

**SOUTHERN WEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE**  
**ACADEMICS**  
**SIP-3227**

**SUBJECT:** Credit ~~Based on Experience~~ for Prior Learning

**REFERENCE:** ~~CE: Board of Governors, Associate in Applied Science Degree Completion Program Guidelines (Revised December 2004), LEAP Credit Process SCP-3200, Awarding Credit for Prior Learning; Board of Governors, Associate in Applied Science Program Guidelines (January 2016); Title 135, Procedural Rule, West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education, Series 17, Transferability of Credits and Grades at West Virginia Colleges and Universities; Title 135, Procedural Rule, West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education Series 59, Awarding Undergraduate College Credit for Prior Learning, Advanced Placement Credit, College-Level Examination Program, Nursing Career Pathway, and Micro-Credentials~~

**ORIGINATION:** December 19, 1984

**EFFECTIVE:** October 14, 2010

**REVIEWED:** ~~August 2010~~ September 6, 2024

## **SECTION 1. PURPOSE**

1.1 To establish procedures for awarding of college credit based on life experience for prior college-level learning gained outside the higher education academic environment. The college catalog specifies the number of credit hours for prior learning that can be awarded-

## **SECTION 2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY**

2.1 All employees and students.

## **SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS**

3.1 ~~The term “life experience” is given only for those experiences that produce learning and skills comparable to the outcomes of courses or training at post-secondary levels. As a general principle, if colleges and universities award credits for the acquisition of certain kinds of knowledge and skills by standard course work, then comparable competence acquired in other ways will be credited through this experience assessment process. The basic intent of the program is to make college degree programs reasonably available to adults with work and family responsibilities. Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) – The assessment of college-level learning for college credit gained outside the higher education academic environment.~~

3.1.1. The assessment of prior learning can be accomplished through a variety of assessment methods including, but not limited to the following:

3.1.1.1 Advanced Placement Exams

3.1.1.2 American Council on Education (ACE) Guides

3.1.1.3 College Level Examination (CLEP) Program

3.1.1.4 DANTES Subject Standardized Test (DSST)

3.1.1.5 Excelsior College Examination Program (ECE)

3.1.1.6 Institutional Course Challenge Examination Credit

3.1.1.7 International Baccalaureate Program (IB)

3.1.1.8 Institutional Evaluation of Industry and Workforce Training such as apprenticeships, certification, and licensor

3.1.1.9 Portfolio Assessment/Review Credit

3.1.1.10 Prior Military Training Credit

3.2 Advanced Placement (AP) – A program of college-level courses and exams through which high school students may receive specific college credit by scoring a minimum score of 3 on the Advanced Placement exam. The list of all AP exams and equivalent credit is maintained by the Community and Technical College System of West Virginia.

3.3 College Level Examination Program (CLEP) – CLEP exams are subject-based and are designed to measure knowledge of specific undergraduate courses. The student must achieve a score equal to or above the required score of the Commission on Education Credit and Credentials of the American Council on Education for CLEP exams current at the time the exam was taken. If the institution offers no equivalent course, the credit shall be considered elective credit.

3.4 Challenging a Course/Credit by Examination – Challenge Exams are created and administered by academic divisions that offer the course. The exam is constructed to allow the student to demonstrate mastery of the learning outcomes of the course. To receive credit, the student must earn a minimum score of 70% or higher on the challenge exam.

3.5 Portfolio Assessment/Credit by Experience – College-level academic credit may be granted through portfolio review for work or life experiences that are equivalent to course work that meets the requirements for their degree program.

3.5.1 Students enrolled in the Board of Governors Adult Degree Completion Associate in Applied Science may petition for credit for individual courses (100 and 200 level), as well as block credit as advised by the Adult Degree Completion Program Director. No limit is applied to the number of credit hours that may be awarded through the portfolio review process.

3.6 Articulation of Credit through Licensure/Certification – Under certain conditions, students may be awarded college-level credit for courses through current licensure and/or certification related to course content covered in courses offered.

