
University Undergraduate Transfer Credit Policy

Version: 1.0

Responsible University Official: Provost

Version Effective Date: 8-20-2025

1.0 Context

- 1.1 This policy re-affirms the rights and responsibilities of SLU's faculty related to transfer course articulation decisions as defined in the [Faculty Manual](#), and provides University-level support and direction for those decisions.
- 1.2 This policy is grounded in (a) analysis of related historical and contemporary practices in American Higher Education; (b) analysis of related institutional and program/unit-level accreditation standards at multiple institutions; and (c) analysis of selected state practices and policies related to the governance of transfer credit. Further, this policy is consistent with the vast majority of the principles advanced in the [Joint Statement on the Transfer and Award of Credit](#) authored by the following:
 - *American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers (AACRAO)*
 - *American Council on Education (ACE)*
 - *Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)*
- 1.3 This policy recognizes and accepts, at the University level, the risks inherent in not having a nearly perfect (e.g., 90-99 percent) equivalency match for all transfer courses. It is certainly possible that a transfer student could be substantively challenged in a subsequent SLU course if their "preparatory" transfer course(s) were only about 75% equivalent to the commensurate SLU course (per Section 3.5). However, it is also true that a transfer student who earned an "A" or "B" grade in such a course might be even better prepared for the subsequent SLU course than the non-transfer SLU student who earned a lesser grade in the equivalent preparatory course at SLU. Further, all transfer students must accept some level of academic risk in transferring institutions. Accordingly, this policy reflects what the University has determined is an appropriate balance between the academic risks assumed by SLU and the transfer student and the general academic good that accrues to the transfer student and to SLU by reasonably facilitating course transfer.
- 1.4 This policy complements, but does not replace, other institutional policies, including the [Graduation Requirements Policy](#) and other [Academic Policies](#) detailed in the current [Catalog](#).

1.0 Scope

- 1.1 This policy applies to all academic credit submitted for transfer to SLU toward fulfillment of any academic requirement of any undergraduate SLU degree or certificate, or any curricular subcomponent thereof.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all undergraduate degree seeking and non-degree seeking students at SLU, at all campuses/locations. Certain stipulations of this policy apply exclusively to matriculated SLU students pursuing transfer coursework at some point during their SLU career after their admission and initial enrollment.

- 1.3 This policy governs the transfer articulation practices of all SLU academic units (departments, colleges/schools) and academic programs.

2.0 Eligibility of a Course to be Considered for Transfer

2.1 A course will be *eligible to be considered for transfer* to SLU if **all** of the following conditions are met:

- A. The transfer course is completed at either a U.S. institution of higher education accredited by a [CHEA-designated "Regional Accrediting Organization"](#) or an international institution fully recognized/approved by the highest-level educational governance body (e.g. "National Ministry of Education" or equivalent) of the country in which the institution is located.
- B. The transfer course is recorded on an official transcript (either in hard copy or SLU-approved electronic form) issued by the transfer institution.
- C. The official transcript issued by the transfer institution is delivered:
 - i. directly from the transfer institution* to either SLU's Office of Admission or Office of the University Registrar.
 - ii. by the student to either SLU's Office of Admission or Office of the University Registrar when the transcript is housed in an envelope sealed by the transfer institution itself and never opened thereafter (as determined by SLU officials).

**For international transcripts: Official transcripts from international institutions may be submitted directly from a University-approved academic transcript/credential evaluation service (see 2.1E below) to SLU's Office of Admission or Office of the University Registrar, as part of a package of materials including that service's evaluation of the proposed transfer credit.*

- D. The final, official course grade posted for each potential transfer course is a "C" letter grade (or above), or the equivalent as determined by SLU's Office of the Registrar after consultation with appropriate officials of the transfer institution.
- E. *For all transcripts from international institutions:* Students also must provide a course-by-course evaluation of each transcript, in English, from a university-approved international credential evaluation service; a current list of SLU-approved services will be maintained by the University Registrar and published annually in SLU's Catalog and on pertinent Office of Admission web pages. Additionally, for all potential transfer courses students must provide official institutional course descriptions, in English (or, if those are unavailable, official course syllabi, in English), to facilitate SLU transfer equivalency decisions.
- F. The course was completed by the student at the transfer institution within 10 years of the SLU-conducted transfer equivalency review, subject to the following exceptions:
 - i. Courses reviewed for articulation as equivalents of courses in the Chaifetz School of Business must have been completed with 5 years of the transfer equivalency review.
 - ii. Academic units may make exceptions on an individual student basis to accept in transfer courses taken more than 10 years prior to review.

