

**University Policy 3.01.09****Degree and Certificate Conferral****Policy Approval Date: March 11, 2011****Policy Effective Date: July 1, 2011****Procedure Approval Date: November 2, 2021****Procedure Effective Date: December 1, 2021****POLICY STATEMENT**

Capella University learners are eligible for degree or certificate conferral upon successful completion of all degree or certificate program requirements as described in Capella's *University Catalog* and pursuant to this policy. Successful completion is determined by a degree audit conducted by the Admissions & Records Operations department.

**RATIONALE**

Capella University requires all Capella graduates to have completed the requirements for their conferred degree or certificate. This policy ensures the integrity of degrees and certificates conferred by Capella University.

**DEFINITIONS****Academic Program**

An academic program is any credentialed academic offering and its components, including but not limited to a degree, specialization, minor, concentration, certificate, or delivery model in which a learner is enrolled.

**Commencement**

Commencement is a voluntary ceremony that recognizes the conferral of a learner's degree.

**Conferral**

Conferral is the issuance of a degree or certificate by Capella University.

**Conferral Date**

Conferral date is the date upon which a learner's degree or certificate is formally issued by the university and made effective. The conferral date is noted on the learner's official transcript and diploma.

**Credit Residence Requirement**

The credit residence requirement is the minimum number of quarter credits earned at Capella University that are applied toward the conferral of a unique Capella degree.

**Graduation**

Graduation is the successful completion of a learner's degree or certificate program with the conferral of a degree from Capella University.

## University Catalog

Capella's *University Catalog* is the official record of requirements for the university's academic offerings. Learners are assigned their initial catalog of record upon their admission to Capella University. Learners who begin their academic programs in the winter or spring quarters are assigned to the January catalog and the April addendum, and learners who begin their academic programs in summer or fall quarters are assigned to the July catalog and the October addendum.

## **PROCEDURES**

- I. Degree and Certificate Conferral Requirements for All Learners
  - A. Learners must complete all degree or certificate program requirements, including coursework, residencies, practica, internships, and any other components such as cumulative grade point average (GPA) and credit totals as described in their *University Catalog* of record.
    1. A single course may satisfy multiple requirements within a degree program, but the credits from that course may only be applied once toward the total credits needed for the degree.
      - a. Undergraduate general education requirements may fulfill either core or specialization requirements when the course is applicable to both categories.
      - b. A single course may not fulfill both a core and a specialization requirement in any program.
    2. Learners should refer to university policies *2.02.07 Changing Academic Program* and *4.01.04 University Catalog* for information about catalog and catalog changes.
    3. Learners are encouraged to contact Academic Advising should they have questions about their current catalog requirements.
  - B. Learners must also meet the minimum university credit residence requirements for their degree or certificate level. Any credits above the university minimum may be fulfilled by transfer and/or prior learning assessment (PLA) credit.

### **Minimum University Credit Residence Requirements by Degree Level**

<b>Degree Level</b>	<b>Credit Minimum Earned at Capella University*</b>	<b>Additional Requirements</b>
<b>Bachelor's</b>	45 quarter credits of total required credits. PLA may account for up to 15 credits of this minimum residence requirement.	Minimum quarter credits includes courses that cannot be fulfilled by transfer as stated in the course descriptions in Capella's <i>University Catalog</i> .  30 quarter credits of Capella's residence requirement must be fulfilled in core and specialization courses.  Learners enrolled in any FlexPath bachelor's degree program must complete a minimum of 22.5 program

		points at Capella University and 15 program points in core and specialization courses.
<b>Undergraduate Certificate</b>	12 quarter credits or at least 50% of total required credits, whichever is greater.	Only full courses will be accepted toward the 50% minimum.
<b>Master's</b>	33 quarter credits of total required credits. PLA may account for up to eight credits of this minimum residence requirement.	<p>Minimum quarter credits includes courses that cannot be fulfilled by transfer as stated in the course descriptions in Capella's <i>University Catalog</i>.</p> <p>Learners enrolled in FlexPath master's degree programs must complete a minimum of 16.5 program points at Capella University.</p> <p>Learners enrolled in the Master of Education in Teaching and Learning degree program must complete a minimum of 26 quarter credits at Capella University.</p> <p>Learners enrolled in the Master of Education in Teaching and Learning FlexPath option must complete a minimum of 13 program points at Capella University.</p>
<b>Education Specialist</b>	36 quarter credits of total required credits.	Minimum quarter credits includes courses that cannot be fulfilled by transfer as stated in the course descriptions in Capella's <i>University Catalog</i> .
<b>Professional Doctorate</b>	52 quarter credits of total required credits.	Minimum quarter credits includes courses that cannot be fulfilled by transfer as stated in the course descriptions in Capella's <i>University Catalog</i> .
<b>PhD</b>	76 quarter credits of total required credits.	<p>Minimum quarter credits includes courses that cannot be fulfilled by transfer as stated in the course descriptions in Capella's <i>University Catalog</i>.</p> <p>Learners enrolled in the PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision degree program must earn a minimum of 72 quarter credits at Capella University.</p>
<b>Graduate Certificate</b>	4 quarter credits or at least 25% of total required credits,	Only full courses will be accepted toward the 25% minimum.