## **SECTION 4. PROCEDURE**

4.1 Under certain conditions a person may receive credit for past experiences, provided that those experiences are related to material content normally covered in a course or courses offered by Southern. An experience does not necessarily have to be work experience to be considered. Qualifying experience does not necessarily have to be paid to be considered but should be of a nature that is verifiable, relevant, and extensive or consistent enough to show competence for the course subject matter.

## **SECTION 5. BACKGROUND OR EXCLUSIONS**

5.1 Assessment of experience for credit is a detailed and laborious process, and results vary from student to student. As such these assessments are conducted only for students who have been admitted to Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College. Advisory assessments are not made. Since the experience of individuals is so diverse, there is no manual or guide that may be consulted to obtain probable estimates about awards of credit.

## SECTION 6. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 6.1 The evaluation of student competence is made by teaching faculty. College faculty make judgments about the quality and value of the work their students regularly submit. These same faculty members are asked to review the statements and documentation of a student seeking credit equivalency, and where appropriate, to interview the student, and then to make a recommendation for an award of credit only in those areas in which the faculty member has been trained and regularly teaches.

The quality of evaluation of a student's work should be quite comparable to that of traditional or standard programs, since the same academic personnel make the judgements in this program as in standard course and/or program offerings. The faculty making the evaluation may be as demanding or as lenient as they feel appropriate. The ~~Dean~~~~Department Chair~~ responsible for the certificate or degree program, the faculty, and the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) or his/her designee share the general responsibility of seeing that academic standards are maintained and, at least as important, that the adult student receives a fair evaluation and an award of credit that does justice to the concept of college learning.

## SECTION 7. RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

~~7.1 After admission to Southern, the student who wishes an assessment to be conducted prepares a detailed and documented portfolio of his or her adult learning experiences that are to be evaluated. (Board of Governors Associate in Applied Science Adult Degree Completion Program students must complete EL 201, Portfolio Development, as part of this process.) The student will also pay a \$300 portfolio review fee and complete form SIP 3227.A, Credit Petition for Experiential Learning, for each course petitioned upon submission of the portfolio to the Director of Adult Experiential Learning. Fees for evaluation of the portfolio must be paid prior to the assessment process. Advanced Placement (AP) – a student seeking credit for AP exams must submit a copy of the AP score report from College Board or a final high school transcript on which the AP score is listed to the campus Records Office. A credit (CR) grade will be given for AP exams with a score of 3 or higher and transcribed on the student's transcript. The list of all AP exams and equivalent credits is maintained by the Community and Technical College System of WV.~~

~~7.1~~

~~7.2 The Dean for University Transfer will forward the portfolio submission to the appropriate Department Chair, who then submits the document to the faculty of the appropriate academic department or disciplines. The faculty member chosen to make a specific evaluation is instructed, where necessary, by the Department Chair about the procedures to be followed. Normally the teaching faculty of Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College will make these evaluations. If the student's experience being assessed lies outside the professional competence of Southern's faculty, the Dean for University Transfer will request a competent individual from another institution or another expert to make the evaluation. College Level Examination Program (CLEP) – a student seeking credit for CLEP exams must submit a copy of the CLEP score report from College Board to the campus Records Office. A credit (CR) grade will be given for CLEP exams with a score equal to or above the required score of the Commission on Education Credit and Credentials of the American Council on Education. There is no fee charged to transcribe the credit.~~

~~7.2~~

~~7.3 The Dean for University Transfer function is to provide general instructions to the student as a guide to preparing the portfolio and to assign credit petitions to appropriate divisions or recruit other experts to review the material submitted. It is also the Dean for University Transfer role to advise division chairs of all previous and concurrent evaluation and recommendations of credit, so that faculty evaluators from similar or related areas do not recommend duplicate credit. Challenging a Course/Credit by Examination – a student interested in challenging a course must contact the Dean of the division for that course by the end of the third week of the academic term in which the student plans to take the challenge exam. The student must submit a *Prior Learning Assessment Form SIP 3227.A* to the Dean or designee. The exam must be taken prior to the final~~

date to withdraw from a full-term course in that academic term. No student may challenge a course more than once, and may not challenge a course in which a grade other than “W” or “AU” was received previously.

