

Academic Policies & Records

While pursuing studies and joining in campus activities, there are things students need to know about LCC's policies on grades and student records, academic and graduation requirements, and rights and responsibilities as a student. Knowing these rules will help students move smoothly through the college system.

Grades & Credits

GPA Calculation

At Lower Columbia College, students receive both letter and points-per-credit grades. Each credit class is offered for a predetermined number of credits, generally one credit per weekly contact hour of lecture or two weekly hours of laboratory contact. Points, or numerical values, are assigned to letter grades. At the end of each quarter, students receive both a letter grade and its corresponding number of points for each course in which they are enrolled. Courses receiving a grade of P (Pass), W (Withdraw), N (Audit), and I (Incomplete) are not included in the GPA. Grades and their points are as follows:

Numeric Grade	Letter Grade Equivalent
4.0	A
3.7	A-
3.3	B+
3.0	B
2.7	B-
2.3	C+
2.0	C
1.7	C-
1.3	D+
1.0	D
0.0	F
0.0	I
0.0	N
0.0	P
0.0	W

Quarter grade point averages, called GPAs, are obtained by separately adding the student's total course credits attempted and the number of points received for those courses. The total grade points earned are divided by the total GPA credit for which the student has enrolled. The resulting figure is the student's grade point average for one quarter. Only credits earned in courses at LCC are used in computing a student's grade point average.

Cumulative grade point averages are found by dividing total grade points earned by total credits attempted. To aid the student in understanding individual progress,

mid-quarter grades are available from individual instructors. These are not recorded on a student's permanent record.

Grade Forgiveness

A student returning to LCC after an absence of three or more years is eligible for grade forgiveness after completing at least 24 new credits at LCC, with a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher. Forgiveness applies only to courses taken before returning, and students can only use forgiveness once. Students must choose entire quarters (not individual courses) for grade forgiveness. The courses will remain on your transcript, but old grades will not be figured into the GPA. Contact the Registration Office for more information.

Grade Report

Students may view their grades (unofficial transcripts) through the ctcLink student portal. Instructions for setting up a ctcLink account are provided to new students by the Registration Office. This unofficial transcript can be printed.

Auditing Courses

A student may audit any course for no credit upon payment of tuition and fees. Auditors are not required to take examinations, but may participate in course work. If you want to audit a class, you must register as an auditor. Registered students wishing to change from graded status in a course to an audit or from audit status to receiving a grade during the quarter in which they are taking the class must process the change of registration through the Registration Office and must have the instructor's written permission. The last day to make such a change of registration is the last day to add or drop classes for the quarter.

Under RCW 28B.15.0540, Washington residents sixty years of age or older may audit courses at a reduced rate, on a space-available basis beginning the first day of the quarter. Limitations apply. Contact the Registration Office for more information.

Final Exams

The final exam schedule is available in the printed quarterly course schedule and at lowercolumbia.edu/classes/finals.php.

Evening classes meeting once a week will take their final exam at the regular class time during finals week. Evening classes meeting more than once a week will take the final exam at the regular class time on whichever day during finals week the class agrees upon.

Students are not required to take final exams for more than two classes on a single day. Students may petition the Vice President of Instruction for other final examination arrangements if such a conflict arises, after first contacting the instructor. Exam priorities shall be

based on class meeting day order first, then meeting time.

Final exams will be administered on the day designated on the final exam schedule. If a deviation from the scheduled day is desired, approval must be obtained from the Vice President of Instruction. Time changes, unanimously approved by the class, are acceptable.

Full-Time/Part-Time Load

The College considers a full-time course load to be 12 or more credits in a quarter. Full-time status may be defined differently for other purposes, such as certain financial aid programs or assessment of fees.

Incompletes

An instructor may give a grade of Incomplete (I) if a student satisfactorily completes most but not all of the course objectives. An Incomplete must be completed within one year of when it was given (or less than one year if so specified by the instructor). The final grade will replace the Incomplete on the student's transcript after the instructor submits it. Incompletes not completed within the year may result in an F.

