

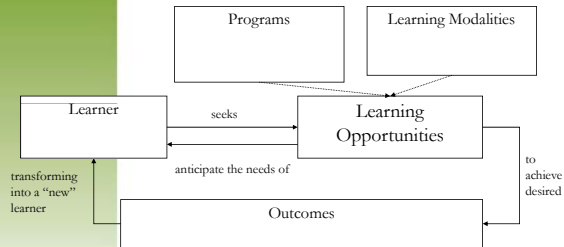
6.5 Transfer Articulation 911

What about Prior Learning?

- Welcome
- Introductions of Panelists

6.5 Transfer Articulation 911

The Continuum of Learning



6.5 Transfer Articulation 911

Variety of methods to grant credits for experiential learning

- Articulation
- CLEP
- Challenge exams
- DANTES
- ACE credits
- PONSI
- Prior Learning Assessment or Credits

6.5 Transfer Articulation 911

Advantages

- Increase access to college programs
- Decrease graduation time; saves students money
- Eliminates unnecessary or repetitive learning
- Recognizes skills and knowledge acquired outside traditional classroom settings

6.5 Transfer Articulation 911

Student considerations

- Student commitment
- Determine appropriate route to obtain credit
- Not "free" credit, cost in time and money, may not transfer
- Rigor of documenting experiential learning
- Portfolio, completion by student
- Portfolio, assessment by institution

6.5 Transfer Articulation 911

Advantages to Institutions

- Recruitment
- Encourages student persistence
- Increases graduation rates
- Meets the needs of adult learners

6.5 Transfer Articulation 911

Models and processes

- Grand Rapids Community College
- Central Michigan University
- Rochester College

Grand Rapids Community College

Prior Learning Assessment
at GRCC

Grand Rapids Community College

PLA- Quantifying Learning to Credit

- Grand Rapids Community College has developed a system to evaluate prior learning in a non-academic setting and grant credit for that learning
- PLA credit will be available for Technology area classes beginning winter semester 2007

Why PLA at GRCC?

- Increase access to college programs and decrease graduation time
- Eliminate unnecessary repeated learning
- Recognize respect for skills and knowledge acquired outside traditional classroom settings
- Award academic credit for college level learning which leads to degrees

GRCC's PLA

- Credit will be granted for a specific learning – not a life experience
- Credit will be granted for classes that do not have standardized tests available
- GRCC may accept PLA credits from accredited institutions
- PLA fee - \$150 regardless of subject or evaluator

PLA Student Information

- Students identify class for which they are requesting PLA credit
- Students receive an information sheet which includes portfolio suggestions
- Students pay for PLA credit and then submit portfolio for review
- Student may earn up to 45 PLA credits
- Students may appeal the evaluation
- Students are responsible for determining whether their PLA credits will transfer to other institutions

PLA Evaluator Process

- Evaluator selected based on knowledge and qualifications of a subject
- If a full time evaluator is not available adjunct faculty with appropriate knowledge and qualifications will be assigned
- Evaluator will submit a written evaluation to student following evaluation of portfolio
- Evaluator will submit completed grade forms to the Registrar's Office

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT:

College Credit Awarded for Knowledge Gained Through Employment, Training, and Life Experiences
as
Self-assessed Within a Portfolio

Introduction to Prior Learning Assessment

- History
 - CMU began offering portfolio evaluation options in the 1970's for military personnel throughout the world
 - Over 8,500 portfolios have been evaluated by CMU faculty

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Eligibility

- Undergraduate students
- Graduate students
 - Maximum of 7 years to a graduate degree
 - Time begins with date of the undergraduate degree or 7 years, whichever is shorter

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- Philosophy
 - Competency v. course challenge model
 - College level learning occurs in many settings

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- Graduate students must express (write) an analysis of what they *learned* and how they apply this knowledge in the work environment
- Learning may be assessed from work, training, and/or life experiences

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- Philosophy (cont.)
 - The written expression of the learning (the self assessment) must be presented in grammatically correct, paragraph format
 - The length of employment and/or number of hours in training determine the maximum possible credits (ACE guidelines)
 - The quality of the self assessment determines the actual credits awarded

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- College Level Learning must be clearly presented in the self-assessment
 - Undergraduate students may earn credits at the lower division (297) or upper division (497) levels
 - Graduate students may earn credits at the 697 level (UNV 697)


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- No credit is earned for observations, experiences, or trainings without the supporting self assessment of the related learning
- The self assessment for a must indicate a value judgment and/or synthesis of the learning
- All learning claimed must be verified through appropriate documentation



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Application and Evaluation Process

- Early advisement
 - Meet with an academic advisor for assistance in determining the potential use of prior learning credits on the degree or certification program
- Acquire the PL handbook and CD
- Credits awarded
 - Undergraduate students may apply a maximum of 60 prior learning credits towards a degree
 - Graduate students – limited to 10 credits
 - 5 credits from CMU must be posted on the transcript before prior learning credits may be posted
 - Graduate level – prior learning credits are not normally counted in place of core courses


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- Portfolio submission – overview
 - Carefully check the guidelines and complete the checklist to assure all information is included
 - Submit two copies of the portfolio and keep one for yourself
 - Cost – there is a one-time fee of \$100 for the initial evaluation, one re-evaluation, and any additional submissions. The cost for credits to be placed on the transcript is \$75 per credit hour


