

Austin Peay State
University

Prior Learning Credit

POLICIES

Issued: ~~May 13, 2022~~

Responsible Provost and Vice President for Academic

Official: Affairs

Responsible Office: Enrollment and Student Achievement

Policy Statement

It is the policy of Austin Peay State University to award prior learning [assessment](#) credit for its students in compliance with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and approval of the department chair or program designee.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to authorize the University to develop procedures for the awarding of Prior Learning [Assessment](#) Credit through departmentally designated course credits or credit through portfolio creation that is submitted for review to the department chair.

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Procedures

Credit for Prior Learning

1. The University process for awarding credits through Prior-Learning Assessment (PLA) [credit \[also known as experiential learning credits \(ELC\) and credit for prior learning \(CPL\)\]](#) ~~must~~ [should](#) align with the Recommended Standards in Prior-Learning Assessment (PLA) Policy and Practice of Tennessee Public Colleges and Universities (August 7, 2012).
 - a. These Standards ensure that the University [employs](#) ~~will utilize~~ best practices [in delivering and provide services, maintaining consistency to students that are consistent](#) while acknowledging the unique realities of an individual life experiences.

- b. The Standards ensure transferability of PLA credit, include identification of types of PLA credits available, instruct the University on the transcription of PLA credit, and establish common standards for portfolio review.
2. When awarding credit under this provision, the University will use a recognized guide or procedure for awarding the credit for extra-institutional or life-long learning. The recognized guides or procedures may include:
 - a. American Council on Education (ACE) National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs
 - b. ACE Military Guide.
 - c. ACE Guide to Credit by Examination.
 - d. College Entrance Examination Board Advanced Placement Program. (CEEB/AP)
 - e. Credit by Departmental Examination. (ref. SACSCOC)
 - f. Degree-relevant extra-institutional learning credit awarded and transcribed by other accredited institutions, as well as that credit transcribed by ACE on the ACE Registry Transcript System (Joint Service Transcript, CCAF for the Air Force) and the ACE Registry of Credit Examinations (ROCR)
 - g. Individual portfolios using the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) or other standardized guidelines authorized, in advance, by permission of the University.
3. If University officials choose to proceed, they should consider the following factors when awarding prior learning assessment (PLA) credits toward college credit:
~~When utilizing published guides for extra-institutional learning, the information provided should include:~~
 - a. course title;
 - b. location of all sites where the course is offered;
 - c. length in hours, days, or weeks;
 - d. period during which the credit recommendation applies (i.e., how old is the knowledge earned?);
 - e. purpose for which the credit was designed;
 - f. learning outcomes;

- g. teaching methods, materials, and major subject areas covered; and
- h. college credit recommendations offered by categories (by level of degrees) and expressed in semester hours and subject area(s) in which credit is applicable.

Programmatic Prior Learning Assessment Credit

Departmental ~~PLC~~ Prior Learning Assessment Credit

Departments may decide to provide articulated prior learning credit based on criteria determined by the department such as prior work experience, institutional partnerships, or national certification.

- Programmatic ~~PLC~~A credits will be granted based on an approval memo from the department chair or program designee for each student.
- If approved, the completed Approval for Prior Learning Credit Form is sent to the Office of the Registrar. ~~The approval memo, signed by the department chair, would list the student's name, A#, course number and name or which credit will be awarded, the amount of credits to be awarded would be filed with the transfer area of the Registrar's Office to be articulated on the student's transcript.~~ The Office of the Registrar notifies the student when the academic credit has been added to the student's academic record.
- Grades for Programmatic ~~PLA~~C credits are calculated as "P-" for Pass.

Procedure for Proposing and Approving Non-Credit APSU Courses as Articulated Credit-bearing Courses

1. Students who wish to earn Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) credits through APSU-sponsored non-credit courses should first meet with their faculty advisor or academic department chair to discuss their options. ~~It's highly recommended to have this conversation before enrolling in any non-credit classes to ensure a clear understanding of how these credits might apply toward their academic goals.~~
2. The following criteria should be used to evaluate the merits of non-credit classes for articulation as credit-bearing courses on students' transcripts. These criteria include, but are not limited to:
 - The content that was taught;
 - The methods used to measure, evaluate, or grade the content;

Commented [BC1]: This is a new procedural language that is intended to make it easier on the chair (or the chair's designee) to approve PLAs using APSU's Professional and Workforce Development (PWDC) awarded credentials. The main point is for students to speak with the academic advisors **BEFORE** enrolling in APSU's PWDC to complete any of APSU's PWDC programs.

But, in the past two years, PWDC has awarded almost 2,000 PWDC credentials. So, there is a significant possibility that this occurs after the credential is already awarded; ergo the need for a backend process.

Commented [BC2]: Side note, I can see how this entire section could come after the next section. However, I lean toward "informing the student" to discuss things with a faculty advisor ASAP.

- The duration of the class or training, often referred to as clock hours or seat time;
- The mode of content delivery, which could be face-to-face, online, hybrid, and/or self-paced;
- Alignment of the content with specific APSU credit-bearing course(s);
- The qualifications of the instructor(s);

The relevance of the learned content. In some disciplines, the age of the learned content may render it outdated for consideration as current APSU credit-bearing courses.