Instructor-Initiated Withdrawal

Students who do not attend any of the class sessions during the first five instructional days of the quarter (i.e., are absent for all of the scheduled class meetings) and do not contact the instructor regarding the absence in person, by phone, or by email, may be administratively withdrawn by the class instructor.

Pass/Fail Option

Students may choose the pass/fail grading option through the first 10 days of each quarter. Students must initiate this option by submitting a pass/fail request to the Registration Office no later than the tenth day of the quarter in which the course is being taken. The decision to enroll on a pass/fail basis may be reversed by notifying the Registration Office in writing by the normal deadline to drop classes. Limitations on courses taken through the student-initiated pass/fail grading option include:

- A maximum of five credits per quarter may be taken pass/fail.
- Per Policy 305, no more than 15 optional pass/fail credits may be applied toward degree and graduation requirements (P/F not to be used in English 101/102 distribution requirements for any of the associate degrees offered).
- Courses taken pass/fail may not be used to satisfy the communications, quantitative skills, core program, or distribution requirements for any associate degree at Lower Columbia College, except when a pass/fail class is required by a specific program or earned through non-traditional credits.

- "Pass" grades are not computed in the grade point average.

Students should understand that other institutions may restrict the acceptance of "Pass" grades, or restrict pass/fail grading for major, minor, or professional courses. Some courses are only graded on a pass/fail basis. These courses are designated in the class schedule or college catalog. It is highly recommended that students consult with the college or university they intend to transfer for information on transferring credit earned through non-traditional methods.

Repeating Courses

Students may repeat courses. Normally, all grades for repeated courses are used in calculating the student's grade point average, although the student earns credit toward graduation only once. You may repeat a course and have the original grade disregarded for grade point average calculation. These rules apply:

- A student must request the grade change for a course after the course has been repeated.
- If a student has taken a course more than once before applying for retake, the student selects which quarter's grade will be removed.
- The retake policy may be used once for any individual course.
- Grade points for any course taken more than once, with the exception of the approved retake course, will be included in the grade point average.

A petition form for course retake requests is available from the Registration Office.

Academic Standards

Academic Standards Committee

The purpose of the Academic Standards Committee is to make recommendations for changes in academic policy, and to serve as the body that hears and acts upon student appeals and grievances of an academic nature. Membership consists of an academic employee elected from each instructional department, the Vice President of Student Services, and a student body representative. The Director of Registration serves as a non-voting ex officio member. The Academic Standards Committee shall review student appeals of: (1) Sanctions imposed on students for alleged arbitrary and capricious application of academic standards; (2) Application of academic policies or procedures by instructors. The Committee shall also grant or deny requests to:

1. Change grades that have been recorded.
2. Reinstate students from academic probation.
3. Waive graduation requirements.

Petition forms are available in the Registration Office and online at lowercolumbia.edu/students/forms

(see "Academic Standards Petition" under "Academic Forms"). Completed forms should be directed to the Secretary of the Academic Standards Committee, who is the Executive Assistant to the Vice President of Student Services.

Student Academic Grievance

LCC's Academic Grievance policy (Administrative Policy 435) protects student freedom of expression in the classroom and protects each student from improper, arbitrary, or capricious academic evaluation as evidenced by the student's final course grade.

A student with an academic grievance shall follow the procedures and timelines listed in the Student Academic Grievance Procedure. More information and a copy of the Student Academic Grievance Petition form is available in the Office of the Vice President of Student Services **(360) 442-2300** or online at lowercolumbia.edu/students/forms. The full text of the Student Academic Grievance Procedure is also available in the **Student Handbook**.

Academic Warning and Suspension

Poor grades may result in an academic warning that alerts the student to low scholarship status and encourages steps to improve performance. The academic warning and suspension policies are:

- A student who receives a quarterly GPA below 2.0 for any quarter will be placed on Academic Warning.
- A student with a second consecutive quarterly GPA below 2.0 and/or whose cumulative GPA is below 2.0 will be on Academic Probation and may be required by the college to enroll in College Success or other courses as determined by the College to assist with academic success.
- A student with a third consecutive quarterly GPA below 2.0 and/or whose cumulative GPA is below 2.0 is subject to academic suspension of up to three academic quarters. Students who are academically suspended must petition for reinstatement to the Vice President of Student Services at least six weeks prior to the quarter in which the student would like to re-enter the College.

