



UNIVERSITY OF
BRIDGEPORT

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

TITLE:	Award of Experiential Credit
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POLICY STATEMENT:

The University of Bridgeport (UB) recognizes that learning is lifelong; through life and work experience students may have acquired college-equivalent learning. Examples of various learning experiences are employment; in-service training sessions; workshops, seminars, and institutes; non-credit or certificate courses, volunteer work; publishing; military training programs, to mention a few. Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) provides a means through which learning that has been acquired outside the traditional college classroom can be evaluated for academic credit.

The University will not award credit simply for years of experience. Rather, the student must demonstrate acquisition of the knowledge and skills pertaining to academic learning as a result of experience. Criteria for assessing learning outside the traditional college classroom will generally include the following:

1. The learning should be publicly verifiable. The student should be able to document that the experience actually occurred and led to the learning that is claimed.
2. The learning should be equivalent to the quality of college-level work.
3. The learning should pertain to specific subject matter aligned with each of the learning objectives of a specific UB course.
4. The learning should have general applicability outside the specific situation in which it was applied.

Students that meet the following criteria are eligible to apply for CPL:

- Enrolled and matriculated in a degree program at UB.
- Completed three credits of college-level composition.
- Applications for Credit for Prior Learning must be submitted prior to completing 90 credits at UB.

Students who apply for CPL must complete the CPL Application Form with attached documentation of at least one of the sources listed below. Approval of the application rests with the student's advisor or program director, and with the Provost.

PROCEDURE :

Students who are eligible may apply for Prior Learning credits to be evaluated from the following sources:

1. **Exams/Testing** – Exams provide students the opportunity to receive college credit for knowledge acquired through independent or prior study, on-the-job training, professional development, or internships. Credit is awarded for satisfactory scores in national standardized exams, such as College Level Examination Program (CLEP), DSST examinations, and International Baccalaureate (IB) examinations. Students are advised to meet with their academic advisors prior to scheduling an exam to make sure the exam credits will meet the program requirements and/or electives of their selected major. A maximum of 30 credits may be awarded through exams.
2. **Sponsored Experiential Learning** – UB grants academic credit for successful completion of certain non-collegiate sponsored instruction that has been assessed in relation to college credit. These include some courses offered by business, governmental and non-profit agencies, professional associations, and the United States Armed Services. Many training programs, including military programs, have undergone a rigorous evaluation process that equates their

outcomes to college credit. UB endorses the evaluations and credit recommendations from the American Council on Education (ACE) and/or the National College Credit Recommendation Service (National CCRS). Various professional certifications have been evaluated for academic credit; A+, Microsoft, Cisco, Project Management, Six Sigma, UCONN Family Development Credential, Ability Beyond Disability certificate and others. Please have the training provider send an official report or transcript of your records to UB's Provost office.

3. **Credit for Armed Services Training** – In recognition of the advanced academic and technical content of many military educational experiences, UB may grant appropriate credits for military educational experiences that are evaluated by the American Council of Education (ACE) as suitable for post-secondary credit. Recommendations in the ACE Guide are used as advisory only and not binding. The Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services serves as the basis for acceptance of such training and the awarding of college credit. Students should submit the ACE transcript to the Provost's office.
4. **Alternative Route to Certification (ARC)** for M.Ed. program – Students who provide documentation that they have successfully completed Connecticut's Alternative Route to Certification (ARC), or of another state with comparable programming, will automatically receive 6 credits toward their 30-credit degree program. Students who fall into this category are not required to take EDUC 630 (3 credits) and EDUC 635 (3 credits) in the M.Ed. program. ARC completers are required to take all other courses. Documentation must be submitted that includes the following: Completed ED 125 Form with ARC program information, dates of completion, and signatures and a completion letter from ARC-granting institution on the institution's letterhead.
5. **Successful completion of Connecticut's (or another state with comparable programming) Alternative Route to Certification (ARC) program**, including:

Documentation that includes the following:

- i. Completed ED 125 Form with ARC program information, dates of completion, and signatures.
- ii. Completion letter from ARC-granting institution on the institution's letterhead

6. **Portfolio Review** – Assessment by portfolio is a process through which a student demonstrates that college level learning has been acquired through non-college experience. This includes learning acquired from work and life experience, independent reading and study; and/or participation in government, industry, or non-profit organizations. **Please review the Portfolio Guidelines below:**

PORTFOLIO REVIEW GUIDELINES

Assessment by portfolio is a process through which a student demonstrates that college-level learning has been acquired through non-college experience. Portfolio assessment may result in the awarding of credit for specific UB courses within a student's program of study. Credit is granted only for learning that is documented and equivalent to college level learning through the submission of a written portfolio. The portfolio assessment process offers the student an opportunity to review work or life experience in the context of a particular academic course. Credit received from portfolio submission may not be used to satisfy the minimum University 30-hour residency requirement.

What Qualifies as Credit?

The learning from one's life/work experiences must be aligned with each of the specific learning objectives of an academic course. For example, assume that you consider your experience of managing a payroll account at a large corporation over an extended period of time. The fact that you had a variety of responsible roles and duties does not by itself qualify you to receive credit. However, as a result of your experience, you may have acquired knowledge and expertise, as you could have in a college course, the nature of payroll accounting, managerial methods of accounting, corporate administrative procedures, tax and payroll regulations, and systems of human resource management. The specific learning would be explained in the written portfolio narrative.