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- Assessment process (9-10 weeks)
 - Random portfolios are selected for verification of the documentation, etc
 - Three evaluators assess each portfolio independently (2 team evaluators and the graduate coordinator)
 - Acquired skills and competencies are identified, as well as the quality and thoroughness of the self-assessment
 - Evaluators do not look for CMU course equivalency
 - Number of credits awarded are based on the competencies described and demonstrated
 - ACE guidelines determine the maximum number of credits possible for time on the job

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COMPETENCY TITLES AWARDED DEPEND ON THE NATURE OF THE EXPERIENCE, THE LEARNING THAT WAS SELF-ASSESSED, AND THE RELATIONSHIP TO THE WORK RESPONSIBILITIES

THE NUMBER OF CREDITS AWARDED ARE DETERMINED BY THE MONTHS OF EMPLOYMENT AND THE QUALITY OF THE SELF-ASSESSMENT

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Questions to be answered for Each IV Tab:

A. Discuss fully the nature of the work experience and what you learned from it. A weak self-assessment will *not* support a grant of credit. Include in your discussion:

1. A full description of the responsibilities involved in this employment position;
2. A detailed explanation of the *new* skills and knowledge which evolved from the experience (do not forget to include learning of technical, interpersonal, or organizational skills);
3. A detailed explanation of how your knowledge and skills improved during the period you were in a particular position;
4. A detailed explanation of how, while in that position, you applied learning obtained from educational experiences or in-job training. (If these experiences are included in your portfolio, identify the section numbers of each.)

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Documentation to be provided for Each IV Tab:

B. The supporting documentation from the employer regarding a work experience must* include:

1. Job description(s);
2. Verification of employment dates;
3. Letters from superiors;
4. Annual performance evaluations;
5. Any other relevant data.

* If specific documentation is not included, an explanation for its absence must be provided on the portfolio checklist.

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Training Experience

This section includes training required by an employer as well as courses and workshops attended to gain new skills or knowledge beyond those directly associated with work responsibilities.

Length of time may vary from as few as 4 hours to over 200 hours. The details in the self assessment should correspond to the length of time.

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Life Experience

Any experience that does not fit into work or training experiences may be appropriate for this section.

The experience must be for a significant period of time, such as a minimum of 2 years for leisure pursuits.

Typically these experiences receive the least amount of credit.

These experiences are the most difficult to self-assess and evaluate.

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Additional Thoughts

- As with any college level course, the effort put into the development of a quality self-assessment will be reflected in the credits awarded
- A three credit hour collegiate course requires work on the part of the student; a portfolio requires an equivalent amount of work/time
- Enjoy the process!

Portfolio process at RC

An assessment and evaluation process for the quantity and quality of past learning for the possible granting of credit for learning that is determined to be "college-level"

Why Nontraditional Credit?

- 1) Honors the adult student's life experiences; recognizes that learning occurs in variety of settings
- 2) Helps the student to finish efficiently
- 3) Avoids duplication of college-level learning

Are there other avenues for this credit?

- CLEP, DANTES
- Professional Schools & Training (PST)
 - PONS
 - ACE
 - Pre-Approved Educational Credit
(ex. Basic Real Estate License=3 semester credits)

Rochester College

120 hour degree can include 60 hours of nontraditional credit

- Limit of 30 hours PST & Test credit
- Limit of 30 hours of portfolio
- Very rare to obtain full amount outside of military experience
- Average portfolio 6-12 credits
- If you are thinking of using this avenue for one class- take the class!

Rochester College

Course Challenge Approach

- Knowledge and experience must find a match in course catalog of a regionally accredited college
- Students must demonstrate reasonable mastery of objectives of the chosen course.
- Conservative approach in order to preserve degree integrity in light of limited resources

Rochester College


Experience alone cannot explain your knowledge

Students must include:

1. Description of knowledge gained
2. Explanation of the experience through which knowledge was gained
3. Description of learning outcomes
4. Evidence of conceptualization and generalization of knowledge


In other words...

Rochester College



What they have learned
↓
How they learned what they learned
↓
What basic trends, concepts, and patterns were identified
↓
What basic principles can be extended to other situations


Rochester College



Five sections of a portfolio

- 1. Introductory letter; petition for credit
- 2. Resume
- 3. Chronological Record
- 4. Prior Learning Papers
- 5. Documentation

Rochester College



Evaluation Process

- Portfolio is checked for formatting and grammar issues
- Portfolio is submitted to evaluator who evaluates according to specific criteria
- Student does not meet with evaluator
- Student may receive full, partial, or no credit. Evaluator may ask for more information

Rochester College

Posting of Credit

- If approved, credit will be posted after the first semester and before the last semester
- Student will be billed for workshop, credit transcription fee, and evaluator fees at that time
- Credit is posted to transcript as nontraditional credit
- Credit may or may not transfer
- Portfolios from other colleges may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Portfolio must be resubmitted for evaluation by Rochester personnel.

Rochester College

Challenges & Reward

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. More training & resources needed B. Variation among schools negatively impacts transfer C. Students enter with gross misperceptions about the process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Confusion between PLA & ACE credit b. Students are surprised by the effort required to complete portfolio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Students report gains in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. critical view of self as learner b. organizational skills c. written communication skills d. learning confidence e. awareness of learning in everyday life (Brown, 2002) B. More efficient use of time needed for degree completion
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Rochester College

Evaluator Training

- tenured faculty
- 1 to 2 years of training
- undergraduate and graduate portfolios
- emphasis on consistency
- inter-rater reliability

6.5 Transfer Articulation 911

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