

## **Main Street Credits**

Earning College Credit for What You Know

# **FACULTY FAQs FOR PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT**

### **What are Main Street Credits?**

During their life time adults often acquire learning that may be of college-level quality and may be able to receive college credit for their prior learning. Sources of college-level learning include on-the-job training, employer and workforce training, volunteer experiences, independent study. Veteran's need to check with the Veteran's counselor to have their military service evaluated. Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) refers to the methods used to evaluate whether prior learning meets college-level standards. One way a student can demonstrate their learning for credit is by creating a portfolio to be reviewed by a faculty assessor.

### **What is a Portfolio of prior learning?**

A portfolio is documentation of a student's past learning which has been prepared and presented by you to the college as part of a petition requesting credit for learning outside of a college classroom. A faculty assessor(s) will be appointed to review your portfolio for college credit.

### **How many credits can be earned through the portfolio process?**

The maximum amount of credit a student can earn through PLA is 24.

### **Does financial aid apply to credit earned by portfolio?**

Financial aid cannot be used towards any form of PLA including the portfolio.

### **How long should it take for the student to develop a portfolio?**

The Portfolio method is likely the most time consuming. Together the student and you as the faculty PLA assessor will determine the appropriate amount of time for you to complete the Portfolio. The amount of credit the student is seeking and schedules are some of the things that will be considered.

### **Do students earn credit for their experience?**

It is important to note that credit should only be awarded for the student's knowledge and not their experience.

### **What is my first step in the Portfolio process with a student?**

The student must complete the "Request for Experiential Learning Credits" form and submit it to the VPAA. Once approved the student will make an appointment to meet with their faculty assessor.

## **How does a student demonstrate their learning within the portfolio?**

There should be a balance between theory and practical application included in order to award credit.

Faculty should provide students with a written document of the learning outcomes and/or competencies of the course for which the student will need to demonstrate their knowledge.

## **How should a portfolio be structured?**

A course shell specifically for PLA by portfolio has been set up in Blackboard. Components to a portfolio should include:

- Title Page
- Table of contents
- List of skills/competencies.
- Essay describing their learning
- Verification letter of their learning
- Other Documents representing their learning
- Bibliography

For more information on the portfolio process refer to the Faculty Guide to portfolio assessment.

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