



Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Policy

Prior learning assessment is a set of well-established, researched, and validated methods for assessing non-collegiate learning for college credit. It is a process that allows learners to demonstrate knowledge and skills in a particular field or fields and have that learning evaluated for college credit. For the purposes of this policy, the learning addressed is defined as college level knowledge or skills that have been attained outside of a traditional academic environment and that have not been previously evaluated for or awarded college credit.

Standards for Awarding PLA Credit

PLA Credit may be awarded if the following standards have been met:

- The student has been admitted to DU in a credential-seeking program. (I.e., degree or certificate.)
- The learning is assessed to be equivalent to the appropriate level – i.e., undergraduate or graduate education.

PLA Credit may be applied toward a degree program, certificate, general education requirements, academic concentration, and general electives that count toward the student's elected program of study. Institutional policies regarding transfer of credit will apply to awarding credit for prior learning. NOTE: Students should be informed that changing a course of study will result in a reassessment of the applicability of PLA Credit.

PLA Credit may satisfy prerequisite requirements using the same policy that applies to other course equivalencies.

PLA Credit Methods

Below is a list of the types of PLA DU can award transfer credit for and the process for assessing them:

1. Credit by examination (AP/IB/CLEP) –official score report required, credits and equivalencies established by the appropriate academic department.
2. Credit recommendations for military courses and occupations evaluated by the American Council on Education Military Guide – official ACE transcript or JST (joint services transcript) required, course transfer with academic department approval and credit awarded based on ACE recommendations.
3. Credit recommendations for workplace courses and examinations evaluated by the American Council on Education – ACE transcript required, course transfer with academic department approval and credit awarded based on ACE recommendations.

4. Assessment made by DU faculty of work-based credentials and education programs, defined as an industry credential, technical certificate, or professional license. The following guidelines have been established for evaluating these credentials:
 - a) Students must submit a copy of the credential, certificate, or license.
 - b) Students must submit a syllabus or equivalent that describes the program, learning outcomes, hours required, etc.
 - c) If not included in the syllabus, the student must submit the credentials of the instructor(s) who provided the training/instruction.
 - d) Assessment of these materials will be performed by the academic department in the discipline in which the student is seeking credit. The department will then recommend course equivalents and make credit recommendations.
 - e) Rubrics for assessing workplace learning should be provided to the Provost's Office prior to credit being awarded.

5. Credit for non-credit programs, including continuing education courses, taught at DU or other higher education institutions. In order to award academic credit for non-credit courses, the content must align with a specific course or courses (excluding topics courses, independent study, and independent research) in the program in which the student is seeking credit. In addition to confirming completion of the non-credit course (transcript or certification will be required), the student must complete the final assessment for the credit-bearing course(s) they are seeking credit for (assessments include final exam, final paper, or portfolio). Completion of the non-credit course alone is not sufficient to award credit.