

Alternative Ways to Earn Credits

At UMFK, there are several ways to earn additional credit. A student may earn credits through the Rural University programs such as Early College - Maine Aspirations, Dual Enrollment and Pleasant Street Academy (PSA). Additionally, a student may earn credit through the following course work: Cooperative Education, Prior Experiential Learning, Directed Study, and Independent Study.

Rural U

Rural U is the University of Maine at Fort Kent's early college and dual enrollment program. Throughout the evolution of early college initiatives in Maine, the UMFK has become a leader in providing quality early college and dual enrollment experiences. What started in the campus' back yard has expanded to more than three quarters of the high schools in the state.

By providing a variety of early college options to students and their schools, Rural U ventures to bring that sense of pride and academic spotlight to other small communities around Maine through streamlining operations, ensuring academic quality and integrity, and providing appropriate student supports for success in their early college endeavors. Incorporating live courses in schools, video technology, and on-line/asynchronous classes, Rural U strives to:

- Increase academic rigor for students in rural communities
- Provide an affordable pathway to college
- Provide opportunities for rural high school students to experience college learning
- Provide opportunities for rural high school students to earn college credits
- Increase post-secondary aspirations for rural Maine students through specific aspirations programs, starting as early as in elementary and middle school and continuing into high school
- Increase high school and university collaborations, efficiency, and alignment

There are four programs under Rural U: Early College Maine Aspirations, Pleasant Street Academy, Dual Enrollment, and AP4ALL.

Early College Maine Aspirations

Maine Aspirations is a unique program in which students take live or online courses for college credit and high school elective credit. This program is not exclusive to UMFK, but the University does work with school partners to ensure that appropriate student and academic support structures, both at school and on campus, are in place. Maine Aspirations students can earn up to 12 credits per year (no more than 6 per semester).

Tuition is free for students. The Maine Department of Education, through the Maine Aspirations program, pays for half the tuition and UMFK grants a scholarship for the other half. Students and their parents/guardians are responsible for course fees and books.

Students that complete a Rural U course will have grades placed on an official UMFK transcript, which can be added to if the student attends UMFK or can be transferred to another college of choice. For ease of transferability students are encouraged to take General Education courses.

Dual Enrollment

Dual Enrollment is defined as UMFK courses being taught at partner high schools by high school teachers qualified and approved as UMFK adjunct faculty. The courses are taught during the regular school day and can last one semester (3 credits) or a full year (3-6 credits).

Courses are aligned with courses already being taught at the high school. Course curriculum must meet all of UMFK's learning outcomes. Teachers are also required to regularly provide evidence of rigor, assessment, and sample student work.

Tuition is free for students. The Maine Department of Education, through the Maine Aspirations program, pays for half the tuition and UMFK grants a scholarship for the other half. Students and their parents/guardians are responsible for course fees and books, when required.

Students that complete a dual course will have grades placed on an official UMFK transcript, which can be added to if the student attends UMFK, or can be transferred to another college of choice.

Pleasant Street Academy

Pleasant Street Academy is Maine's first early college high school model. Established in 2011, it is a partnership between the University and Fort Kent Community High School. Students enroll as juniors and seniors and have the opportunity to earn up to 33 credits by graduation. All courses are taught at UMFK by UMFK faculty and at the high school by teachers approved as adjunct faculty. Classes count toward both core high school requirements and UMFK general education requirements.

Students that complete a Pleasant Street Academy course will have grades placed on an official UMFK transcript, which can be added to if the student attends UMFK, or can be transferred to another college of choice.

Pleasant Street Academy is locally funded. Students and their parents/guardians are responsible for course fees and textbooks. Tuition will be paid for by the program.

AP4ALL

AP4ALL provides online Advanced Placement courses to any Maine public high school student. In the fall of 2015 the Maine Department of Education and the University of Maine at Fort Kent partnered to dually enroll a number of AP4ALL courses. Students now have the choice to take the AP exam at the end of the course, or to dually enroll in the course for UMFK credit.

