

SECTION: 2.0 ACADEMIC

SUBJECT: Credit by Prior Learning Assessment

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**Background:** This policy provides a process whereby students will have the opportunity to earn college credit for learning outcomes of life and work experiences which can be shown to be equivalent to learning outcomes from formal college coursework. This policy is aligned with SBOE Policy III.L and NWCCU Standard 2.C.7

**Point of Contact:** Provost

**Other LCSC offices directly involved with implementation of this policy, or significantly affected by the policy:** Division Chairs, Instructional Deans, Registrar & Records Office, Controller's Office, Financial Aid

**Date of approval by LCSC authority:** June 1980

**Date of State Board Approval:** N/A

**Date of Most Recent Review:** October 2023

**Summary of Major Changes incorporated in this revision to the policy:** Policy is expanded to include all forms of Prior Learning by which students may earn credit, rather than just Portfolio. Policy defines which forms of PLA count towards credit limitations. Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) replaces Prior Experiential Learning (PEL) to align with state policy. Procedural details related to Portfolio submission are deleted from policy.

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**Policy:**

Students may earn college credit for specific learning that they have achieved through life and work experiences by successful completion of one or more of the forms of Prior Learning listed below. Scores for standardized exams have been established to ensure that student's prior learning is equivalent to the learning outcomes of courses. Faculty with expertise in course subject areas assess Challenge Exams or Portfolios and award credit, where merited, for college-level learning, characterized by a balance of theory and practice, derived from experience. Credit is only awarded for learning and not for experience.

**1. Forms Of Prior Learning Assessment (PIA) Counted Toward 25% Credit Limit  
(See 4. Limitations)**

- A. Faculty Developed Course Specific Portfolio Assessments.
- B. Other forms of PLA based on experiential learning: students may earn credit for Prior Learning through additional assessments not listed above, on a case-by-case basis, subject to Division Chair approval.

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## **2. Forms Of PLA Not Counted Toward 25% Credit Limit (See 4. Limitations)**

### A. Standardized Assessments:

- 1) Advanced Placement (AP)
- 2) College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
- 3) DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST)
- 4) International Baccalaureate (IB)

### B. Faculty Developed Course Specific Challenge Exams

### C. Credit Recommenders:

- 1) American Council on Education recommendations (ACE)
- 2) Placement into higher course based on Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)
- 3) Placement into higher course based on American College Testing (ACT)
- 4) Placement into higher course based on another form of placement testing (such as the LCSC Writing Placement Exam, or ALEKS). Others to be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- 5) Competency Credit (credit earned for satisfactory completion of a higher course in a direct curriculum sequence).
- 6) Other forms of PLA: students may earn credit for Prior Learning through additional assessments not listed above, on a case-by-case basis, subject to Division Chair approval.

## **3. Eligibility**

- A. Student must be currently enrolled at LCSC to have any credits earned through PLA noted to the transcript.
- B. Student must complete and obtain approvals on the Course Challenge Form or the Course Portfolio Form prior to beginning the Challenge Exam or Portfolio process.

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#### **4. Limitations**

- A. Prior Learning credits listed under Section 1 are limited to 25% of credits required for a Bachelor's degree or an Associate's degree.
- B. Credits are awarded only for courses in the current college catalog, or that are part of the required curriculum of a degree plan from a catalog still in force (no more than 7 years old at the time of the student's graduation).
- C. Divisions or programs may limit credit by PLA to specific courses.
- D. PLA credits will not be awarded for courses that are the same, or similar to, courses the applicant is enrolled in, once the course has begun, or has audited, regardless of the grade the student received for the course.
- E. A student may not attempt PLA credits for the same course by both a Challenge Exam and Portfolio.
- F. If a student-attempts PLA credits by a Challenge Exam or Portfolio and is not awarded credits, credit will only be available by enrolling in, and passing, the course.
- G. PLA credits do not count towards LCSC residency credits or towards Federal Financial Aid, including scholarships.
- H. Though Idaho institutions work closely together to ensure transfer of credit, there is no guarantee that another higher-education institution will transfer credits earned through PLA.