Northeastern State University

Graduate Prior Learning Assessment

Policy and Procedure

Northeastern State University
PLA Policy and Procedure document cites [OSRHE Policy and Procedures Manual](#) - Reference 3.16

This policy sets standards to award graduate credit earned outside an institution of higher education, usually through life experiences or other non-credit education.

A student may request credit toward a graduate degree for prior learning (CPL). A maximum of seven (7) graduate credit hours can be awarded for prior learning. A graduate program is not required to award prior learning credit. If a program elects to review a request for prior learning credit, the following parameters must be met. NSU only awards credit for prior learning in programs for which it is approved to be offered by the State Regents. NSU assigns its own course title and number to the credit awarded and the neutral grade of pass (P) or satisfactory (S) is utilized to designate credit awarded for prior learning. Conventional letter grades are NOT used. All awarded credit for prior learning is identified by source and method on the transcript. Prior learning credit, once recorded and validated at an institution in the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, is transferable on the same basis as if the credit had been earned through regular study at the awarding institution and subject to the same conditions as other credits from these campuses.

Charges for transcripting prior learning credit are assessed. Please see the Tuition, Fees, Financial Aid page for more information. For more information on prior learning credit, write, call, or email the Office of the Registrar, Northeastern State University, 701 North Grand Avenue, Tahlequah, OK 74464-2399, (918) 444-2208, registrar@nsuok.edu.

Eligibility

1. The student must be admitted to and enrolled in a graduate master's program.

2. Credit awarded to a student for prior learning must be validated by completing six (6) or more semester hours in the graduate program before being placed on the official transcript.

3. The prior learning must be reflected in the enrolled graduate program's curriculum.

4. The prior learning must align with and meet or exceed the course or program learning outcomes for which the credit will be applied.

5. The student must request a prior learning assessment through the NSU Graduate College.

Assessment

1. Prior learning credit may be earned at Northeastern State University through these means:
    a. Standardized examinations.
    b. Degree-relevant prior learning credit awarded and transcripted by other institutions accredited as degree-granting institutions.
    c. Assessment of individual student portfolios using the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) or other standardized guidelines.
    d. Institutionally prepared assessments.
    e. American Council on Education (ACE) Guide to Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Forces, National Guide to College Credit for Workforce Training, and ACE recommendations of college credit by examination, as well as ACE credit recommendations on the Joint Service Transcript and other publications as recommended by ACE.
    f. The University of the State of New York's National College Credit Recommendation Service (CCRS).

2. The program faculty must evaluate the prior learning to determine the applicability and amount of credit. In addition, the prior learning credit must be deemed graduate level by the Program Chair, Department Chair, and Graduate Dean, and must meet or exceed the graduate course or program outcomes and be considered "B" level work or above.

3. If a certification is being used for prior learning, the program may use the certificate as the assessment and may require additional documentation through a portfolio submission. The portfolio must include evidence of certification alignment with course outcomes.

Procedure:

Before beginning the credit for the prior learning process, students must consult the graduate program coordinator to determine if this type of credit is appropriate and, if so, the steps to create/submit a review. If evidence is demonstrated through a portfolio, the portfolio should reflect the primary content of the aligned course syllabus and demonstrate achievement in meeting or exceeding the course learning outcomes. A portfolio could include evidence such as professional development courses, experiential learning, writing samples, certification(s) and/or licensure, etc.

Restrictions:

1. Credit from prior learning will not be awarded for any course a student previously attempted or completed at NSU as a regular or an audit student.

2. Credit cannot equate to more than the course being replaced. (e.g. 3 hours to 3 hours).

3. Students may combine prior learning assessments and transfer work to meet program requirements. However, a student may only apply a total of nine (9) hours of coursework not originating from NSU. Credits awarded from prior learning assessments, coursework transferred from other institutions, and credits earned through a consortium that did not originate from NSU (e.g., cross-registration) do not count as instruction offered by NSU.

4. Prior learning credit cannot be applied for a course if the student previously completed the course with a grade of "C" or lower.

5. Prior learning used to substantiate credit at the undergraduate level cannot be used to substantiate credit at the graduate level.

Appeal

A student may appeal the outcome of the assessment to the Graduate Council. The Graduate Council decision is final.

Appendix 1.A

Rubric for Prior Learning Assessment Portfolio Submissions

Criteria for Satisfactory Grade of Pass: Candidates must score at the minimum level of "satisfactory" in each element of the rubric.

Item	Target	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
SOURCES OF LEARNING (EXPERIENCES)			
Documentation and description of experiences as a basis for PLA portfolio submission as presented in essay.	Essay succinctly narrates and describes the significance of the candidate's relevant learning experiences and establishes the candidate as qualified to write on the subject.	Essay identifies specific learning experiences to establish a connection between the candidate's learning and course content. Details regarding the dates, locations, and context of these experiences are included and are supported in the accompanying documentation.	Essay is vague and includes only a description of experiences without establishing a connection between the candidate's learning and the course content. Details regarding the dates, locations, and context of these experiences are omitted or not supported in the accompanying documentation.
EVIDENCE OF LEARNING (COMPETENCIES)			
Evidence (overall)	Evidence provided demonstrates the candidate has met the course learning outcomes at a mastery level through prior learning.	Evidence provided demonstrates the candidate has met the course learning outcomes at an acceptable proficiency level through prior learning.	Evidence provided shows exposure to content but does <u>not</u> make the case that the writer has met course learning outcomes through prior learning.

Evidence aligned with specific learning outcomes	Candidate evidence of each learning outcome listed in the course description and course syllabus is demonstrated through more than one artifact or multiple means.	Candidate provides adequate and appropriate evidence of each learning outcome listed in the course description and course syllabus.	Candidate evidence is not clearly aligned with specific learning outcomes or evidence lacks performance elements and merely highlights time spent with activities or exposure to concepts with no performance evidence.
QUALITY OF PRESENTATION OF SUBMISSION			
Essay	The essay demonstrates the candidate's mastery and proficiency in learning comparable to the applicable college course.	The essay demonstrates the candidate's learning comparable to the applicable college course.	The essay does not demonstrate the candidate's learning comparable to the applicable college course.
Writing Traits/ Presentation Organization; Grammar/Mechanics; Formatting; Source Integration	Entire submission is coherent and fluid in its presentation and adheres to graduate-level expectations as demonstrated by: • being generally free of errors <u>and</u> • formatting reflects professional writing <u>and</u> • giving credit to resources used in developing evidence (where applicable) <u>and</u> • professionally organized, presented	Entire submission is coherent in its presentation and adheres to graduate-level expectations as demonstrated by: • errors that do not compromise the comprehension of the response <u>and</u> • formatting appropriate with minor errors <u>and</u> • giving credit to resources used in developing evidence (where applicable) <u>and</u> • professionally organized, presented	Some or all of the submission lacks coherence and fails to meet graduate-level expectations as demonstrated by: • serious, persistent errors that compromise the comprehension of the response <u>or</u> • formatting not professional <u>or</u> • not giving credit to resources used in developing evidence (where applicable) <u>or</u> • lacking organization