	whichever is greater.	Minimum quarter credits includes courses that cannot be fulfilled by transfer as stated in the course descriptions in Capella's <i>University Catalog</i> .
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\* Individual academic programs may have additional/greater credit [residence requirements](#).

- C. To qualify for conferral in their degree or certificate program, learners must complete the following requirements. Advanced doctoral learners are exempt from these requirements in some circumstances.
  1. Apply to each degree or certificate program and be admitted to that program.
  2. Register for and complete a minimum of one Capella University course that will be applied to their academic program requirements after admission, change of academic program, or change of catalog.
  3. Register for and complete a minimum of one Capella University course that will be applied to their academic program requirements after admission, change of academic program, change of catalog, or change of delivery method, GuidedPath or FlexPath.
  4. Complete the final course necessary to meet program requirements through registration at Capella University.

## II. Degree and Certificate Conferral Process for All Learners

- A. Upon completion of the last program requirement, the Admissions & Records Operations department will conduct a degree audit of the learner's record.
- B. Upon confirmation that all degree or certificate program requirements have been met, the learner will be conferred their degree or certificate and will be notified of the conferral.
- C. Degrees and certificates are conferred on the last day of the month in which it is confirmed that the degree or certificate program requirements were met.
- D. Changes, including grade point average (GPA), quarter credit totals, or specializations, cannot be made to conferred degrees.

## III. Commencement for All Learners

- A. All learners must receive official confirmation that their degree or certificate was awarded and must be invited before they may attend a commencement ceremony.
- B. Learners who meet requirements after the RSVP deadline will be invited to attend a subsequent commencement ceremony.
- C. Learners should not purchase travel, hotel accommodations, or regalia until they have been invited to participate in commencement and have sent in their RSVP confirming their intent to attend.
- D. Diplomas are not issued at commencement events.
- E. Additional commencement information is located on Campus.

## IV. Capella University Diplomas

Capella University diplomas will identify a learner by the individual's official learner name of record, unless the learner requests otherwise and the request is approved. To request that an alternate name appear on a Capella University diploma, a learner must contact

Admissions & Records Operations. Such requests will be reviewed and approved or denied on a case-by-case basis.

V. Capella University Transcripts

A. The Capella University transcript is the learner's official academic record at Capella University.

B. Capella University will not modify a learner's certificate- or degree-conferred transcript after a degree or certificate has been conferred. The learner's record is considered to be sealed from retroactive change upon conferral, except to correct clerical errors.

VI. All procedures with this policy apply to learners in GuidedPath and FlexPath programs.

### **POLICY OWNERS**

Academic Owner: Registrar

Operations Owner: Admissions & Records Operations

### **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

University policy 2.01.01 Admission

University policy 2.01.02 Maximum Time to Degree Completion

University policy 2.02.07 Changing Academic Program

University policy 3.01.03 Academic Recognition

University policy 3.01.08 Academic Degree and Certificate Requirements

University policy 3.04.04 Application of Capella Credits

University policy 3.04.05 Attendance at Residencies

University policy 3.04.11 Transfer Credit and Prior Learning Assessment

University policy 4.01.04 University Catalog

University policy 4.01.06 Official Learner Name of Record

University policy 4.03.01 Tuition and Fees

*University Catalog*

[\*Dissertation Manual\*](#)

Campus commencement pages

### **REVISION HISTORY**

Original Policy Approval Date: May 22, 2009

Revision Dates: 11-11-09; 7-1-11; 7-1-12; 10-8-12; 11-21-12; 8-21-13; 12-21-13; 5-8-15; 4-28-16; 8-11-16; 11-1-16; 12-20-16; 6-6-17; 11-16-17; 3-14-19; 3-31-20; 11-2-21

Administrative edits as result of ongoing review: 2-16-10; 8-9-11; 10-18-12; 1-18-13; 1-29-13; 6-24-13; 2-10-14; 7-20-14; 1-29-15; 11-1-15; 4-26-17; 10-25-17; 5-1-18; 2-27-19; 4-1-19; 5-23-19; 3-26-21; 1-6-22