AP4ALL courses are all taught online by Maine certified teachers qualified and approved as UMFK adjunct faculty. Course curriculum must meet all of UMFK's learning outcomes. Teachers are also required to provide evidence of rigor, assessment, and sample student work.

The Rural U – AP4ALL program follows the Maine Aspirations guidelines set forth by the Maine Department of Education. All juniors and seniors, in good academic standing, can take up to 6 credits per semester (no more than 12 per academic year) at public colleges and universities. Tuition is free for students. Maine Aspirations pays for half the tuition and UMFK grants a scholarship for the other half. Students and their parents/guardians are responsible for course fees.

Students that choose to complete an AP4ALL course through Rural U will have grades placed on an official UMFK transcript, which can be added to if the student attends UMFK, or can be transferred to another college of choice. Awarding of credit is based upon the successful completion of the course and is not dependent on the student taking the AP exam. Students enrolled are upheld to the same standards of achievement as all students at UMFK. Transferability of credit is dependent on the students' final grade; grades below a C are not typically transferable.

Cooperative Education

Cooperative Education is the integration of classroom theory with practical experience. In the program students have specified periods of attendance at the University and specific periods of employment in industry, business, government, or service agencies.

Academic credit for Cooperative Education will be awarded for job-related learning, which can be documented and measured. The amount of credit to be given will depend on three criteria: nature of the work, length of the work experience, and academic value of that work experience. Before the beginning of each new semester, the student must prepare a proposed study plan and submit it to the faculty advisor within the major and to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The proposal should include concise statements on the course area, topic, or problem on which the student will focus; reasons for doing this particular study, and how this will increase the professional expertise in relation to career objectives. Criteria will be established by the student and the instructor in terms of how performance is to be judged and how those criteria will be met by concrete evidence of accomplishment.

The maximum amount of credit which may be earned for one semester of full-time work experience is eight (8) Cooperative Education credits (based on the formula that 80 hours of full-time supervised work = one academic credit). No more than eight Cooperative Education credits may be earned in the same type of work experience.

A maximum of eight credits earned in Cooperative Education may be applied, with the approval of the chair of the appropriate division and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, to the student's major. Four Cooperative Education credits may be applied, with the same approvals, to the student's minor.

A maximum of sixteen Cooperative Education credits may be applied toward requirements for a baccalaureate degree, and a maximum of eight Cooperative Education work experience credits may be applied toward requirements for an associate degree.

Each student must get advance approval of the request from the chair of the appropriate division and from the Vice President for Academic Affairs to apply Cooperative Education work experience credits toward satisfaction of requirements for major or minor

studies.

Eligibility and Employer Requirements

The Cooperative Education option is open to all students who meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Have attained a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 overall or 3.0 in major.
2. Are recommended by the appropriate faculty advisor.
3. Have completed a minimum of 45 semester hours of university credit or an associate degree.
4. The final determination of eligibility will rest with the employer. A student must be interviewed and accepted by a potential employer to become a participant in the Cooperative Education program.

Credit by Examination

CLEP and DSST are credit-by-examination programs conducted by Educational Testing Service (ETS) and administered through Student Support Services that provide an opportunity for UMFK students to receive credit for their education required in non-traditional environments. A maximum of 60 credits may be earned through a combination of these available challenge exams, to be completed before the student begins their junior year. Students may not receive credit-by-examination for courses they have previously attempted. Students who have successfully passed higher level courses in a subject may not take challenge exams for additional credit in that subject. Exceptions to the indicated policy may be approved by the Director of Student Support Services.

However, students may take foreign language exams to satisfy degree requirements, demonstrate proficiency, and receive credit beyond the junior-year cutoff if they have not completed courses in the language at UMFK.

Transfer students may take challenge exams, CLEP, DSST during the first three semesters of matriculation at UMFK regardless of previously completed course work.

The charge for DSST is \$80 per test. The charge for CLEP is \$77 per test. A nonrefundable deposit of \$10 is required with registration for each test. The remaining \$77/\$80 must be paid at the time the test is administered by check or credit card. Additional information may be obtained through Student Support Services. Testing will be conducted on an ongoing basis. Students must register 48 hours in advance.

