

POLICY ON CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING (CPL)

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and governing principles whereby students may obtain college credit(s) for prior experiential learning or through non-credit training programs that can be equated to college coursework. This policy does not supersede or replace Policy 30, Transfer Credit for Graduate Students, or Policy 31, Transfer Credits for Undergraduate Students.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. **STANDARDIZED TESTS** - Tests that measure the same skills at the same levels for every test taker, and that are administered and scored in a standard way, no matter when or where they are given, such as CLEP, AP, IB, DSST.
- B. **ESTABLISHED TRAINING AND CERTIFICATIONS** - Credit for prior learning from recognition of workforce training. This is done in conjunction with the American Council on Education (ACE) recommendations.
- C. **PORTFOLIO** – A written document where students explain their prior experiences and describe how these match the expected student outcomes of an existing college course. The portfolio development and assessment process are designed with the high level of academic rigor found at accredited higher learning institutions. There is a strong emphasis on quality in the assessment process, which adheres to the Ten Standards for Quality Assurance in Assessing Learning, as set forth by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL).
- D. **NON-CREDIT CREDENTIALS** – An internal process of awarding academic credit for non-credit workshops/trainings offered through the School of Extended Learning. Often referred to as badging and articulation of badging.

III. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ASSESSMENT

- A. Experiential learning may be determined to be equivalent to credit earned through the completion of college courses based on:
 - 1. Satisfactory performance on formal or professionally-normed examinations (e.g., College Level Examination [CLEP], Dantes Subject Standardized Test [DSST]).
 - 2. Satisfactory completion of established training or certification programs (e.g., training evaluated internally by qualified faculty, programs approved by American Council on Education [ACE]);
 - 3. Satisfactory portfolio demonstration of the acquisition of knowledge and skills which approximate the content and outcomes of college courses.
 - 4. Credit from non-credit training programs through Extended Learning where an MOU exists identifying articulation equivalency.

- B. The assessment of experiential learning will be conducted by the University's designated credit for prior learning (CPL) coordinator(s) in conjunction with qualified faculty within the academic program for which credit is sought, when applicable. Requests for prior learning assessment credit should be made to Admissions, Academic Advising and the CPL coordinator(s). The CPL coordinator(s) will route requests to the appropriate program, as required. The Registrar's Office will be notified in writing of all decisions, transcribe credit for specific CPL awards, and maintain records regarding CPL decisions.

1. Credit by Examination

- a. Provost's Office will review the standardized testing equates to academic courses and minimum scores as need or at minimum every five years.
- b. Official test score reports will be submitted to the Admissions Processing Office.
- c. The scores will be entered and if the score meets the minimum standard set by the faculty then the Student Information System (SIS) will post the credit.

2. Credit by Evaluation of Training/Certification

- a. Training transcripts will be evaluated by the CPL coordinator.
- b. Transcripts will be verified and a credit award recommendation will be achieved by one of several methods: The American Council on Education (ACE) National Credit Registry; verification from the issuing organization/institution; and/or assessment of transcripts by qualified faculty.
- c. Credit will be awarded based on the successful completion of the verification process.
- d. The notation will be sent by the CPL Coordinator and credit will be awarded in the Student Information System by the Registrar's office.

3. Credit by Portfolio Evaluation

- a. The portfolio will be evaluated by a faculty member or experts most familiar with the course content for which credit is being sought.
- b. The evaluation recommendation must be approved by the CPL coordinator(s) and the respective Division/Department Chair. If approved, credit will be awarded in the Student Information System by the Registrar's office.

4. Credit by Credential

- a. GSU recognizes that there is value to providing credit for non-credit programs and/or experiential learning that may serve as 'on-ramps' for our current credit programs.
- b. Memorandums of Understanding will be developed between the School of Extended Learning and one or more of the four academic colleges.
- c. Student earns the articulation credential (articulation badge) and it is submitted through a secured link to the Registrar's office.

IV. APPLICATION OF CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING

All undergraduate and graduate programs who wish to apply or incorporate Credit for Prior Learning will need to review existing admission requirements, particularly if those requirements are related to any specific state regulatory implication (e.g. licensure).

- A. Credits awarded for prior learning may be applied toward admission and/or degree requirements within the limits specified below.

1. UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL

- a. Admission Requirements: Applicants may use credits awarded through the CPL process to meet, in whole or in part, the university requirements for general admission and of 24 credit hours for transfer student admission.
- b. Degree Requirements: A student may apply credit awarded through CPL to the degree requirements specified on their degree requirements subject to the approval of his/her advisor and collegial policies.
- c. Credit Awarded: Credits awarded through the CP process may be used to meet undergraduate required/core concentration or selectives requirements with the approval of the Division/Department Chair. General Education and Elective requirements do not require approval.

2. GRADUATE LEVEL

- a. Graduate level CPL may only be applied under special circumstances, upon the recommendation of the program faculty and approval by the Dean and Provost.
 - b. Subject to the approval of the university curriculum process, colleges may establish further restrictions on the application of credit awarded through the CPL process.
- B. Credit for prior learning may only be awarded once per course and cannot be used to change/alter a grade if credit was received. Duplication of credit is prohibited.
 - C. Credit(s) awarded through the CPL process may not be used to meet the university residency requirement as defined in Policy 28.

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University acknowledges and credits documents from the following in the re-writing of this document: CAEL, ACE, Illinois Board of Higher Education and National Louis University.

VI. RESPONSIBLE PARTY

The Office of the Provost, with input from the Registrar, School of Extended Learning and the CPL coordinator(s), is responsible for establishing procedures under this policy.

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