

Transfer and Career Services Guide to Course Transfer

The Office of Transfer and Career Services is happy to work with students and academic advisors to help a student determine the probability of their courses transferring to their next college. Here is what is important to know about transferring credits, and in what ways our office can be helpful:

Only the receiving college can determine what will and will not transfer

Landmark College has no control over what another college will accept as transfer credit. The receiving institution's registrar will evaluate a Landmark student's transcript, often in correlation with departmental faculty, to determine what credit they will accept. Typically, the receiving institution needs to offer a similar course at their institution in order for them to accept the credit.

There are some general trends colleges follow when transferring credit in:

- Many colleges require that a student have earned a C or higher in a course for it to count for transfer credit at their institution. Courses for which a student has earned grades of C- or D are accepted less often for transfer credit. Some colleges will accept a C- or D for transfer if the student has an associate degree.
- Courses taken on a Pass/Fail basis will rarely transfer. Generally, only courses given a letter grade are transferable. Landmark classes under the 1000 level will not transfer. These are considered "non-credit" courses, taken to build college readiness skills.
- There are limits to the number of credits four-year colleges will accept for transfer. The maximum number of transfer credits accepted at another college is typically around 60 credit hours, but can be as high as 90 credit hours. It is also good to keep in mind that just because a student transfers with a significant amount of credit does not mean they can complete their degree in two years or less. If they have not met the prerequisites for the program they are going into, it will likely take them longer than two years to finish.
- Credits transfer, grades do not. The student will start a new GPA at the next college.
- Physical education courses or trade-related courses (e.g. massage therapy, welding, fire safety, etc.) typically do not transfer, or will transfer in a very limited capacity.

How a student can determine if credit will transfer

There are a few steps students can take to determine if a class will transfer, or is likely to transfer:

- *Compare Course Catalogs Descriptions:* Students can compare our course description with the course description of the college(s) they are interested in. If the classes sound similar in content and philosophy, it is likely they will accept the credit. Course catalogs can typically be found on most colleges' websites.
- *Contact Admission Offices:* If a student has a few colleges in mind they would like to apply to, they can contact their admissions offices. They should provide them with the Landmark course catalog description of the course(s) they are considering taking and ask if this is

something that would transfer into their institution. Our office is happy to help a student in creating these emails and reaching out to colleges.

- *Articulation Agreements:* Landmark does have articulation agreements with select institutions that guarantee the transferability of some classes for students who have earned an associate degree (see section on Articulation Agreements for more info).
- *Transfer Credit Databases:* Some colleges provide databases online detailing what credits they have accepted from other colleges. It is worth asking the admissions office at a college of interest if their registrar has such a database. Keep in mind, however, that if it has been a while since a Landmark student has enrolled there or they have had few Landmark applicants, the database may not be up to date or only include a handful of courses.

Credit evaluation timeline

Most colleges will provide a credit evaluation to students AFTER they have been accepted to the college. Students should keep in mind:

- Credit evaluations done BEFORE a student enrolls are usually considered “preliminary” and will not include courses they are currently enrolled in (though some colleges may let you know the likelihood of a current course transferring).
- Most institutions will not do a credit evaluation on unofficial transcripts, so it is important for a student to send official documents.
- Some colleges will do a preliminary credit evaluation before a student applies if requested.
- You can reach out to a college before applying when selecting courses at Landmark for a sense of what is likely to transfer (larger institutions may not respond, but still worth asking).
- If a college says they will not provide a credit evaluation until a student officially enrolls at a college, the student should be hesitant about enrolling there. A student is entitled to know how many of their credits are likely to transfer BEFORE paying an enrollment deposit.

Credit transfer decisions are not final

A student may be initially disappointed at courses that do not transfer to a college they are considering attending. Students should view the initial credit evaluation they receive as a starting point for a conversation with a college admissions office/registrar and NOT a final assessment. Students often can appeal evaluations and ask for an additional review. As part of a more in-depth review, a registrar will likely want a copy of the course syllabus of the course(s) in question.

All Landmark course syllabi are available on SharkNet at:

<https://sharknet.landmark.edu/departments/aa/Registrar/Syllabus/Forms/AllItems.aspx>. A student may also have to go directly to the faculty chair of a department to appeal some credit decisions. Our office is happy to help students negotiate this process. If a student is really interested in a college, it is worth taking this additional step!

Articulation Agreements

Landmark has established partnerships with select colleges and universities. Revisiting and updating these is a continuous process, especially as Landmark continues to expand its programs, so it's best to consult with a Transfer and Career Services staff member about current opportunities. Students should always follow-up with partner colleges to confirm requirements, and this is especially important during course selection. Agreements generally fall into three categories:

Transfer: Usually apply to Landmark associate degree graduates only. Agreements vary greatly but can include guaranteed admission for students who have maintained a certain GPA and course equivalency (meaning some or all credits earned from Landmark will apply toward degree requirements at the partner institution).

Articulation: Usually apply to Landmark associate degree graduates only. Admission may or may not be guaranteed but transferability of some Landmark courses toward degree requirements at the partner institution usually is. It's important to note that these are often program-specific and not generalizable to all academic programs at the next institution.

Joint Admission: Students are accepted jointly to Landmark College and the partner institution. In most cases, students must indicate interest during the initial application phase.