**Procedure for Prior
Learning Assessment (PLA)
Portfolio for Significant
Life Experiences
The Portfolio**

1. In some cases, students may have earned significant experiential learning through their professional work. When this occurs, a comprehensive evaluation of their work, responsibilities, and accomplishments may be appropriate to assess eligibility for college credit. To support this process, students, in collaboration with a University official – such as a faculty advisor or academic department chair – may develop a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Portfolio. Creating a PLA Portfolio is a significant commitment for both the student and the University official responsible for evaluation.

This procedure recommends that the PLA Portfolio address the following key areas:

- Learning Outcomes: Identify specific skills and knowledge gained through professional experience that align with academic learning outcomes.
- Evidence of Learning: Include documentation such as work samples, project reports, certifications, or performance evaluations that demonstrate the learning achieved.
- Reflection on Learning: Provide a narrative that reflects on how professional experiences contributed to personal and professional growth, and how these align with academic goals.
- Course Equivalency: Propose specific courses for which the professional experience is equivalent, and explain how the learning meets the objectives of those courses.
- Letters of Recommendation (as needed): Include letters from supervisors or colleagues who can attest

to the applicant’s skills, experience, and qualifications.

- Professional Development: Detail any formal or informal training, workshops, or continued education relevant to the learning outcomes.
- Integration of Theory and Practice: Explain how theoretical concepts were applied in real-world professional settings.

Candidates for portfolio credit are:

- Admitted students with significant work experience
- Employed at least 5-7 years in a particular field, with increasing responsibilities
- Highly organized – effective speakers and writers
- Highly motivated – will work independently to complete a project
- Able to reflect on work and training experiences

2. With approval from the department chair, the chair’s designee, approval, currently-enrolled students may earn PLA prior learning credit by through the development developing a of a learning-PLA portfolio to fulfill degree requirements. however, sStudents must still complete at least 25% of their undergraduate and one-third 1/3 of their graduate degree requirements through credit-bearing courses instruction provided by Austin Peay State University. PLA credits Credit via portfolio might may be granted-awarded for college-level courses when for which credit cannot reasonably be granted through means of CLEP, departmental challenge exams, or other approved methods for recognizing mechanisms to receive credit for prior knowledge. Prior learning eCredits earned though PLA awarded will be treated in the same way as transfer credits, with a “P” (Pass) will be grade assigned, which and will not count in the student’s the grade point average.

Portfolio Preparation through Non-Credit APSU Course

Students interested in earning PLC through the development of a learning portfolio should first complete a Letter of Intent to the department chair and their assigned advisor to ensure the PLC will fulfill their sought degree requirements. Upon approval from their academic advisor, students will enroll in a non-credit APSU

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portfolio development course, through the Adult, Non-Traditional, Transfer Student (ANTS) Center and will build a portfolio. The non-credit APSU course on portfolio development is required for students seeking PLC. The student will prepare the portfolio as part of this class. The student may consult with their academic advisor, subject area faculty, course instructor, or ANTS Center Coordinator during the preparation.

A portfolio is an organized collection consisting of an expanded résumé, certifications, essays, and/or documentation that demonstrates student learning through life/work experiences. If significant work experience is related to the degree requirements without having completed a formal training program that can be evaluated, a portfolio might be a good option. Through the portfolio, the student must provide evidence that the knowledge gained through experience is equivalent to course content and learning outcomes for courses offered at Austin Peay State University. One portfolio is prepared for each course for which the student is seeking credit.

Assessment

The ANTS Center Coordinator reviews the portfolio(s) and sends it to the appropriate department chair(s). The department chair will designate a committee to review the portfolio. The committee assessing the portfolio determines if the level of learning displayed in the portfolio is in line with the course content, learning objectives and outcomes that are expected in the course identified as equivalent to the student's experience. The designated committee has the option to award course credit or no credit. Students will receive full credit for each course approved by the committee. There will be no partial credit.

The chair of the committee forwards approved packets to the Office of the Registrar and the ANTS Center Coordinator. The Office of the Registrar notifies the student when the academic credit has been added to the student's academic record. If credit via portfolio is denied, the department chair or chair of the committee that assessed the portfolio must inform the ANTS Center Coordinator. The ANTS Center Coordinator notifies the student that the portfolio was denied.

Students may appeal the denial of prior learning credit no later than 30 calendar days after receiving the decision from the ANTS Center Coordinator. A formal, written appeal to the dean

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~~of the college in which the academic department resides must be filed by the 30 day deadline. If the dean determines there is merit to the student's appeal, the dean will inform the student within five business days so that department chairs can award credit.~~

~~Program Service Fee~~

~~A standard program service fee applicable at the time of portfolio submission will be collected for each course the student requests to be fulfilled via portfolio.~~

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Links

Life/Work Portfolio Prior Learning Credit Options at the Undergraduate Level <https://www.apsu.edu/prior-learning/>

Revision Dates

APSU Policy 2:015 (Merged with 2:023) – Rev: May 13, 2022
APSU Policy 2:015 (previously 2:016) – Rev.: March 25, 2017
APSU Policy 2:015 – Issued: May 11, 2004

Subject Areas:

Academic	Finance	General	Human Resources	Information Technology	Student Affairs
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President: signature on file

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