Cost

A non-refundable portfolio evaluation fee is due upon submission of the portfolio. The fee does not guarantee that credit will be awarded.

Purpose and Function of the Portfolio

- The portfolio represents an organized identification, description, assessment, and self-evaluation of prior learning aligned to each learning objective of a specific academic course.
- The portfolio requires the student to describe and explain his/her acquisition of knowledge and skills in writing.
- The portfolio provides for the documentation or evidence that verifies the occurrence learning experiences, skills attained, and/or product(s) developed.
- The portfolio enables the University to assess, evaluate, and assign academic credit for the student's formal and informal learning. The amount of credit that can be granted depends upon the student's educational and experiential background. The award of credit for experiential learning is directly related to the depth, quality and thoroughness of the portfolio.

The Process of Submitting a Portfolio

- a) Student reviews his/her degree plan with an Academic Advisor and determines if CPL opportunities exist.
- b) If the portfolio method is sought, the student communicates with the **CPL Coordinator** to schedule an orientation; and proceeds to develop a portfolio.
- c) Upon completion of a portfolio, the student pays the evaluation fee to the Bursar and submits the portfolio to the Provost's office.
- d) The Provost's office evaluates the portfolio for compliance with the current Guidelines. A portfolio not in compliance is returned to the student.
- e) Once determined to be in compliance, the Provost submits the portfolio to appropriate faculty and dean for evaluation.
- f) Faculty perform the evaluation and complete a Portfolio Evaluation Form, which is approved by the dean.
- g) The student is informed of the evaluation and receives the Portfolio Evaluation Form with the faculty comments.
- h) The Portfolio Evaluation Form is sent by the dean to the Registrar's Office. Awarded credit is recorded on the student's transcript.
- i) The Portfolio is retained at the Provost's office.

The Contents of a Portfolio

A separate portfolio must be submitted for each course for which credit is sought. Any supplementary materials should be submitted in a manner that protects the material and facilitates evaluation by the faculty evaluators. A student's portfolio must include all of the items listed below in the order shown. The entire portfolio must be submitted in a 3-ring loose-leaf binder. The Narrative must be typewritten or computer generated on standard 8.5 X 11 inch white paper, Times Roman font size 12, and double-spaced. It should describe the learning thoroughly and in depth and include the following:

- 1) Portfolio Application form and a receipt of payment of the Evaluation fee.
- 2) Title Page – Lists student's name and course title for which credit is sought.
- 3) Table of Contents.
Show the page numbers of each major heading to facilitate evaluation; center the page numbers on each page. Each page of the portfolio should be consecutively numbered, beginning with the Table of Contents.

- 4) Course Description – A recent course syllabus is customary and can be obtained from the student’s Dean or academic advisor.
- 5) Narrative – The Narrative is a written statement that serves as a bridge between the course description and the documentary evidence and, as such, is a critical element of a portfolio. The Narrative should be a reflective analysis that identifies and describes the learning resulting from your life/work experiences. The Narrative is the primary evidence of your learning and the key part of your portfolio. You must demonstrate to the faculty that your learning has the characteristics of intellectual challenge, scope and depth, which is comparable in value to those found in academic courses. Note that credit is awarded for the knowledge gained, not for the experience itself, which is no guarantee of learning. Similar to students in academic courses who are asked to provide evidence of their learning through essays and exams, you are asked to provide evidence of knowledge acquired and skills performed that meet the objectives of the academic course. The Narrative should be clear, logical, coherent and well organized. The Narrative must emphasize what you have learned, and not simply a recitation of the details of your experiences or activities. The Narrative should address the following questions: (1) how does the learning from the experience relate to your academic program? (2) How does the learning from the experience relate to your professional goals? And (3) what contribution(s) has the learning from the experience made to your personal development?
- 6) Documentation – The documentation part of the portfolio entails providing the verification that an experience with learning potential occurred—a formal confirmation of your physical presence in an activity, or other evidence that supports your claim that you have gained the knowledge and skills. Evidence of your expertise in a subject may be almost anything, such as; job descriptions, memos, reports, proposals, awards, licenses or certifications. Recordings, artwork, slides, photographs or other documentary evidence may also be included. Evidence must be direct, authentic, of college-level quality and broad enough to warrant an award of credit. The documentary material cannot be returned to the student, therefore, photocopies or duplicates are recommended.

PUBLISH POLICY STATEMENT (CLICK ON BOX NEXT TO OPTION-SELECT ALL THAT APPLY):

- UNIVERSITY CATALOG
- FACULTY HANDBOOK
- STAFF HANDBOOK
- STUDENT HANDBOOK

OFFICES DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY THE POLICY:

Academic Colleges
Registrar’s Office

HISTORY: Adopted by School of Professional Studies, Fall 2014; Revised by Provost Office, Fall 2024

EFFECTIVE DATE:	Fall 2014
RESPONSIBLE OFFICE (ONLY ONE):	Academic Affairs
REVIEW DATE:	Annually

APPENDIX:

CPL Application Form