Petition forms are available at the Registration Office, the Office of the Vice President of Student Services, and online at lowercolumbia.edu/students/forms. Completed forms should be directed to the Executive Assistant to the Vice President of Student Services. If readmitted, the student must enroll under whatever conditions are determined to help them succeed.

Academic Credit for Prior Learning

Course Equivalency Assessment

A student may request to have a course equivalency assessment (CEA), performed by faculty, and based on prior education or work experience. Courses and

credits earned through CEA are not included in the student's grade point average. CEA courses may be used to satisfy any graduation requirement but may not be accepted as part of the 24 required credits in residence. The student must pay the required fees after assessment has occurred. Transferability of CEA courses is determined by the receiving institution. More information is available at lowercolumbia.edu/credit-prior-learning.

Credit by Challenge

A student may request to challenge a course if they have previously taken courses and established a transcript record at LCC and believe that previous experience has provided the competencies essential for passing the course to be challenged. The student must enroll in the course and pay the required fees. Some courses may not be challenged. Courses and grades resulting from the challenge process will be posted to the student's transcript record at the end of the quarter during which the exam is taken. More information is available at lowercolumbia.edu/credit-prior-learning.

Credit for Professional Certificates or Training

A student may request to receive credit for specific industry training and certifications that have been pre-assessed by faculty for alignment with specific classes offered at LCC. Credit granted for professional certificates or training may be used to satisfy any graduation requirement but may not be accepted as part of the 24 required credits in residence. The student must pay the required fees after assessment has occurred. Transferability of credit granted by this method is determined by the receiving institution. More information is available at lowercolumbia.edu/credit-prior-learning.

Alternative Options for Earning Credits

Advanced Placement Examinations

Lower Columbia College grants credit for completion of the College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) examinations. AP is a cooperative educational endeavor between secondary schools and colleges and universities. The program provides motivated high school students the opportunity to take college-level courses in a high school setting. AP courses are taught by high school teachers, following course guidelines developed and published by the College Board. Students who participate in the program gain college-level skills and may also earn college credit. **Students interested in transferring to a four-year university should check the requirements of their target school to determine the best way to use their AP exam credits.**

Washington state community and technical colleges will grant a minimum unrestricted elective credit for an Advanced Placement (AP) score of 3 or higher. Credit will be awarded on the basis of official AP results, not transcript notation. More information is available at lowercolumbia.edu/credit-prior-learning/alt-options.

College Level Examination Program

Credit will be granted for College Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests with a minimum score equivalent to the 35th percentile for General and Subject examinations. Subject examination credits will be granted as equivalent to credits earned in courses at LCC. Credit for Subject examination will not be granted when students have earned credit in equivalent courses. Subject and general examination credits may count toward satisfying distribution requirements for any Associate in Arts-Direct Transfer Agreement or Associate in Sciences-Transfer degree, but do not satisfy lab requirements. Students must submit an official copy of CLEP scores to the Registration Office. Upon evaluation of those scores, the student will be notified of acceptable credits. Credit will be granted for Excelsior College Examinations on a case-by-case basis. Provisional credit will be given prior to a student's completion of 12 LCC credits. Credits will be granted and posted to the student's transcript following completion of required LCC credits. More information is available at lowercolumbia.edu/credit-prior-learning/alt-options.

Foreign Transcript Credits

Lower Columbia College recognizes foreign transcript credits that are equivalent in academic level and nature to work offered at LCC. Students who have studied abroad and intend to use these credits towards fulfilling requirements of a program at LCC should contact the Registration Office for information on transferring credit earned outside of the United States. The Director of Registration makes the final determination on credits to be granted. More information is available at lowercolumbia.edu/credit-prior-learning/alt-options.

