

Incomplete AAOTs and other transfer degrees

Students transferring into WOU with an AAOT or other qualifying transfer degree are assumed to have met the spirit of General Education and do not need to take the program. Due to variability in AAOT approved courses and transfer degree structures, students who have many transfer courses without the umbrella of such a degree can face significant implications that could delay degree completion. For example, credits that are not used as the students may have intended or been advised at their originating institutions can be viewed as “wasted” credits and fall into the category of credit leakage.

For students who have a small number of courses that count toward an AAOT or other transfer degree but do not otherwise articulate at WOU, the impact is fairly minimal, especially given recent efforts at WOU to address credit overages by eliminating required minors and strategizing degree pathways within 90 credits. Despite this, a small number of students (an average of about 2/term) enter WOU one course or requirement shy of an AAOT or transfer degree. For these students, the “unraveling” of the courses they intended to meet their General Education requirements can leave them with a term or more’s worth of unused (“wasted”) credits and a longer than expected timeline to degree completion. Thus, risking the retention of these students.

There are a variety of reasons why students are unwilling or unable to complete a transfer degree before coming to WOU. The most common of these are student athletes seeking to take advantage of a scholarship opportunity by changing schools prior to completion of a transfer degree. Other students move with their families and are unable to complete the degree they started at their institution of origin. Students who are active duty or veterans also find themselves occasionally in this position due to restationing. Finally, students who have experienced frustration with their experience at their institution of origin and are anxious for the more personalized support offered at WOU decide it is worth it to abandon their AAOT, and often they were not advised properly at their institution of origin about the implications of transferring prior to completion of an AAOT or transfer degree.

It is recommended that the General Education Committee, in keeping with the tradition established by the program that transfer students meeting the spirit of a requirement, consider formalizing a process to address students with nearly completed transfer degrees.

1. Students with a **single course** remaining to complete an AAOT or other qualifying transfer degree.

We recommend that students complete an equivalent course at WOU to meet the spirit of the AAOT, which will clear all their General Education requirements. If there is no equivalent course available, students must complete an Integrating Knowledge course.

2. Students with a **single requirement** that constitutes more than one course to complete an AAOT or other qualifying transfer degree.

We recommend that students complete a course that would address the requirement in the relevant transfer degree along with one Integrating Knowledge course to clear all their General Education requirements. If there is no equivalent requirement available at WOU, then students must complete the full Integrating Knowledge requirement to complete the AAOT.

Students with **more than one requirement** remaining in a transfer degree are not eligible to request these exceptions.

While we may not be able to establish this process in Degree Tracks, we can establish a very streamlined petition process that would allow the Gen Ed Director to quickly and efficiently finalize nearly complete transfer degrees that meet the spirit of the requirement when students finalize their work at WOU.