



**POLICY 04:05:00
PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT (PLA)**

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the awarding of credit to students for learning experiences gained outside the traditional classroom.

II. Definition

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) is a process by which learning mastered outside of a formal classroom is reviewed for college-level equivalency. Credit for PLA may be granted for learning acquired from work and life experiences; civic, community, or volunteer work; individual study; and in-service training sponsored by associations, business, government, and industry, including the military. PLA is the evaluation and assessment of an individual's life learning for college credit, certification, or advanced standing toward further education or training.

III. Policy

- A. PLA is evaluated on the amount and type of learning that a student can demonstrate has occurred. Awarded credit will correspond as closely as possible to comparable courses from Pellissippi State's inventory of course offerings. Emphasis is placed on the satisfactory presentation of the student's achievement relative to the student learning outcomes as stated on the master syllabus for the course.
- B. Students admitted to Pellissippi State may obtain advanced standing and course credit through the following:
 - **CLEP (College-Level Examination Program).** Pellissippi State recognizes and accepts credit derived from general and subject area examinations of the College Board.
 - **DSST (DANTES Subject Standardized Tests) credit by exam program.** DSST tests are used to award college credit to students who can demonstrate knowledge of subjects commonly taught in introductory college courses.
 - **Advanced Placement (AP) test.** Pellissippi State offers course credit for successful completion of AP examinations administered by the CEEB to high school students.
 - **Military service.** Pellissippi State grants credit for appropriate educational experiences in the armed services in accordance with the American Council on Education (ACE) Guide to the Evaluation of Education Experience in the Armed Services.
 - **Extra-institutional learning.** Pellissippi State may award credit for extra-institutional learning, such as technical certificates, industry recognized credentials, licensures and apprenticeships, according to the American Council on Education (ACE) Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs.
 - **CPS (Certified Professional Secretary) examination.** Students passing the CPS examination are granted credit at Pellissippi State for certain courses that will apply to a certificate or degree.
 - **CAP (Certified Administrative Professional) examination.** Students passing the CAP examination are granted credit at Pellissippi State for certain courses that will apply to a certificate or degree.

- **Credit by examination.** A student with a minimum high school or college grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 is required of students applying for credit by examination; students who do not meet this requirement shall not be permitted to take an examination for credit except with permission of the academic department Dean. A student who has previously received a grade in a course may not apply for credit by examination, and a student can attempt an examination for any course only once.
- **Life experience.** Credit for life experience may be petitioned for courses for which credit cannot feasibly be granted by other means, such as advanced placement, CLEP, credit by examination or transfer credit.

IV. Awarding of Credit

Credit for Advanced Placement and military training is awarded when students apply for admission and provide transcripts. Students must apply for credit for extra-institutional learning, credit by exam, and credit for life experience; and they must schedule CLEP, DSST, and other types of exams. Detailed information regarding the various types of PLA and instructions for applying may be found on the Prior Learning Assessment website: <http://www.pstcc.edu/pla/index.php>.

Sources: TBR Policy 2.01.00.04 Awarding Credits Earned through Extra-Institutional Learning
TBR Policy 2.01.00.06 Articulation and Transfer
TBR Recommended Standards in Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Policy and Practice

Reviewed/Recommended: President's Staff, January 25, 2021
Approved: President L. Anthony Wise Jr., January 25, 2021