International Baccalaureate Credit

The International Baccalaureate (IB) program is a rigorous, pre-college course of study for high school students, designed to prepare students for liberal arts education at the college level. The term "international" reflects the availability of the program in several countries. The IB program is similar to the College Board Advanced Placement program. IB scores are based on rigorous coursework and a test score. LCC accepts IB credit. Students must submit an official copy of IB scores to the Registration Office. Following evaluation of IB scores, the student will be notified of acceptable credits. For transfer of credit information, a student should consult the Director of Registration. Final decision on credit granted for IB scores is determined by the Director of Registration. More information is

available at lowercolumbia.edu/credit-prior-learning/alt-options.

Military Service Experience

Credits for military personnel's military school and experiences are granted according to the publications of the American Council on Education. Students should submit official copies of their Joint Service Transcript (JST) to the Registration Office along with a Transcript Evaluation Request form. Note: if you plan to use VA education benefits, you must submit official transcripts for a credit/transcript review.

Joint Services Transcripts are ordered online. The credential evaluator will review the record and translate military training experience applicable to a student's degree or certificate into Lower Columbia College course numbers and credit values. Final determination on credit granted for military service experience is at the discretion of the Director of Registration. Courses transferred in as electives will be considered restricted. A student is allowed up to 15 credits of restricted electives to be counted towards a transfer degree at LCC. NOTE: Some four-year institutions will not accept military credits. Students with military experience may also explore the Academic Credit for Prior Learning assessment process.

Students who change their program of study must request to have their transcripts re-evaluated to determine any applicable transfer credit for their new program of study. More information is available at lowercolumbia.edu/credit-prior-learning/alt-options.

Graduation & Transfer

Applying for Graduation

To receive a degree from LCC, students must apply for graduation through the Registration Office. Graduation applications are available online at lowercolumbia.edu/graduation and at the Registration Office. A student should consult with an advisor to ensure that all course work will be completed by the intended date of graduation, and return the completed application to the Registration Office by the quarterly deadline. It is recommended that students apply for graduation two quarters before they intend to graduate, so that any deficiencies may be identified and corrected. Students may graduate at the end of any quarter.

Commencement exercises are held in June each year. Students who have completed requirements during the past year may participate in the June commencement ceremony. Students eligible to graduate at the end of summer quarter, may—during the preceding spring quarter—apply for spring graduation and participate in commencement, completing requirements through the summer completion option.

Students may apply for graduation under the graduation requirements in effect at the time they first enrolled, provided the first enrollment year is within five years of the year of graduation.

Transferring Credit

LCC recognizes academic credits earned at other regionally accredited collegiate institutions that are essentially equivalent in academic level and nature to work offered at LCC. Credits earned at other regionally accredited collegiate institutions will become part of the student's LCC permanent records if the student earned a C- or better, however, the cumulative GPA will only be calculated using LCC courses. The College subscribes to the Statewide Policy on Intercollege Transfer and Articulation Among Washington Public Colleges and Universities, which is endorsed by the state's public colleges and universities and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and is adopted by the Washington Student Achievement Council. The policy deals with the rights and responsibilities of students and creates an appeal process in transfer credit disputes.

Reciprocity Between 2-Year Colleges

Washington community and technical colleges (CTCs) offer reciprocity to students transferring within the CTC system who are pursuing the Associate in Arts Direct Transfer Agreement degree or the Associate in Sciences – Transfer degree. Students who completed an individual course that met distribution degree requirements or fulfilled entire areas of their degree requirements at one college will be considered to have met those same requirements if they plan to complete the same degree when they transfer to another community or technical college in Washington. These degree requirements include Communication Skills, Quantitative Skills, Diversity, and/or Distribution Area requirements. Students must initiate the review process and be prepared to provide necessary documentation. More information is available at the Registration Office.

Transfer Degrees

Washington State colleges and universities and many private colleges and out-of state-institutions recognize graduates of Lower Columbia College who have earned the Associate in Arts-Direct Transfer Agreement degree as satisfying most or all of their general education requirements and will normally grant junior standing on transfer. Some colleges require specific course patterns or courses, in addition to the basic Associate in Arts degree. More information is available at lowercolumbia.edu/university-center/transfer-options.