7.3.1 A full-time faculty member within the discipline to which the course belongs will prepare, administer, and grade the comprehensive challenge exam. The faculty member will complete and submit a a *Prior Learning Assessment Form SIP 3227.A* for appropriate signatures after the exam has been graded.

7.3.2 To receive a credit (CR) grade for the course being challenged, the student must earn a score of 70% or higher.

7.3.3 A non-refundable posting fee of \$10 per credit hour per course is assessed for this service prior to taking the exam. The fee must be submitted to the campus Bursar’s Office or designee.

### 7.3

### 7.4

The Department Chair will assign a faculty member in each appropriate field in which the student is requesting credit to evaluate the student’s experience as documented through the portfolio. The faculty member chosen to make a specific evaluation is instructed, where necessary, by the Department Chair about the procedures to be followed. Portfolio Assessment/Credit by Experience – a student interested in submitting a portfolio of life experiences for college credit must contact the Dean of the division for that course. The Dean will begin the portfolio examination process by completing a a *Prior Learning Assessment Form SIP 3227.A* and assigning a faculty member to review the portfolio.

7.4.1 A full-time faculty member within the discipline to which the course belongs will review the statements and documentations of the student seeking credit, and where appropriate, interview the student, then make a recommendation for an award of credit only in those areas in which the faculty member has been trained and/or regularly teaches. The faculty member will list the recommended credit on the Prior Assessment Form, then submit for appropriate signatures after the portfolio review.

7.4.2 After recommendation of credit has been given, the Registrar’s Office or designee will transcribe the course equivalent, the credit hours recommended, and the credit (CR) grade on the student’s transcript.

7.4.3 A non-refundable portfolio evaluation fee of \$300 is assessed for this service prior to submitting the portfolio. A posting fee of \$10 per credit hour is payable upon award of credit and must be paid before the Registrar’s Office will post the credit to the transcript. The fee must be submitted to the campus Bursar’s Office or designee.

7.4.4 A student in the Board of Governors Associate in Applied Science Adult Degree Completion Program must complete EL 201, Portfolio Development as part of this process.

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7.5 \_\_\_\_\_ 7.5 The faculty member may request an interview with the student. The purpose of an interview is to allow the faculty member making the evaluation the opportunity to verify, in an appropriate manner, the information in the portfolio and to secure additional information from the student or other sources about the experiences described in the portfolio. Also, if there are original works of art, voluminous published materials or other bulky materials to be presented as supporting evidence, these would normally be brought to an interview

rather than submitted with the portfolio. The purpose of the interview is not to dispense with a well-prepared written portfolio, since a written record of the evidence on which the award of credit is based is preserved in the student's permanent file in the Registrar's office. Articulation of Credit through Licensure/Certification – a student interested in submitting specific license or certifications for college credit must contact the Dean of the division for that course. The review of submitted documentation and recommendation of credit are the responsibility of the Dean.

7.5.1 The Dean should provide the recommendation of equivalent college credit and credit hours to the Registrar's Office or designee by college email. A copy of the licensure or certification must be attached to the email. The credit (CR) grade will be transcribed on the student's transcript.

7.5.2 A non-refundable posting fee of \$10 per credit hour payable upon award of credit and must be paid before the Registrar's Office will post the credit to the transcript. The fee must be submitted to the campus Bursar's Office or designee.

7.6 The faculty member making the evaluation may seek additional information about the student's knowledge and abilities through the Dean for University Transfer, directly from the student, or from persons knowledgeable about the student's achievements. The faculty member is free to defer a credit recommendation until the student's written materials are completed to satisfaction. If the faculty evaluator requires additional information, the student will have 30 days in which to provide the additional information. Appeals - The student has the right of appeal if the awarding of academic credit seems unreasonably low or is denied; however, the request for a second evaluation must be made in writing to the Dean 10 working days from the date on the email notification sent to the student. The Dean will forward this request and documentation to the CAO or his/her designee. A final decision will be made in consultation with the faculty evaluator, Dean, and CAO or his/her designee. No portfolio may be submitted more than twice for consideration including the original submission. If submitting a portfolio for a second evaluation, the student may elect to submit additional information to strengthen the petition.

