

BIS Transfer Credit Policy

For coursework completed prior to admittance and enrollment to GMU:

The student **must** indicate any institution(s) previously attended on the Application for Admission to GMU for coursework that has been or will be completed before the student's first term of enrollment under his or her current GMU catalog year. No transfer credit can be considered in the future if the institution(s) is/are not listed on the application. The GMU Office of Admissions will conduct a primary evaluation of transcripts and award transfer credit as appropriate. The B.I.S. office conducts a secondary evaluation of these transcripts during the term of the student's enrollment in the introductory B.I.S. course: BIS 300: Understanding Interdisciplinary Studies.

For Coursework after admittance and enrollment to GMU/Study Elsewhere:

Once admitted to GMU, students are not normally expected to enroll for coursework at other institutions. In some cases, study elsewhere permission can be granted by the Undergraduate Academic Affairs office. To complete coursework at another institution, the student must submit a written request for permission to take courses elsewhere (form available through the [GMU registrar](http://www.gmu.edu/student/academicaffairs/forms.htm) or Undergraduate Academic Affairs) (<http://www.gmu.edu/student/academicaffairs/forms.htm>). The policies of the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Office can be found at <http://www.gmu.edu/student/academicaffairs/policies.htm>

Requests for:

Nontraditional credit: Nontraditional refers to credit by portfolio assessment, employer-sponsored or military training, or credits not otherwise accepted by the GMU Office of Admissions. Requests for this type of credit must first be submitted to the BIS office for non-traditional credit processing (This process does **not** indicate approval). If you are unsure whether a course is non-traditional, please contact Josh Lind at jlind@gmu.edu. The form is then submitted* to the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Office.

All other credit: The student submits* the request directly to the College of Arts and Sciences Office of Undergraduate Academic Affairs.

*All requests should be submitted with sufficient time to allow for processing of the request and student registration time.

If the request is approved, a special registration is entered to the student's GMU record for the appropriate term to indicate the number of credit hours that are being completed at another institution and the student completes the coursework during that academic term.

If satisfactory scores/grades are received for eligible coursework, the student requests that the institution or office responsible for administering the coursework send an official transcript directly from that institution to either the B.I.S. office (for coursework with approved "BIS ----" articulations) or the GMU Office of the Registrar (for all other approved articulations).

The B.I.S. Records Specialist or the GMU Registrar's Records Office reviews the transcript(s) and posts eligible credit to the student's academic transfer record as appropriate.

Note: It is the student's responsibility to ensure that transcripts are sent to the appropriate office for evaluation. Failure to do so could delay a student's planned date of graduation.

The B.I.S. program accepts five types of transfer credit:

Credit earned at regionally accredited institutions

Credit earned at independently or privately accredited institutions

Credit earned by examination

Employer-sponsored or military training

Credit for life experience learning
(portfolio assessment)

Credit earned at regionally accredited institutions

Most course credit earned at regionally accredited colleges and universities will be accepted by the B.I.S. program, even if not transferred by the GMU Office of Admissions, provided the following requirements are met:

a grade of "C" (2.0) or better earned for the course (C- is not accepted)
the course is 100-level or above (college-level)

Determinations as to how the transfer credits will be applied to specific degree requirements are made by the B.I.S. advisors in light of the student's overall degree plan.

Credit limits

There is no limit to the number of credits that can be transferred from this category. However, students must remember that other program requirements (including 30 semester hours of residency credit) will have to be met in order to complete the B.I.S. degree program.

Exclusions/exceptions

Orientation courses from other institutions that are not accepted by GMU Admissions are not accepted for B.I.S. transfer credit. ESL (English as a Second Language) courses are also not accepted for B.I.S. transfer credit.

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**Credit earned at independently
or privately accredited institutions**

Credit earned at institutions accredited by bodies other than recognized regional accrediting organizations will be considered only if institution is listed in the guidebook, Accredited Institutions of Postsecondary Education, published by the American Council on Education (ACE).

The B.I.S. program will determine how the transfer credits will be applied to your degree requirements.

Credit limit

A maximum of 30 semester credit hours (or equivalent quarter hours) from independently or privately accredited institutions may be applied to B.I.S. degree requirements.

Exclusions/exceptions

Orientation Courses and ESL Courses

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Credit earned by examination

CLEP (College Level Examination Program) or DAN TES (Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support) exams may be used to fulfill certain general education or elective credit requirements. **Only** those examinations that have been reviewed and approved by the university are acceptable for credit. For specific information about tests that are accepted visit the [GMU Office of Admissions, Testing Office](#).

