



Evaluating Courses for Incoming Transfer: A Guide on Why, What, Who, When, and How

Why

LCC strives to acknowledge prior student learning at other colleges and universities—and also from standardized examinations such as AP (Advanced Placement), CLEP (College-Level Examination Program), IB (International Baccalaureate), and DAN TES (Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support), along with other areas of prior learning—by awarding transfer credit for equivalent LCC courses when possible.

At the same time, we want to make sure our transfer equivalencies are both accurate and understandable. That is, the information we keep on our [webpage](#) and in [MiTransfer.org](#) regarding incoming transfer equivalencies should be clear and useful for students, advisors, and even other institutions. If different students take the same course at another college, they should get the same transfer credits at LCC. We should not reinvent the wheel each time, as that increases the possibility for error and unfairness.

What

Per the [LCC catalog](#), we can award credit from college-level courses that meet **all** of the following criteria. Courses must be...

- **from an institution accredited regionally or professionally**
- **listed on an official transcript which the Registrar’s Office receives directly from the other institution**
 - LCC cannot use an unofficial transcript, a sealed official transcript delivered by the student, etc. (Such documentation can be used for granting placement levels or prerequisite overrides but not for awarding transfer credit.)
- **taken at the institution sending the transcript**
 - If College B has accepted transfer credit from College A, we cannot re-transfer that credit via College B’s transcript—we need the original official transcript directly from College A.
- **non-developmental/non-remedial**
- **equivalent to an LCC course**
 - The course need not be a 100% match—70% similarity is acceptable.
 - Courses that are not equivalent may be transferred only per our SOP on [“Transfer of General Credits.”](#)
 - General credits that can count only toward the General Associate degree can be requested by general advisors.

- General credits that will be substituted for specific program requirements can be requested by program advisors.
 - General credits that will be substituted into General Education requirements can be requested by Academic Affairs.
- **graded 2.0/full C or higher**
 - We cannot transfer a C-.
 - Grades of Pass on a Pass/Fail system can be transferred only when it is documented that Pass at the sending institution is at least a 2.0/full C.
- **no more than 1 credit smaller than the LCC course**
 - For example, if LCC's ABCD 201 is 4cr, we can accept a slightly smaller 3cr course as equivalent, but we cannot accept a 4cr term/quarter course that is only 2.67 semester credits.

Courses are transferred to the student's LCC transcript in LCC course numbers and titles, with a grade of TR, meaning "transfer." Grades from the courses LCC has accepted in transfer are **not** calculated in the LCC GPA. However, if a student has a 2.0, 1.5, 1.0, or 0.0 in an LCC course and then transfers the equivalent course in, the LCC 2.0, 1.5, 1.0, or 0.0 will be [excluded](#) from our GPA calculation. (If the student's LCC GPA had been below 2.0, such that an LCC grade of 2.0 was beneficial, the Registrar's Office can put that grade back in the GPA calculation when requested by an advisor.)

Transfer credit is posted on the student's LCC transcript for the semester it was received by LCC, not necessarily the semester or even year it was taken—a potentially important matter for advising purposes. There is no time limit on transferring courses.

There is no limit on the amount of credit that may be transferred in. However, all LCC [Associate Degrees](#) require at least 15cr toward the program to be taken at LCC, all [Certificates of Achievement](#) require at least 7.5cr toward the program to be taken at LCC, and all [Certificates of Completion](#) require at least one-fourth of the credits toward the program to be taken at LCC.

Who

The transfer process is performed by the Registrar's Office. They receive the official transcripts sent by other institutions, they do the majority of evaluations according to [lists of common equivalencies](#) posted online, and they award appropriate transfer credit on students' LCC records. In addition to maintaining and updating our own [webpage](#), the Registrar's Office maintains and updates our incoming equivalencies in [MiTransfer.org](#) as well. (Incoming transfer information for other institutions is maintained in MiTransfer.org by the various receiving schools.)

When

The Registrar's Office begins the transfer process as soon as the official transcript is received. During times of high traffic, it might take a few weeks before courses are evaluated and transferred.

Occasionally, however, the Registrar's Office may need to have unfamiliar or unusual courses evaluated by subject-matter experts in the academic program areas. The Registrar's Office maintains a list of faculty and administrators who may evaluate courses and authorize transfer credit.

How

When subject-matter experts in the academic program areas are asked to evaluate another institution's course for potential transfer equivalency, it may be tempting simply to check MiTransfer.org and in a single step say that since LCC's ABCD 201 transfers to College X as PQRS 100, then PQRS 100 should transfer in as our ABCD 201. However, this should **not** be done in isolation.

Why? LCC teaches a course titled "The Western World to 1500," for example, and it is possible that another institution teaching "World Civilizations to 1500" might accept our course as an equivalent. Yet this institution's World Civilizations course should not transfer in as LCC's Western World because its coverage would be much wider than the Western world, meaning that its treatment of the West would be too light and hence would fall outside our minimum of 70% equivalency. Transferability thus should never be based solely on whether another college or university accepts a particular LCC course.

When asked by the Registrar's Office to evaluate an unfamiliar or unusual course, subject-matter experts should **examine as many of the following as possible**:

- **course title**
 - Do this not in isolation but **in context**, searching in the other institution's online catalog or course descriptions to see all offerings in the same alphacode.
 - Sometimes the new course first seems a decent fit with LCC ABCD 201...but then the catalog shows that a different course would be even better. The course in question then should **not** be transferred as ABCD 201.
- **course description**
 - Again, look **in context**, both at the course in question and also at the institution's other offerings in the same alphacode.
- **syllabus**
 - The syllabus from the other institution may not always be necessary, but it can help if title and course description do not give enough information.

- **existing [LCC transfer equivalencies](#)**
 - Sometimes, unbeknown to the reviewer, LCC has already determined that a different course from the institution is equivalent to ABCD 201.
 - Is the existing equivalency correct? Or should it be changed?
- **[MiTransfer.org](#)**
 - Check how the course transfers to other colleges and universities, noting the course titles at the receiving institutions.
 - Are many of these titles similar to one of ours? Or is there great divergence?
 - Check how any potential LCC equivalent courses transfer, both to the institution in question and to others, noting the course titles at the receiving institutions.
 - Do many institutions accept the course in question and the LCC course the same way? Or is there great divergence?
 - Remember that transfer equivalencies at LCC—except for courses already established via various [MiTransfer Pathways](#)—need not necessarily be based on those of other institutions. Examining transferability at other institutions sometimes can, however, provide useful context in our evaluation.

The LCC transfer decision should be made in the best professional judgment of the subject-matter experts, based on the above research, and this decision will determine what the Registrar’s Office transfers not only for the student whose transcript is evaluated now but also for all such students in the future. That is, if a new or changed equivalence is decided, the Registrar’s Office will post that equivalence on its public [transfer equivalencies webpage](#) and in [MiTransfer.org](#), and the course in question will transfer in as ABCD 201, while a different course from the same institution will not.

Remember, though, that even if the course in question is not truly equivalent to ABCD 201, it still, if appropriate, could be transferred in as ACBD 000 General Credit and then substituted for 201 in an LCC program.

For questions on any of the above, check with the Transfer and Academic Record Coordinator in the Registrar’s Office ([Joe Brewer](#) [brewerj1@star.lcc.edu]) and the Academic Affairs Project Manager ([Rafeeq McGiveron](#) [mcgiver@star.lcc.edu]).

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