

University of Louisiana System

Title: *PRIOR LEARNING
ASSESSMENTS FOR
ACADEMIC CREDIT*

Effective Date: **March 19, 2012**

Cancellation: **None**

Chapter: **Academics**

Policy and Procedures Memorandum

In addition to credits earned at other postsecondary institutions, individuals enrolling at UL System Institutions may have previously acquired college-level learning from corporate or military training, work experience, civic activity and/or independent study. As such, each institution is required to adopt policies and procedures which allow for the recognition of these prior extra-institutional learning processes that include the awarding of credit or advanced placement. Such credits should be analyzed in terms of level, content, quality, comparability and degree program relevance.

I. Categories of Assessment

There are a variety of ways individuals can earn credit for prior learning including but not limited to the following.

A. Advanced Placement/Dual Enrollment (AP)

A cooperative endeavor between secondary schools and colleges and universities which provides high school students the opportunity to take college-level courses in a high school setting. Students who participate in this program not only gain college-level skills, but may also earn college credit while they are still in high school.

B. The College Level Examination Program (CLEP)

A group of standardized tests that assess college-level knowledge in several subject areas for knowledge obtained outside the classroom, such as through independent/home study, job experience, or cultural interaction.

C. Challenge Exams/Proficiency Exams

Institutions may provide for exams to be administered for specific subject areas or in certain departments to allow placement in advanced level course work. Such exams may be developed and administered by the institution.

D. Portfolio Assessment

A standardized process through which students demonstrate knowledge and experience in a particular field in order to gain credit for specific courses. Portfolio Assessment involves compiling pertinent information into a portfolio and submitting it for faculty review. Institutions may choose to offer courses designed to teach a student how to prepare an effective portfolio.

E. Other Nationally Recognized Assessment Tools

1. **DSST** (Formerly DAN TES) an extensive series of exams in college subject areas that are comparable to the final or end of course exams in undergraduate courses for eligible Service members and civilian examinees.
2. **Excelsior College Exams (ECE)** college-level subject-matter examinations which are comparable to CLEP and DSST exams.
3. **American Council on Education (ACE)** provides course equivalency information to facilitate credit award decisions for adult learners (CREDIT) and for military learning experiences (GUIDE).

II. Criteria for Assessment

Each institutional policy should clearly define the criteria to be used in the assessment and awarding of credits. Such policies shall be published in student catalogs and on the institution's website. Campuses shall have the flexibility to:

- Publish a listing of exams, minimum score requirements and institutional course equivalents or to evaluate the credits on a case by case basis;
- specify a maximum number of hours which may be credited;
- limit the awarding of such credits to lower level courses only;

- allow the credits to waive required courses or apply to elective courses only;
- determine whether credits are awarded on a pass/fail basis only and whether credits will be used to determine grade point averages;
- assess appropriate charges to cover the cost of examinations or other assessments.

III. Other

A. Adult Learners

The Center for Adult Learning in Louisiana (CALL) is a joint initiative between the LA Board of Regents (BOR) and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) targeted at adults to enroll and earn a degree or other college credential. CALL expands adult participation in postsecondary education through the establishment of specific programming and the promotion of learning services. Prior Learning Assessment is an integral part of the CALL initiative.

B. Veterans

Act 191 of the 2011 Regular Session of the Legislature (LA.R.S 17:3351(E)) requires institutions to award educational credits to veterans for courses that are a part of the student's military training or service and that meet the standards of the American Council on Education or equivalent standards. The law defines veterans as a citizen or resident alien who has been released from military service under a condition other than dishonorable who meets at least one of the following conditions:

- 1) has engaged in active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces;
- 2) is a member of the national guard OR is a reserve enlistee called to active duty for purposes other than training;
- 3) was a cadet or midshipman at a U.S. Armed Forces service academy

Policy References:

LA R.S. 17:3351

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