according to individual cases.

7. The actual assessment. On presentation of the evidence, the Department Chair or designee, will evaluate it, with the student present or not, as may be appropriate. He/she will find either that the academic credit is warranted or that it is not. Again, the criteria under item 5, above, are to be applied. If credit is warranted, it will carry the grade of P (Pass).

The Department Chair (or designee) will determine the amount of credit and its equivalency (e.g., credit for a specific course or elective credit.). A rule of thumb is that the competency being credited should be equivalent to that which would be acquired by an equal amount of academic course work.

The Department Chair (or designee) will notify the Associate Academic Dean in writing of the results of the assessment, including the subject to which the credit should be assigned.

8. Credit fee. A student for whom credit is declined will have no further expense beyond the original assessment fee. For credits actually awarded, a charge of \$50.00 will be made for each credit hour recorded. The Business Office will inform the student of the fee to be paid.
9. Recording. On payment of such fee, the Registrar will enter the credit on the student's permanent record as instructed by the Associate Academic Dean.

Note: If any information in the application and supporting documentation is misrepresented, falsified or in violation of the academic dishonesty policy described in the undergraduate catalog, credit will not be awarded and any fees paid will not be refunded.