

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

COMMUNITY COLLEGES POLICY

UHCCP # 5.302 Prior Learning Assessment Program

November 2013

I. Purpose

The purpose of the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Program is to award college credits to students who are enrolled in a degree or certificate program at the university or community college and have successfully completed, at a high school, business school, trade school, adult education school, or military training program, courses that are equivalent to courses offered for credit in the University of Hawai'i (UH) System.

The intent is to ensure consistency in awarding credits, to maintain the credibility of college-level learning, and seamlessly transfer credits among participating UH campuses (Attachment A).

II. Related University Policies

- A. Board of Regents Policies, Section 5-14.b Student and Credit Transfer Within the University
www.hawaii.edu/offices/bor/policy/borpch5.pdf
- B. UH Systemwide Executive Policy E5.209, University of Hawai'i System Student Transfer and Inter-Campus Articulation
www.hawaii.edu/apis/ep/e5/e5209.pdf

III. Definitions

- A. Prior Learning Assessment - PLA is the process through which students can earn college credit by identifying and documenting college-level learning that has been acquired through life experiences such as military and/or work experience, training, professional certification, independent study, volunteer activities, and hobbies (e.g., astronomy, history, travel, cultural and/or fine arts). This policy is also known as a credit equivalency program.

The options for granting credits include:

- B. Credit by Examination (CE) - Students who feel competent that their background/learning experiences have adequately prepared them in certain subject areas may challenge instructor-prepared examinations. The credit by

examination must be approved by appropriate faculty and/or Division Chairperson.

- C. Equivalency Examination - Standardized national exams may be equated to equivalent courses. The equivalency examination must be approved by appropriate faculty and/or Division Chairperson. Examples of such examinations include the following:
1. AP – Advanced Placement Examination
 2. CLEP – College-Level Examination Program
 3. DSST – DANTES Subject Standardized Tests
 4. IB – International Baccalaureate
- D. Portfolio-based Assessment - Prior learning must be documented in writing with evidence of the concepts learned and the achievement level attained. The documenter must also provide a background of his/her credentials and why he/she has the expertise to be a documenter in the field. The prior learning must be verified by content experts, i.e., supervisor, co-workers, personnel staff. Credit for such prior learning must be approved by appropriate faculty and/or Division Chairperson.
- E. Non-Collegiate-Sponsored Education Credit - This evaluates learning from courses completed in non-collegiate settings (e.g., professional licenses, labor union courses, agency training programs, professional workshops, and military courses) whose course content is equivalent to offerings from a college. The non-collegiate-sponsored education credit must be approved by appropriate faculty and/or Division Chairperson. Examples of such education credit include the following:
1. Military (e.g., Army **ACE Registry Transcript System (AARTS)**, Sailor Marine **ACE Registry Transcript (SMART)**)
 2. American Council on Education (ACE) College Credit Recommendation Service
 3. Professional Licenses or Industry Certifications (nationally- or state-certified professionals)

IV. **Responsibilities**

The Chancellor shall be responsible to:

- A. Ensure that the components of the PLA Program are carefully monitored and documented.

- B. Assure that the institution, relying on the expertise of its faculty and institution's chief academic officer, determines the appropriateness of granting credit for prior learning.
- C. Create a mechanism to evaluate/assess effectiveness of the program.

V. Procedures

Participating UH campuses will establish procedures for granting PLA credit in each of the common options listed in Part III. In determining its procedures, each campus at a minimum shall ensure that:

- A. Courses for which credit are granted based on PLA will be recorded as Credit by Examination (CE) or Credit (CR) as appropriate (Attachment B).
- B. Courses for which credit are granted based on PLA will be accepted to fulfill applicable certificate/degree requirements.
- C. Limitations to the number of CE credits allowed will be based on current Western Association of Schools and Colleges recommendations.
- D. Criteria for awarding credit should be demonstrated mastery of student learning outcomes at a "C" level or higher.

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Program
List of Participating UH Campuses

- Hawai'i Community College
- Honolulu Community College
- Kapi'olani Community College
- Kaua'i Community College
- Leeward Community College
- University of Hawai'i at Hilo
- University of Hawai'i – Maui College
- University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu
- Windward Community College

Attachment B

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Program
Examples of PLA at Participating UH Campuses

Option	Credit-by-Examination (CE) Reference Part III.B.	Equivalency Examinations Reference Part III.C.	Portfolio-Based Assessment Reference Part III.D.	Non-Collegiate-Sponsored Education Credits Reference Part III.E.
How does it work?	With instructor approval, enrolled students may take instructor-prepared examinations covering the material in a specific course.	Equivalency examinations such as CLEP, DSST, IB, and AP exams give students the opportunity to earn college credit.	Students usually enroll in a portfolio-based assessment course (credit or non-credit). Students prepare a portfolio in which they document college-level learning.	Students who have successfully completed military training, licensure or professional certifications, and/or ACE equivalency may be awarded college credit.
How is student learning assessed for earning credit?	Students must pass the examination with a "C" or higher.	Credit is awarded if the student meets the qualifying score set by the campus.	Student portfolios are evaluated by content expert faculty assessor(s) for evidence of meeting course-level student learning outcomes (SLOs) with a "C" or higher.	Individual campuses determine the equivalencies.
Which students should choose this option?	Students in degree programs that include specific courses for which a student believes he or she has current knowledge meeting the student learning outcomes (SLOs) of the course. Students who have completed courses at non-regionally-accredited postsecondary institutions should consider credit-by-examination.	Students with specific knowledge in an area where tests are offered.	Students who have substantial professional or community experience and college-level writing skills (i.e. qualify for ENG 100)	Military experience that is documented through ACE or other official training records. Employees/professionals who obtained industry certification or licensure and can provide original proofs of satisfactory completion.

Option	Credit-by-Examination (CE) Reference Part III.B.	Equivalency Examinations Reference Part III.C.	Portfolio-Based Assessment Reference Part III.D.	Non-Collegiate-Sponsored Education Credits Reference Part III.E.
How are these credits awarded?	Criteria for awarding credit should be demonstrated mastery of student learning outcomes at a "C" level or higher.	Transcripts from CLEP, DSST, IB, and/or AP examinations are sent to college specified by the student.	Credit must be approved by appropriate faculty member(s) and/or Division Chairperson.	Transfer credit awarded based on ACE transcripts. Professional certifications or licensures are awarded on an individual basis.
How are these credits recorded?	Institutional credit recorded by the college as a grade of CE on the transcript.	Institutional credit recorded by the college as a grade of CE on the transcript.	Institutional credit recorded by the college as a grade of CE on the transcript.	On other documentation, institutional credit is recorded by the college as a grade of CE or CR on the transcript as appropriate.
What are the costs?	Tuition and fees for the challenged course, but no books or supplies are required.	Test and administration fees.	Students pay portfolio class fee/tuition and textbook costs (if applicable), and portfolio assessment fees.	None, since assessments were administered and paid for previously.
Are there special considerations?	Students should talk with their advisors regarding campus-specific policies.	Students should talk with their advisors regarding campus-specific policies. CLEP or DSST tests must be arranged at authorized test centers.	Students should talk with their advisors regarding campus-specific policies. Students must be able to provide documentation as evidence for prior learning.	Students should talk with their advisors.