GMU departmental credit-by-exam opportunities may also be used to fulfill certain general education or elective credit requirements. Some departments have placement exams that may be used to earn exemption from certain prerequisites, but no credit is awarded for passing these exams. Contact the GMU Office of Admissions, Testing Office for more information.

Credit limits

A maximum of 45 semester credit hours of examination credit can be applied to B.I.S. degree requirements. Students may count towards their graduation requirement any combination of examination credit and ACE credit (see below) as long as neither category exceeds 45 semester credit hours and the combined credit from BOTH categories does not exceed 60 semester credit hours.

Note: Because they are specific to the institution, GMU department and placement exams do not count towards the examination credit limit.

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Employer-sponsored or military training

Employer-sponsored or military training may be used to fulfill certain elective or concentration credit requirements, provided the training has been reviewed and recommended for 100-level college credit or above by the American Council on Education (ACE). To receive credit, training or course specifics must

exactly match what is in the ACE guide. The B.I.S. program follows ACE recommendations for the amount and level of college credit to be awarded for a training experience.

For ACE evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services please see <http://www.militaryguides.acenet.edu/>

Students and military personnel may request a copy of their ACE transcripts at <http://www.acenet.edu/cill/military/index.cfm>

Credit limits

A maximum of 45 semester credit hours of ACE approved credit can be applied to B.I.S. degree requirements. Students may count towards their graduation requirement any combination of ACE credit or examination credit (see above) as long as neither category exceeds 45 credit hours and the combined credit from BOTH categories does not exceed 60 credit hours.

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Credit for life experience learning (portfolio assessment)

Students can earn credit for life experience learning through the submission of portfolios to the [Prior Learning Activity for Credit Evaluation \(PLACE\) program](#) at NVCC or to [Thomas Edison State College \(TESC\)](#) of Trenton, NJ. The exact nature of academic requirements that must be met in order for credits to be awarded through portfolio completion varies depending on the institution that reviews the portfolio and awards credit. For this reason, the only institutions from which B.I.S. students may earn transfer credit through portfolio completion are NVCC and TESC, since the B.I.S. program has developed working relationships with the portfolio assessment programs of these particular institutions.

NVCC's PLACE Program is for individuals who have gained college-level knowledge through work, volunteer activities, participation in civic and community assignments, travel, independent study, and other "life experiences." Credits earned through PLACE are lower division only (100 and 200 level).

Credit limits

The PLACE program imposes a maximum credit limit of 15 semester hours. All of the hours can be applied to the B.I.S. degree. Students may count towards their graduation requirement any combination of PLACE and TESC credit (see below) as long as the combined portfolio credit from BOTH colleges does not exceed 30 semester credit hours.

Exclusions/exceptions

PLACE portfolio credit does not count towards the 30 semester credit hour residency requirement imposed by GMU.

Students may request additional information about PLACE portfolio assessment at: <http://novaonline.nv.cc.va.us/eli/std298hw/PLACE/evaluationofportfolio.htm>

Thomas A. Edison State College is a regionally accredited institution in New Jersey that has a credit for life-experience program similar to NVCC's PLACE. Both lower and upper division credits may be earned at TESC. A key feature of the program is that courses may be selected for portfolio credit from the T.E.S.C. course portfolio catalog or from any regionally accredited academic institution in the United States. TESC portfolio guidelines are on file in the B.I.S. office.

Portfolio credit via prior learning assessment at Thomas Edison State College

Website: <http://www.tesc.edu/prospective/undergraduate/credit/pla.php>

Before you begin the portfolio process, you will need to:

1. Complete the [GMU Request to Take Course Elsewhere](#)
2. Send this form to Josh Lind to get the nontraditional stamp added to the form. Josh is at jlind@gmu.edu or 993-4572.
3. Submit the complete form with the nontraditional stamp to the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) Academic Affairs office – 3rd floor of Enterprise Hall, Room 316. Phone: 993-8725; FAX: 993-8712

Credit limits

A maximum of 30 semester credit hours can be applied to the BIS degree from TESC's portfolio program. Students may count towards their graduation requirement any combination of TESC credit and PLACE credit (see above) as long as the combined portfolio credit from BOTH colleges does not exceed 30 semester credit hours.

Students may request additional information about TESC's portfolio assessment at <http://www.tesc.edu/prospective/undergraduate/credit/pla.php>

Exclusions/exceptions

The B.I.S. program will not accept Coursework completed through TESC's portfolio evaluation process if it was evaluated by TESC before the student enrolled for coursework at George Mason University. In addition, the BIS program does not accept credits from TESC's "credit-banking" system, in which courses are completed through other institutions and merely transcribed by TESC. Transfer credit is only accepted by evaluation of transcripts from the institution through which the coursework has been completed.