7.6

7.7 Although comparable in some ways to proficiency testing, the process of evaluation employed is performed through a review of the portfolio, rather than by testing. However, if the student prefers, he or she is free to demonstrate knowledge of specific academic fields by taking various standardized tests, such as those offered through CLEP and similar programs, or challenge exams for specific courses.

7.8 After the faculty member has completed the evaluation, he or she makes a recommendation for an award of credit on form SIP-3227.A, Credit Petition for Experiential Learning. The evaluator can award the full number of credit hours petitioned, partial credit, or no credit. The preferred method of recommendation is to equate the student's competencies with actual courses listed in the institution's curriculum. However, since this is not always possible, the recommendation may be made in terms of block credit in particular area.

7.9 After a faculty member's recommendation for credit is made, the Department Chair reviews it and makes a recommendation to the CAO or his/her designee for approval or denial of the credit recommended by the faculty member. Form SIP-3227.A is returned to the Dean for University Transfer until the entire portfolio is evaluated, at which time all credit awards are submitted to the CAO or his/her designee.

7.10 The actual awarding of academic credit for life experience is made by the CAO or his/her designee. After the approval has been given, the Office of the Registrar is officially notified of the award of credit, and this award is entered into the student's permanent record. The Registrar's office will notify the student in writing of the outcome of this evaluation. A grade of "CR" (credit) is provided for any credit petition granted.

7.11 The appropriate posting fees must be processed and paid before the Registrar shall affix the awarded credit to the student's transcript.

7.12 The student has the right of appeal if the awarding of academic credit seems unreasonably low or is denied;

however, the request for a second evaluation must be made in writing to the Dean for University Transfer within 10 working days of the date on the notification letter sent to the student. The Dean for University Transfer will forward this request and documentation to the CAO or his/her designee. A final decision will be made in consultation with the faculty evaluator, department chair, and CAO or his/her designee. No portfolio may be submitted more than twice for consideration including the original submission. If submitting a portfolio for a second evaluation, the student may elect to submit additional information to strengthen the petition.

~~7.13 For a variety of reasons, no timetable for completing student evaluations can be set in advance. In some cases, individual evaluations may require as much as a whole semester to complete because a student may be requesting credit under the auspices of several academic divisions, his/her experiences fall into several disciplines or because experts from outside the institution must be contacted to make the evaluations. Although every reasonable effort will be made to proceed expeditiously, students should not assume that the evaluation can be completed in a few weeks or even a few months. Normally the final decision will be made in one semester, although in some complex cases, an evaluation may take more than one semester~~

## SECTION 8. CANCELLATION

8.1 ~~None.~~ Cancels SCP-3214, College Board Advanced Placement Credit, SIP-3188, College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), and SCP-3201, Challenging a Course/Credit by Examination, SCP-3201.A, Challenge Examination Request Form, and SCP-3201.B, Challenge Examination Results Form.

## SECTION 9. REVIEW STATEMENT

9.1 This procedure shall be reviewed on a regular basis with a time frame for review to be determined by the President or the President's designee. Upon such review, the President or President's designee may recommend to the Board that the procedure be amended or repealed.

**Attachments:** SIP-3227.A

**Distribution:** All employees of Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College via [www.intranet.southernwv.edu](http://www.intranet.southernwv.edu)

**Revision Notes:** November 2010 — Revisions reflect no substantial changes in procedure or documentation requirements. Revisions provide clarity and reflect changes in management responsibilities. Form was streamlined. The policy SCP-3227 was rescinded by the Board of Governors to become a unit procedure on October 14, 2010.

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January 2023-Reflect the update to SCP 3200, Awarding College Credit for Prior Learning in November 2021. Provides procedures for multiple Prior Learning Assessment opportunities in one specific college procedure.

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September 2024-Updated to combine all Prior Learning Assessment in one specific procedure and to update titles.