

# HIRAM CONNECT

Hiram Connect requires students to integrate and apply classroom learning with high-impact, out-of-classroom experiences, strengthening intentional career exploration, and personal development through reflection.

Hiram Connect for Online Programs will consist of three stages:

1. STDV 10600 CONNECTING TO/THRU HIRAM – required 1 credit hour in the first year of coursework at Hiram College.
2. Completion of clock hours of approved Connect experience time
3. Connect reflection in Capstone/Senior Seminar course.

There are five key questions at the center of the Hiram Connect program:

1. Curriculum: What should I learn? What should I learn to do?
2. Career: To what work can I devote myself? How can I support myself?
3. Calling: How will I make my life meaningful?
4. Character: Who am I and who should I become?
5. Community: Where do I belong? And how will I serve my community?

Referred to as the “5 Cs” students will grapple with these questions throughout their educational experience at Hiram College. They will be introduced to these questions in the STDV 10600 CONNECTING TO/THRU HIRAM course and in that course they will be required to create and submit a plan to accomplish 120 clock hours of out-of-classroom experiences that, added to coursework, will provide opportunities to explore and reflect on the 5 Cs. With the help of advisors and instructors, students will develop an understanding of what Connect is about and the steps they will be expected to complete to fulfill the Connect requirement.

- The Connect Plan will be submitted and approved prior to the completion of STDV 10600 CONNECTING TO/THRU HIRAM. The plan must account for the completion of 120 clock hours of experience.
- The plan must demonstrate an understanding of the 5 Cs as they relate to the student’s own experiences.
- The plan must articulate the steps the student intends to take to ensure that their involvement in their workplace, community, or other life experiences connects to their coursework and to the world at large.
- The plan must demonstrate the ways in which it is possible to take your education into the real world and engage in new experiences or current experiences in new ways.

The goal is to communicate specific ways the student plans to grapple with the 5 Cs in critical and reflective ways and add experience, previous skills, and knowledge into a new and more nuanced context.

## Hiram Connect: Policy for Transfer Students to Receive Credit for Prior Experiential Learning

Students transferring into Hiram College with junior-level status (i.e., students entering Hiram College with at least 56 transfer credits accepted) can earn up to 60 Connect “clock hours” of experiential learning credit through reflection on experiential learning completed prior to matriculating with Hiram College. Examples of prior experiential learning could include, but are not limited to, work experience, professional development training, internship, and research.

In this written reflection, students would be expected to indicate how the prior experiential learning contributed to their growth in skills or

leadership, and should demonstrate how the learning exemplifies at least two of the 5 Cs: career, calling, curriculum, community, and character. Students must be specific in their learning outcomes and articulate the importance of this prior experience as it connects to their goals as a Hiram College student.

This reflection will be reviewed and approved by criteria set by the Connect Board.

## Experiential Learning Guidelines

We recognize that Online students have full lives that include work, school, family, and community. To assist working adults to complete appropriate experiences without having to schedule or plan separate internships or travel experiences, the following guidelines have been established:

1. Experiences can begin as soon as the students’ Connect Plan has been approved.
2. The student must engage in and document/prove their connect hours of work, community, or life experience as it relates to their education and the 5 Cs.
3. The hours can be a combination of experiences, but must be documented through supervisor signature/verification of time spent, vigilant journaling, or careful recording of experiences (i.e. blogs, photos, videos, portfolios, etc.)
4. The student must submit documentation of these experiences along with a reflective essay, highlighting the Connect experience as it related to the 5 Cs.
5. The experience and the reflection must be **intentional**: students must consider the *value* in these experiences: How have you learned? What have you learned? Why does it matter? How have you progressed?
  - Hiram encourages students to step outside of their comfort zone and experience the world in new ways.
  - Must be a **new** experience, cannot be retrospective.
  - Emphasis on purposefulness of this endeavor.
6. The documentation of experience and the essay must demonstrate active engagement in the Connect experience: did the student ask questions, solve problems, make decisions, investigate, and examine?
7. The hours of Connect experience as well as the reflection process and the essay connecting this experience to the 5 Cs must be completed before the student begins their capstone work.
 

This experience will be recorded on your academic transcript as CNXT 34000 (<https://catalog.hiram.edu/search/?P=CNXT%2034000>) HIRAM CONNECT EXPERIENCE.