3.0 Transfer Course Articulation Policy Statements

- 3.1 Whenever reasonable, articulations should be made to current courses in SLU's Catalog – and not to “generic” transfer course equivalents (as created by the Registrar's Office) such as those with an “ELE” suffix. The “ELE”-suffix courses are available for use only when it is clearly not reasonable to articulate the transfer course to a currently-cataloged SLU course per this Policy.

Note: This echoes the aforementioned [Joint Statement on the Transfer and Award of Credit](#), which notes: “[Institutional transfer] policies should aim to maximize the amount of credit applied to fulfill requirements on the path to a student's chosen degree or credential. Awarding credit ... to fulfill electives, ...while sometimes helpful, must not be the focus of our efforts. Credit for [transfer work] is most beneficial when it is applied to fulfill a specific degree or credential requirement.”

- 3.2 Assuming the institution at which a potential transfer course was offered is regionally accredited, or is an equivalently-authorized international institution (per Section 2.0), the following should not be determining factors in a transfer articulation decision:

- A. The size/type/level/Carnegie Classification or any similar characteristic of the institution at which the credit was earned.

For example, whether a potential transfer course was taken at a community college (an increasing number of which are now offering bachelor's degrees per charters revised by their state departments of education) or a “Research I” university should not be a factor in any course equivalency determination. Note that the level of research productivity of any institution's faculty is itself not a factor in either the design or teaching/offering of a course (at SLU or elsewhere). For transfer credit articulation, the unit of analysis must be the course itself – not the institution by which it was offered (other than the restrictions offered in Section 2.0).

- B. A transfer course's number or numeric level (e.g., 100- or 1000-level, 200- or 2000-level, etc.). The course number or level alone should not dictate any decision about (a) course transferability generally or (b) determining whether to articulate a transfer course as a direct equivalent to a current cataloged course at SLU versus articulating as a more “generic” transfer elective course.

For example: A 1000-level course at the transfer institution might well be determined to be the functional equivalent of a specific 2000-level (or 3000-level) course at SLU; if so, the course should be articulated to SLU as the specific 2000-level/3000-level SLU course. Likewise, a 2000-level course at the transfer institution might well be determined to be the functional equivalent of a specific 1000-level course at SLU; if so, the course should be articulated to SLU as the specific 1000-level SLU course.

Relatedly, when the transfer course is determined not to be the functional equivalent of a specific SLU cataloged course but still a fully-transferable course, the course should be articulated to SLU at the level at which any similar SLU course would be; there should be no summary decision to articulate the course solely at the level assigned by the transfer institution.

- C. The modality (in-person, online, hybrid, etc.) of the transfer course.
- D. The schedule of the transfer course (for example, whether it met three times a week for

16 weeks, or once a week for 8 weeks, or per some other class meeting schedule/cadence). *Some consideration of contact hours may be permissible when addressing some international transfer credit.*

- E. Whether or not the course was taken as part of a “dual credit” or “dual enrollment” program while the student was both a high school and college-level student.
- F. Whether the course was taken while a student was studying abroad, or at SLU’s Madrid Campus.
- G. The academic credentials or related professional experience (or lack thereof) of the faculty member who taught the course at the transfer institution.
- H. Per faculty review consistent with this Policy, all transfer courses determined to be functional equivalents of specific SLU cataloged courses will be used by the University Registrar to fulfill all applicable requirements of all academic programs (undergraduate majors, minors, certificates, micro-credentials, and the University Core); no academic unit may refuse to accept/apply such courses toward their programs.

3.3 Each transfer credit articulation decision should be made by appropriate faculty, formally appointed by their respective chair or dean, and be based on a review of the official course description of the potential transfer course as presented in either (a) the course catalog/bulletin of the transfer institution or (b) as provided via a University-sponsored transfer articulation software/system maintained by SLU’s University Registrar. The articulation review should consider each of the following *when available*:

- course student learning outcomes
- course content/subject matter studied (knowledge, theories, practices, historical/contemporary perspectives, specific authors/texts/genres/time periods to be studied, skills to be developed, software to be used/learned, etc.)
- the *academic/developmental* level at which course content/subject matter is addressed (e.g., introductory, intermediate, advanced; determination of level is often aided by a review of similar/sequenced courses in the same discipline at the transfer institution)
 - This is explicitly *not* to be reduced to an analysis of the course number/level (e.g., “1000-level, 2000-level,” etc.).
- any course pre- or co-requisites (which should also be reviewed for comparative context and insights about the level at which subject matter is addressed)
- any restrictions on course enrollment (e.g., “limited to majors,” “restricted to freshmen”)
- the instructional method (lecture, discussion, seminar, laboratory, studio, clinical, etc.)
- the language in which the course was taught (only when the language of instruction is directly germane to the learning outcomes of the course)

3.4 Any specific standards for transfer credit employed by each academic discipline/department/college/school, including standards for articulations as specific SLU courses, must:

- A. be formally articulated and adopted, and in accordance with the shared governance policies/procedures of the academic unit;
- B. not conflict with this policy.

