



Academic Credit for Prior Learning

Intercollege Relations Commission

April 2018

Definition

Prior learning is the knowledge and skills gained through:

- Work and life experience.
- Military training and experience.
- Formal and informal education and training from in-state and out-of-state institutions, including foreign institutions

Statutes

- RCW 28B.77.230 – Academic credit for prior learning
- RCW 28B.10.053 – Academic credit for military training

Resources

www.wsac.wa.gov/transfers

Updates

2017 Report

- Received data from all publics and all ICWs (60 schools).
- Awarded ACPL credits increased 41 percent.

2016-17 ACPL Student FTE and Credits Summary

Category	Assessment Examples	Total Students ²¹	Total Quarter Credits ²²
Credit by Testing	DANTES Subject Standardized Tests(DSST)	16	130
	College Level Exam Program (CLEP)	259	2,963
Prior Experiential Learning	Portfolio Review (college level credits)	280	3,731
Course Challenges	Generally a faculty or department-created course-specific assessment	600	3,976
Extra-Institutional Learning	American Council of Education (ACE) (military completion courses)	1,166	27,780
	Occupational Crosswalks (Military MOS, other)	417	10,517
	Individual Industry Cert (e.g. NCLEX-RN)	479	12,245
Total Number of Students and Credits		3,217	61,341

Source: WSAC staff analysis of Academic Credit for Prior Learning data collected from institutions (Fall 2017).

Key Recommendations

- Streamline data collection process.
- Develop more consistent policies for awarding credit for military training.
- Develop more crosswalks and increase adoption of crosswalks by institutions.
- Continue to convene the ACPL workgroup semi-annually.

SBCTC Coding Policy

Community and technical colleges must denote the following ACPL categories on transcripts:

- Credit by Testing
- Extra-institutional Learning
- Prior Experiential Learning
- Course Challenges

Transferability

Community and technical colleges (CTCs) guidelines and policies

CTC ACPL guideline

ACPL credits earned at one CTC will be accepted toward the appropriate course or program at any other CTC.

CTC reciprocity policy

Individual courses that meet a Basic Requirement, Distribution Requirement, or diversity requirement in a transfer degree at the sending college will meet the requirement at the receiving college for a similar transfer degree, even if the credit is awarded through ACPL.

The receiving institution will accept an entire DTA distribution area, even if the credit is awarded through ACPL, if all of the following are true:

- The student met the distribution at the sending institution.
- The student maintained a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or better.
- The student meets the sending institution's residency policy.
- The student meets the receiving institution's continuous enrollment policy.

State transfer policy

- ACPL credit awarding policies must be published.
- Transfer students follow the receiving institution's ACPL policies.

Direct Transfer Agreement (DTA) guidelines

- ACPL credits apply toward the 15-credit limit for restricted subjects.

Assessing Prior Learning

Awarding credit

Colleges award and transcribe academic credit for prior learning when:

- Learning outcomes assessed are equivalent to specific college course outcomes.
- Awarding credit is consistent with the institution's policies.

Assessment methods

Category	Examples	NWCCU Standards
Credit by testing	Standardized exams such as CLEP, DSST	2.C.8 or 2.D.10
Extra-institutional learning	ACE recommendations for military training; industry crosswalks; industry certifications	2.C.8 or 2.D.10
Course challenges	Written, oral, or demonstration assessments, generally developed by faculty.	2.C.8 or 2.D.10
Prior experiential learning	A portfolio compilation of evidence identifying learning outcomes mastered through a variety of experiences. No more than 25% of credits can be used toward credential.	2.C.7