Area: Instruction

Policy Name: Credit for Prior Learning

Policy Statement: The College recognizes the validity of prior learning. Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) – A comprehensive term used to describe credit awarded for learning gained outside a traditional postsecondary academic environment. "Prior Learning Assessment" (PLA) is also used to describe CPL. CPL involves the evaluation and assessment of an individual's learning obtained through activities such as working, participating in employer training programs, serving in the military, studying independently, completing advanced secondary level coursework, studying open-source coursework. CPL may take the form of postsecondary credit, certification, or advanced standing toward further education or training.

Procedures: Credit for Prior Learning is learning that has not been transcribed by an institution of higher learning. To encourage and to assist students to complete a degree, the College may award college credit for prior learning. The following list reflects forms of CPL which will be considered for credit.

Advanced Placement (AP) Exams – A series of standardized exams developed by the College Board. College credit is awarded based on exam score. The exams usually follow standardized high school courses generally recognized as being equivalent to undergraduate college courses.

American Council on Education (ACE) and ACE Guides – Major coordinating body for higher education institutions in the U.S., providing third party, unbiased credit equivalency recommendations among other services. ACE Guides are credit recommendations for formal instructional programs and examinations offered by non-collegiate agencies (including civilian employers, the military, professional associations, and other workplace related training).

College Level Examination Program (CLEP) Exams – Tests of college material offered by the College Board and designed to measure college-level competence achieved outside the college classroom. Course credit is given to students earning a satisfactory score on the CLEP exam indicating successful mastery of course outcomes.

Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) – Expert in the field of prior learning policy and practice. Publish guidelines for quality – 10 Standards for Assessing Learning.

Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Educational Support (DANTES)

Credit by Examination – An examination for a particular course that an academic program or department may utilize to give students credit for a course. A student will work directly with the individual program or department to learn about the availability of institutional course examinations. The cost of credit by examination is outlined in the College Catalog.

International Baccalaureate Programs (IB) – An internationally accepted qualification for entry into institutions of higher education, much like the AP program. It is a demanding two-year curriculum culminating with final examinations. Credits are awarded to students who achieve a minimum score on the exams. Graduates of the IB program must demonstrate competency in languages, social studies, the experimental sciences, and mathematics. In addition, the program includes three core requirements that are included to broaden the educational experience and challenge students to apply their knowledge and understanding. To receive a diploma, students must achieve a minimum score of 24 out of a possible 45 points, as well as satisfactorily complete the creativity, action, and service requirements.

Apprenticeship – Apprenticeship is a combination of on-the-job training and related technical instruction in which workers learn the practical and theoretical aspects of a highly skilled occupation. Apprenticeship programs may be sponsored by individual employers, joint employer and labor groups, and/or employer associations.

Certification – Certification (usually by a third-party industry group) is a designation that is obtained once the student is qualified to perform a particular task or job. Certification differs from licensure in that certification is an employment qualification and not a legal requirement for practicing a profession.

Portfolio Review Credit (or portfolio assessment credit) – Credit awarded as a result of review of a portfolio prepared by the student to demonstrate learning acquired outside of the classroom and that is relevant to the student's educational program. A portfolio may include documentation such as certificates of training, work samples, awards and honors, job descriptions, performance evaluations, samples of work product, evidence of self-directed learning, and resumes to validate equivalent learning outcomes are met. A portfolio course may be offered by the institution to assist the student in preparing a quality portfolio.

Prior Military Training Credit – College credit for military training awarded through American Council on Education (ACE) College Credit Recommendation Service or through direct evaluation of the student's military service school transcripts.

Additional less-common avenues to verify and document Credit for Prior Learning are listed below. This is not an exhaustive list. If students wish to seek Credit for Prior Learning via an avenue not described above or listed below, they are encouraged to provide their information to the Chief Academic Officer for review and consideration.

- Career Pathway
- Crosswalk
- Standardized Tests (DSSTs)
- Evaluation of Local Training
- Excelsior College Examination (ECE) Program
- Learning Counts

- Locally Evaluated Industry and Workplace Credit
- Professional Licensure
- National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS)
- Right Skills Now
- Thomas Edison State College Examination Program (TECEP)

To be awarded credit for prior learning you must meet the following requirements:

- All students seeking credit for prior learning must be enrolled at the College and have declared an objective that is either an Associate of Applied Science or Technical Certificate.
- Students seeking Credit for Prior Learning must provide validated documentation stating the knowledge, skills, and/or dates of employment when experience was gained. Failure to supply such evidence will result in non-approval. If requested, students must be able to demonstrate proficiency to the designated party(ies).
- The Chief Academic Officer and a faculty content expert will review and approve or disapprove the application for Credit for Prior Learning. Students must complete at least 12 credit hours at the College with a cumulative 2.0 GPA before Credit for Prior Learning will be awarded.
- Must meet graduation requirements. See college catalog or talk to your Enrollment Specialist.
- There is no overall cap on CPL credits. Students must meet all requirements for graduation which include 15 credit hours to be taken at the College. The graduation requirements may add some de facto limits to CPL.
- Any questions regarding Credit for Prior Learning should be directed to the Chief Academic Officer.

Full program policies and procedures to determine Credit for Prior Learning are found in the College Catalog.

Contact: Chief Academic Officer

Related:

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