3.5 Transfer courses should be articulated as the functional equivalents of specific SLU cataloged courses when, minimally, approximately 75 percent of the course (per the review considerations addressed in 3.3) is deemed reasonably similar to a specific SLU course. However, when an

absolutely critical element(s) of SLU course’s content/subject matter is demonstrably not addressed (in other words, it is clearly part of the up to 25% of the transfer course deemed not reasonably similar to the SLU course), then the absence of that critical element(s) itself warrants an alternative transfer articulation decision.

- 3.6** There shall be no default status, policy, or practice in any SLU college/school that requires the submission and review of syllabi for all, or even most, transfer articulation reviews. As a general rule, syllabi shall not be required for SLU to conduct transfer articulations of courses from domestic institutions holding CHEA-recognized “regional” accreditation (per Section 2.1.A). Syllabi may be requested to complete an articulation (or adjudicate an appeal of completed but contested articulation) after all other reasonable articulation efforts (including reviews of how the transfer course, as described in the transfer institution’s official catalog, fits in the context of its home institution’s core/general education and major curricula) still result in not enough clarity to determine transferability.

Note: This should likely result in requiring syllabi in an exceedingly small percentage of all transfer articulation cases institution-wide. Also note that the proliferation of learning management systems (LMS) such as Canvas, Blackboard, D2L, etc. across American institutions of higher education present increasing challenges to the provision of syllabi for transfer articulation purposes. Any student who has formally withdrawn from an institution likely has no access to that institution’s LMS; if they don’t otherwise have a saved copy, they will not be able to self-produce a syllabus for a potential transfer course articulation.

- 3.7** Credit amounts from transfer courses offered at institutions that do not employ the [traditional “semester credit hour” system that SLU employs](#) will be converted according to nationally-accepted norms, as follows:

| Transfer Course Credit System | Credits on Transfer Institution’s System | Equivalent Credits at SLU (Semester Hour System) |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Quarter Hour System | 4 | 2.67 |
| Single Credit System | 1 | Per Stipulation of the Transfer Institution (see governing official catalog or transcript key) |

- 3.8** SLU will articulate and award no more or less credit for a transfer course than was given by the original/transfer institution.

Example: If a student completed a transferable three semester hour (SH) course at another institution, then that course will transfer to SLU as a three credit course at SLU.

Example: If a student completed a transferable four quarter hour (QH) course at another institution, then that course will transfer to SLU as a 2.67 credit course at SLU.

- 3.9** If a student transfers in a 4 QH course (converted into a 2.67 SH course upon articulation), and that transfer course otherwise fully meets either a specific core requirement, or requirement of an academic major/minor/certificate or similar, and that requirement that normally mandates completion of a 3 SH course, then the specific requirement is nonetheless deemed fulfilled. In other words, a 2.67 SH transfer course should be counted as fulfilling whatever 3 SH requirement that transfer course would fulfill if it were, in fact, a 3 SH transfer course. On degree audits and related records the course should always show as 2.67 credits; however, any associated academic requirements should also show on audits as being fulfilled by the 2.67 credit course.

- 3.10** Transfer articulation decisions made by SLU faculty shall remain in effect for a maximum of five years, after which they must be re-evaluated by the appropriate faculty or their designated and trained staff delegates. Articulations may be terminated or modified as deemed necessary by the appropriate SLU faculty at any time before that five-year threshold is met.

Note: The Office of the Registrar will annually purge their database(s) of outdated faculty-approved transfer articulations, ensuring that internally- and publicly-available transfer articulations are updated and accurate.

- 3.11** Matriculated SLU students enrolled in or seeking to enroll in transfer coursework at some point during their SLU career (after their admission and initial enrollment at SLU) may transfer a maximum of nine credits toward the completion of their SLU degree.

- Students who participate in an approved non-SLU-affiliated study abroad/study away program may request an exemption from this nine-credit limit.

- 3.12** No academic unit or program may require a student to take (or “retake”) a course at SLU for which SLU has already awarded the student transfer credit via an articulated transfer course.

Note: Admission requirements to graduate/professional schools at SLU or elsewhere may require the retaking of an undergraduate course at SLU; such an admission requirement is not subject to this SLU undergraduate policy.

- 3.13** If any portion of this policy contradicts a formal, written policy of any institutional or disciplinary/program/college/school accreditation or state/federal licensure body governing any SLU program, then that portion of this policy is deemed inapplicable to the specific, accreditor-governed instance of transfer articulation.

4.0 Approvals

This policy was:

1. Endorsed by UAAC: 4-3-2025
2. Approved by the Provost: 5-20-2025