Washington 45

A student who completes courses selected from the categories listed below will be able to transfer and apply up to 45 quarter credits toward general education requirements at any other public, and most private, higher education institutions in the state.

First Year Transfer List

- Communications (5 credits)—ENGL& 101, ENGL& 102
- Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning (5 credits)—MATH& 107, MATH& 148 or MATH& 151
- Humanities (10 credits in two different subject areas or disciplines)—PHIL& 101, MUSC& 105, DRMA& 101, HIST& 116
- Social Science (10 credits in two different subject areas or disciplines)—PSYC& 100, SOC& 101, POLS& 101, POLS& 202, HIST& 117
- Natural Sciences (10 credits in two different subject areas or disciplines)—BIOL& 100, BIOL& 160 w/ lab, ASTR& 101 with lab, CHEM& 110 with lab, CHEM& 121 with lab, CHEM& 161, CHEM& 162, GEOL& 101 with lab.
- Additional 5 credits in a different discipline can be taken from any category listed above.

For transfer purposes, a student must have a minimum grade of C or better (2.0 or above) in each course completed from this list. Students who transfer Washington 45 credits must still meet the transfer institution's admission requirements and eventually satisfy all their general education requirements and their degree requirements in major, minor and professional programs.

Student Records (FERPA)

Official Transcripts

An official transcript is a copy of the student's permanent record, signed by the Director of Registration with the school seal placed over this signature. An unofficial transcript is an unsigned and non-seal-bearing copy of that record. A student may request a transcript in person, in writing, or at lowercolumbia.edu/transcripts. A transcript will only be released to the student or to persons authorized in writing by the student. LCC charges a small processing fee for each official transcript requested.

Unofficial Transcripts

See Grade Report on the first page of the Academic Policy section.

Annual Notification of Student Privacy (FERPA)

The *Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act* (FERPA) is a federal law that governs the release of and access to student education records. Section 99.7 of FERPA requires that students be informed of their rights under the law. Student rights include:

- The right to inspect and review their education records.
- The right to request the amendment of their education records to ensure they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of their privacy or other rights.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in their education records, except to the extent that the Act and regulations authorize disclosure without consent, such as to school officials with legitimate educational interest.
- The right to file with the U.S. Department of Education Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO) a complaint under Sections 99.63 and 99.64 concerning alleged failures by the College to comply with the regulations of the Act. The office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave. SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Disclosure of Student Information

Student information is generally not released by Lower Columbia College without written consent of the student. However, there are some exceptions. FERPA permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from student education records without student consent if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in 99.31 of FERPA. Disclosure is permissible when it is:

- To school officials, including teachers, within the institution whom the institution has determined to have a legitimate educational interest.
- To officials of another institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll or where the student is already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment transfer.
- To authorized representatives of federal, state, or local educational authorities.
- To the student.
- In connection with the student's request for or receipt of financial aid.
- Required by a state law requiring disclosure that was adopted before November 19, 1974.
- To organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the College.

- To accrediting organizations to carry out their functions.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. *Note: The College will make a reasonable effort to notify the student or a designee of the order or subpoena before complying.*
- To appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency.
- To a victim of an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or a non-forcible sex offense, subject to the requirements of 99.39. The disclosure may only include the final results of the disciplinary proceeding with respect to that alleged crime or offense, regardless of the finding. (99.31 9(a)(13))
- To the general public, the final results of a disciplinary proceeding, subject to the requirements of 99.39, if the school determines the student is an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or non-forcible sex offense and the student has committed a violation of the school's rules or policies with respect to the allegation made against him or her. (99.31 (a) (14))
- To parents of students who are claimed as dependents for income tax purposes and the institution has verified that fact (unless there is a court order, state statute or other legally binding document prohibiting such). A copy of the parents' most recent federal income tax return is required and students will be informed in advance of release of records for this purpose.
- To parents of a student regarding the student's violation of any federal, state or local law, or any rule or policy of the school, governing the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance if the school determines the student committed a disciplinary violation and the student is under the age of 21. (99.31 (a)(15))
- Information the school has designated as "directory information" under 99.37.

Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the student, FERPA 99.32 requires the College to record the disclosure. Eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures.

School Officials

As a part of its FERPA policy, Lower Columbia College defines school officials as: members of the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support position or a person employed by (or under contract to) the College to perform a special task, such as an agent, attorney, or auditor. A school official has a "legitimate educational interest" if the official needs to access student information in order to fulfill their official responsibilities, or by a contract agreement related to a student's educational experience.

Directory Information

The following has been designated as directory information by Lower Columbia College and may be released without a student's written consent:

- Name
- Major field of study
- Enrollment status
- Dates of attendance
- Participation in recognized sports
- Degree or certificate earned
- Term degree or certificate awarded
- Honors

Consequences of Restricting Directory Information

Students may request that directory information not be released. Restricting the release of directory information will have other consequences, including:

- Verification of the student's enrollment or degrees may not be provided to potential employers or other third parties.
- The student's name may not appear in the commencement program.
- The student's name may not be released to any newspaper or other agencies in recognition of graduation or other achievements.
- The student may be excluded from lists of academic award winners.

A directory information restriction applies to all elements of directory information in a student's record. Individual directory information data elements cannot be restricted or released. Lower Columbia College does not assume responsibility for contacting a student for ongoing permission to release directory information and does not assume liability for honoring a student's request to restrict disclosure of directory information.

To restrict the release of directory information, students must complete a "Student Request for Non-Disclosure of Directory Information" form, available in the Registration Office. For more information, contact registration@lowercolumbia.edu.

The Solomon Amendment

The Solomon Amendment (1998) is a federal law requiring institutions that receive federal funding to allow military recruiters:

- Entry to campus
- Access to students on campus
- Access to lists containing recruiting information on students

The Solomon Amendment identifies certain information that military recruiters may request about students age 17 years or older who are currently enrolled in classes. This information is known as Student Recruiting Information and includes only:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Age
- Class level
- Academic major
- Place of birth
- Degrees received
- Most recent educational institution attended

If a student restricts the release of directory information under FERPA, then the College may not release such information to the military (FERPA supersedes the Solomon Amendment). There are additional guidelines for the release of data. The registrar authorizes all data released to the requesting units and questions should be directed to Registration Office.

Honors & Recognition

All USA Academic Team Award

Up to two Lower Columbia College students are honored each year through the All-USA and All-State Academic Team recognition programs. State team members are nominated by their community college presidents. Each All-Washington Academic Team members may receive a scholarship funded by program sponsors. The state's public baccalaureate institutions and several private colleges also offer scholarships to community college transfers who are award winners. More information is available at lowercolumbia.edu/student-life/student-awards/all-wa-team

Honors Lists

The Honors List is compiled at the end of each quarter to recognize students who have achieved commendable grade point averages.

Quarterly President's and Dean's Lists are submitted to The Longview Daily News for publication and are posted at lowercolumbia.edu/student-life/student-awards/honors-list.

- President's List: to be named to the president's list, students must attend school full-time and maintain a grade point average between 3.8 and 4.0.
- Dean's List: to be named to the dean's list, students must attend school full-time and maintain a grade point average between 3.25 and 3.79.

Outstanding Student Awards

Each spring, LCC faculty and staff select outstanding students from their respective fields of study

and activities for recognition. The students are honored at a reception hosted by the Associated Students of Lower Columbia College and the Vice President of Instruction. More information is available at lowercolumbia.edu/student-life/student-awards/outstanding-students

Scholastic Achievement Awards

Lower Columbia College does not designate a valedictorian. Instead, we recognize four students with the highest grade point averages and most rigorous coursework.

Two awards are given to students in the professional/technical area (including professional/technical students in transfer pathways), and two in academic transfer. Scholastic Achievement Awards are LCC's *highest* academic honors.

Awards are presented each year at the annual commencement ceremony. These are the *only* awards presented during Commencement.