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)

The University of Maine at Fort Kent recognizes that enrolled students may have developed knowledge and skills from previous employment, experiences, trainings or through degrees/diplomas, licenses, or certification from other agencies. Where possible, UMFK attempts to honor a student's past experiences by granting credit for these prior learning experiences. Prior Learning Credit Guidelines:

1. Be currently matriculated and enrolled at UMFK
2. Be within the first two semesters of being admitted or readmitted to UMFK
3. Have a minimum current cumulative grade point average of 2.0, and
4. Be willing to demonstrate, upon request, the knowledge or skills appropriate to the course for which the individual is seeking credit.

*Please note that credits awarded through the PLA process are nonresident credits and do not satisfy the minimum credit hour residency requirements for graduation.

The following describes the four different pillars of Prior Learning Assessment.

1. Standardized Tests - UMFK offers 31 CLEP and 14 DSST exams conducted by Educational Testing Service (ETS). These exams are administered through Student Support Services located in the Learning Center. There is an \$80 exam fee plus a \$10 nonrefundable registration fee per test. UMFK's Nursing Division offers Challenge Exams in Nutrition, Microbiology, Pharmacology and Pathophysiology. *Contact Denise Potvin at 207-834-8625 or denise.potvin@maine.edu to register and make arrangements at a test site near your home. A \$35 exam fee will be charged to your student account after completing a challenge exam.* UMFK accepts Advanced Placement (AP) exams with a score of 3 or higher. AP exams are administered by the American College Board with the official results sent directly to Registrar's Office.
2. Military Training & Experience - UMFK will award credit for learning that occurred during US military service based on the

recommendations of the American Council on Education (ACE) guidelines. Please submit your military transcript to the Registrar's Office.

3. Credential Review - Specific credentials, licenses, and/or training may equate to college credit. For further information on Credential Review contact the PLA coordinator at 834-8647.
4. Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Portfolio - The portfolio is a mechanism used to validate the acquisition of knowledge and skills congruent with course expectations and student learning outcomes. The review process is available to students who believe that they can meet the learning outcomes/competencies required of a specific course. Each application for evaluation of artifacts should be limited to courses in one discipline that can be evaluated by one faculty member in that discipline. If a student wishes to get PLA credits for multiple courses across multiple disciplines, which would require the expertise of more than one faculty, the student must divide the courses into separate applications such that an individual faculty member can process each application.

A student's portfolio provides objective evidence that they have acquired content and skills through prior learning and/or practice experience. The decision to accept the documentation provided is based on determination of the equivalency of this prior knowledge and skill which a student would be expected to demonstrate at the completion of a specific course.

Components of the PLA portfolio are:

- Letter of Intent
- Resume/Chronological Work History
- Course Syllabi
- Narrative Description
- Support Evidence
- Credit for Past and Experiential Learning Application

A student that feels they have experienced college level learning outside of a higher education institution may contact the PLA coordinator at 834-8647 or speak to their advisor for further instruction.

Credits for Prior Learning Assessment

The University of Maine at Fort Kent enrolls many students who have developed knowledge & skills from their own reading programs, work and other experiences, or through licenses or certification from other agencies. Where possible UMFK attempts to honor prior learning by reviewing and granting credit for these types of learning. The process involves a good deal of work for both the applicant and the evaluator. The process should therefore not be seen as an easy way to get credit.

Eligibility

1. Applicants must be currently matriculated and enrolled at UMFK.
2. Applicants must have a current cumulative grade point average of 2.0.
3. Applicants must be in the first or second semester following admittance or re-admittance to UMFK.
4. Applicants who have earned a certificate, license or completed a rigorous training program must present official certifications or documents from the institution at which the credential was earned for evaluation. The student should write a letter of intent and enclose with official documentation.
5. Student petitioning for Prior Learning Assessment portfolio evaluation of academically qualifiable work experience must follow the PLA portfolio standards and work closely with the PLA coordinator.
6. Students must identify the course(s) for which they are seeking credit and the number of credit hours they believe the experience is equivalent to. Where possible, the University recommends the student attempt to equate the experience with an existing course(s). Students may obtain copies of UMFK course syllabi from the Vice President of Academic Affairs office, faculty, or PLA coordinator.

