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Glynis Bradfield

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Andrews University awards credit for prior learning

As one of the most culturally diverse universities in the United States, according to *U.S. News & World Report*, Andrews University has the privilege and responsibility to understand international and regional education qualifications in order to make fair admission decisions and award equivalent credits for prior learning. With increasing access to knowledge outside of traditional education settings, the rising cost of higher education, and the mobility of students with more adults studying part-time and online than ever before, Andrews University is responding to 21st-century higher education needs with greater recognition for prior college-level learning. Personal or professional experiences outside of post-secondary education can be assessed for alignment with program and individual class outcomes and credit earned through examination, validation of certification and training, performance evaluation or portfolio assessment.

The number of students admitted to undergraduate programs for the first time who transfer college credit earned through dual enrollment or completing advanced standardized or national exams continues to rise each year. A recent Council on Adult and Experiential Learning study (at CAEL.org) found that students awarded credit for prior college-level learning were 2.5 times more likely to graduate, and these students completed an average of 9.9 more credits at the institution than those who were not awarded credit for prior college-level learning.

As Andrews University evaluated advanced high school studies and several Scandinavian university transcripts, and provided opportunities to earn credit by exam and portfolio assessments, Jonathan Karlsson was able to complete the B.A. in Religion fully online while working in Finland as a global mission pioneer and an evangelist and Bible worker in Sweden.

When Atlanta North School's reaccreditation required kindergarten teacher, Debbie Bergherm, to upgrade her education, Andrews University's individualized degree completion plan — developed with support from her principal, conference superintendent and union certification registrar — motivated her to stay focused and finish in record time. Time, money and an Adventist school's accreditation were saved, thanks to recognizing achievement of program and class outcomes through multiple prior learning assessment methods.

Being a part of the global Adventist education system, Andrews University recognizes prior learning credits earned through all sister institutions accredited through the Adventist Accrediting Association. Emmanuel Nyalety appreciates how Andrews recognized his Valley View University transfer credits and provided a degree completion path that included all the prerequisites for the two master's degrees, in Software Engineering and Information Technology, he recently finished. While working as a software engineer in Atlanta, he travels with a medical missionary group each summer to Ghana and is writing



Jonathan Karlsson

Courtesy Jonathan Karlsson



Emmanuel Nyalety

Courtesy Emmanuel Nyalety

software to automate medical records for the facilities served in Ghana.

Andrews University's growing expertise in international credential evaluation and recognition of prior college-level learning, along with the new unified framework of outcomes and aligned Andrews core experience (or general education), opens new doors to Adventist higher education. Jonathan, Debbie and Emmanuel have valued the flexibility and accessibility of an Andrews experience that has increased their ability to go where God leads as world changers. ■

Learn more online at andrews.edu/go/priorlearning, andrews.edu/go/UG-entrance and andrews.edu/go/GR-entrance, or contact Glynis Bradfield, Prior Learning director, at glynisb@andrews.edu or Kerry Ferris, Credential Evaluation specialist, at karenf@andrews.edu.

Glynis Bradfield, Distance Student Services and Prior Learning director, Andrews University