

Credit for Prior Learning Policy and Procedures Simmons University - Dix Scholar

This document describes the policy and process for Dix Scholars students to request credit for prior learning. “Credit for Prior Learning” (CPL) refers to the process by which students’ work and life experience are assessed for college-level learning, with Simmons credits being awarded following a rigorous review process. CPL does **not** replace the traditional transfer credit process, and CPL is **not** used to award credit for coursework taken at previous institutions.

Students wishing to earn CPL credits must submit a portfolio documenting their prior learning and pay a fixed fee for portfolio processing.

Portfolio Preparation. Students may independently prepare and submit their portfolio using the “Credit for Prior Learning Template: Dix Scholars” document to guide their work. Simmons will be developing a series of online self-paced modules (not credit bearing) to provide additional guidance for students using this self-guided process. Students must have been accepted at Simmons in order to submit a portfolio, but do not need to have started their coursework.

CPL Credit Policies. Simmons grants only elective credits through the CPL process. Although specific degree requirements may be waived based on the information submitted, such waivers are not part of the portfolio review process, and any courses waived will not appear on the student’s transcript.

Students may earn up to 24 credits through CPL portfolio review. These 24 credits are counted as part of the 96-credit limit on transfer credit: students who have earned more than 72 credits through course transfer evaluations are therefore limited in the number of CPL credits that they are eligible to earn.

Portfolio Submission and Review. Portfolios must be submitted to their CPL Advisor, along with the completed “Evaluation of Prior Learning” form and any supplementary materials.

Portfolios must be submitted within one year of the student's initial matriculation date. Exceptions may be granted only in unusual circumstances (e.g., a continuing student who is requesting CPL for an ongoing/parallel work experience).

Portfolios are reviewed by the faculty; the primary point of contact for portfolio review is the CPL advisor. Simmons makes every effort to complete the review process within three weeks from the submission date. Appeals and requests for additional information regarding the review process should be directed to the head of the academic unit for the student's program of study (i.e, the Program Director or Chair).

Portfolio Fees. A one-time portfolio review fee of \$1,500 must be paid at the time the portfolio is submitted for review. If the student is awarded fewer credits than the equivalent of the per credit tuition rate., the remaining portfolio fee is applied as a credit (tuition waiver) towards the student's remaining coursework. Refunds are not granted for unused tuition waiver credit.

Students may choose to submit a second portfolio (either as a resubmission after review and revision or as a new portfolio that documents different work than the first portfolio). The portfolio review fee for a second portfolio submission is \$500. (The tuition waiver policy does not apply to the second portfolio fee; if no credits are awarded, the student does not receive a tuition waiver or refund of the fee. No more than two portfolios may be submitted. As with the first portfolio, the second portfolio must be submitted within one year of the student's initial matriculation date, unless a waiver is granted.

Appeal Process.

A student may request an appeal in writing which is submitted to the academic unit head. The academic unit head will appoint two faculty with relevant disciplinary expertise related to the appeal request, who were not part of the initial portfolio review, to review the appeal. The appeal must follow the guidelines below.

The appeal must include:

- In writing from their Simmons email to the academic unit head with the CPL advisor copied.
- Include a Personal statement from the student outlining the reasons for requesting an exception to College policy. There is no length requirement, however the statement must explain clearly and fully the student's reasoning and request for an exception.
- A new CPL Evaluation Form.
- Submitted within 10 business days of receipt of their CPL evaluation

The CPL advisor will guide the student on who the academic unit head to be included is.

If, after the appeal process, the student wishes to resubmit after review, they may do so within 10 business days of receipt of the appeal decision to their CPL advisor. That resubmitted portfolio will be the final portfolio accepted for the work in question, and the decision on the resubmitted portfolio will be final.