Review and Decision Process

1. Once all steps of the Prior Learning Assessment process are completed by the student it will be presented to the reviewing faculty member and/or division chair for review. Students will be charged a \$75.00 review fee for all Prior Learning Assessment reviews.
2. The portfolio will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis and the learning demonstrated must be considered 70% or higher.
3. The reviewing faculty and/or division chair may recommend one of the following three options:

- **Award Full Credit:** Evaluators can award the full amount of credit petitioned by the student, *with rationale for awarding credit*.
 - **Deny Credit:** Evaluators can deny credit completely, *with rationale for awarding credit*. The student may request to appeal the decision and complete the appeal process.
 - **Request an addendum or interview:** Evaluator may request additional information or an interview before making a final credit determination. After the addendum material is submitted with the original portfolio or an interview is completed, the evaluator has the option of either awarding or denying credit. If credit is denied the student may request to appeal the decision and complete the appeal process.
4. Recommendations will be submitted to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and final determination of the credit hours to be granted will be the responsibility of the VPAA.
 5. Once the student's PLA request is approved for credit it will be assessed a \$50.00 per credit charge.
 6. The VPAA office will submit approved PLA request's to the Registrar's office for required action.

Appeal Process

If the reviewing faculty member and/or division chair denies the student's PLA request the student may request in writing, within 10 business days of the denial, to appeal the reviewing faculty and/or division chair's decision. The student should ask for an explanation of the denial and clarification of the information missing from the request. Once the reviewing faculty and/or division chair receives the request they must provide the student with the requested information within 10 business days and provide the student with a PLA portfolio resubmission due date in which the student must complete the requests of the reviewing faculty member and/or division chair and resubmitted required information by this date in order to have their portfolio re-reviewed (with no additional review fee charged).

Directed Study

Directed Study provides students with the opportunity to pursue special areas of study under the direction of a faculty sponsor. Directed Study differs from Independent Study in that the faculty sponsor provides the direction for the student's work. Procedures to be followed are:

1. The interested student and faculty member complete Directed Study proposal form. Learning outcomes, work to be completed, and methods of evaluation must be included. (Forms are available at www.umfk.maine.edu/forms.)
2. Proposal is then submitted to Division Chair for approval.
3. Student begins and completes project during the regular academic term.

Directed Study is open to all students who meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Students must be either juniors or seniors in baccalaureate programs or sophomores in associate programs.
2. Students must have a minimum GPA of 2.5. Additional information concerning Directed Study is available from the Registrar or Vice President for Academic Affairs.
3. Students generally will not receive approval for a Directed Study in an existing course except in extraordinary circumstances.

Independent Study

In Independent Study, with the supervision and guidance of a faculty sponsor, a student develops a research project, field study, practicum, or special readings proposal which centers on an area of study not included in the regular course sequences. Independent Study is never a substitute for a course or for a course not successfully completed. Credit for the proposal must be recommended by the faculty sponsor at the time the study is presented by the student. Credit will vary between one semester hour and four semester hours. A student may enroll for one course of independent study at a time with a maximum of 20 hours applicable towards a baccalaureate degree.

Independent Study presupposes a developed competency and maturity; consequently, participation in the program is restricted to students who have accrued a cumulative point average of 2.5 or a minimum GPA of 3.0 in the student's major. A student who does not meet the qualifying criteria, but develops a proposal which merits Independent Study status, should consult with a prospective faculty sponsor to assess the possibilities for successful completion of the project. Procedures to be followed are:

1. The interested student completes the Independent Study Form available from the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Measurable objectives, work to be completed, and methods of evaluation must be included.

2. The student reviews the proposal with a faculty sponsor.
3. With the agreement of the faculty sponsor, the proposal is submitted to the Division Chair for approval.