Please note: Transfer and Career Services maintains informal collaborative relationships with numerous colleges and universities and can often connect students directly with an admissions representative.

Paying attention to prerequisites

If a student has a fairly clear idea of what they would like to major in, it is a good idea for them to start looking at the curriculums at other colleges so they can get a sense of what they may be able to take at Landmark that would directly transfer into a major. This is more important when majoring in Liberal Studies at Landmark as our A.S. degrees are likely to cover basic major requirements in their chosen field. For instance, if a student intends on majoring in psychology, they will likely find that taking statistics will serve them better than college algebra or calculus. By spending a little time in the beginning looking at how different degree programs are structured, a student will get a sense of the best way to use their electives here, and likely decrease the time needed to complete their degree at the next institution.

Students should also be aware that in order to transfer into certain majors, they will need to have already taken some classes before entry. This tends to be the case with highly technical fields such as engineering. Again, if a student knows what they would like to major in, we strongly encourage this extra bit of research.

Transfer 'friendliness'

Colleges vary greatly in the degree to which they are receptive to having transfer students on their campus. In this sense, some college are much more "transfer friendly" than others and have thoughtful policies in place to ease transition to their institution. Transfer friendly policies include things like:

- Having a high maximum number of credits that can be transferred in (60+ credit hours).
- Allowing general education requirements to largely be covered by an A.A. or A.S. degree or waiving some general education requirements for transfers (e.g. foreign language, first-year seminar, English).
- Offering merit-based scholarships or Phi Theta Kappa scholarships that are comparable to first-year scholarships.
- Guaranteeing housing for transfer students.
- Offering a transfer orientation and other support services to help transfer students make the transition to their college.

The following are examples of less transfer friendly policies:

- Not accepting a lot of transfer credit (less than 40 credit hours for an A.A./A.S. degree student), and often making it difficult to appeal that decision.
- Requiring students to take institution-specific courses for their major or general education requirements even if they are very similar to courses they have already taken.
- Not holding admissions space in the incoming class for transfers.

With these range of policies in mind, it is important for students to research a college's transfer policies including the transferring of credit, prerequisites for majors, general education requirements, and how many course hours a transfer student must complete in order to receive a degree from that institution.

Majors with special considerations

There are a number of areas of study that, because of certifications, popularity, or their specialized nature, present challenges to enrollment that students should be aware of. The following is based on national trends and our experience as an office working with students trying to enroll in these programs:

Nursing

Nursing programs tend to be highly competitive due to demand, with very few openings—if any—for transfer students. This is particularly true of community college programs that will often have higher GPA requirements for nursing majors than 4-year institutions because of their low cost.

Students interested in nursing should try to maintain at least a 3.0 GPA and have a background strong in the sciences. *Human Anatomy and Physiology* courses are highly recommended as they are required by most nursing programs. However, it is important to note that some colleges may require certain courses be completed there, regardless of whether the course was completed successfully at a previous college.

Veterinary Technology

“Vet tech” has become a very popular field of study in the last few years making it a very competitive program to enroll in. Like nursing, students will want to have a strong GPA and science background, particularly having taken at least *Chemistry I*.

Engineering

It is recommended that a student interested in engineering take at least *Calculus I* and *Calculus II* if possible, along with *Chemistry I and II*. Most engineering programs require transfer students to have also taken *Physics I and II*, something we currently do not offer. This being the case, we sometimes recommend that they take these classes over the summer. If they do not meet the prerequisites to apply directly into engineering majors, students can apply to institutions as undecided or math majors, and then apply to the college of engineering after one semester. Before electing to do this, the student should speak with the college or colleges s/he wants to apply to about this as a possibility and how difficult it is to do.

Engineering students should also be aware that even if they have taken calculus, chemistry, and physics, the classes will still not transfer into some engineering programs. An engineering program may require that the calculus course included trigonometry (which ours does not) or that the physics course be calculus-based. Some colleges may require certain courses be completed there, regardless of whether the course was completed successfully at a previous college.

Education

Teaching certification is state regulated and follows a very structured path of course sequences and student teaching experiences. This may put transfer students at a disadvantage in terms of their degree progress in an education major. Also, students should be aware that all states require some sort of standardized test to gain the certification needed to teach in public school systems.

As an alternative path to becoming a teacher, students can also major in what they would like to teach, and then plan to earn their masters in education before going into the field, or they can look at fast-track teaching certification options for individuals that already have a bachelor's degree. Additionally, many private schools do not require that their teachers have state certification (though these positions can be challenging to obtain as they are competitive).

We encourage students to take classes in the area they plan on teaching when possible.

Pre-Professional Health Programs

Students should note that some pre-professional programs, such as physical therapy, can be very challenging for transfer students to enter into. This is due to the competitiveness of the programs and the sequential nature of the coursework. While transfer students can gain entry into these programs they should be aware that their progression towards a degree will likely be extended past 4 years.

If a student is considering medicine, pharmacy, or dentistry in the future, they should be taking as heavy of a science load as they can handle. While they do not necessarily need to transfer into a "pre-med" program if considering medical school, they should be ready to take organic chemistry at their next institution, meaning they have already completed *Biology I and II*, and *Chemistry I and II* at Landmark.