

Department of Labor Health e-Workforce Consortium

Health eWorkforce Consortium Prior Learning Assessment Resources

Led by Bellevue College, the Health eWorkforce Consortium was formed to elevate Health Information Technology workforce development locally and nationally and provide career paths into this promising field for veterans and others.

The nine-college consortium includes Bellevue College, Bellingham Technical College, Clark College, Clover Park Technical College, Northern Virginia Community College, Pierce College, Renton Technical College, Spokane Community College, and Whatcom Community College. The Health Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) is also a primary partner.



Prior Learning Assessment Resources

One of the goals of the Health eWorkforce Consortium (<http://hiteducation.org/dol-taa-ccct-health-e-workforce-consortium/>), funded by a Department of Labor TAA-CCCT grant, is to advance best practices in **Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)** both within the Consortium and at the institutional level.

In addition to advancing PLA best practices, the Consortium developed the **Employer’s Military Skill Locator** (<http://emsl.hiteducation.org/>) tool to encourage and expedite veteran hiring and assist colleges with assignment of prior learning credit based on military experience. It answers the often asked question “What military occupation is most like the job I want to fill with a veteran?”

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Background: Getting Started on Prior Learning Assessment

What is prior learning?

According to The Council for Adult & Experiential Learning (CAEL), the long-time guiding policy body working in the area, PLA is “a term used to describe learning gained outside a traditional academic environment. Put another way, it’s learning and knowledge your students acquire while living their lives: working, participating in employer training programs, serving in the military, studying independently, volunteering or doing community service, and studying open source courseware.”

PLA is the evaluation and assessment of an individual’s life learning for college credit, certification, or advanced standing toward further education or training.

Why is it important?

When people receive college credit for what they know from life and work experience, they earn their degrees and credentials faster, saving money on tuition. Research shows that this can lead to improved retention and completion rates. Students also learn the value of their experience, which gives them confidence to complete their degrees. Prior Learning Assessment is about using tools and methods to measure work experience, and assess what college credit they might gain from this experience. PLA was specifically mentioned by our funder as an important area of focus in TAA grants. We’ve pledged to develop and implement best practices in PLA at all Consortium colleges. In CAEL’s 2012 College Productivity Report, they wrote:

“According to Lumina Foundation, the U.S. needs to educate nearly 800,000 more college graduates each year from now until 2025 to meet the growing needs of the workforce. Increased enrollment in—and successful completion of—postsecondary learning programs is critical to achieving that goal. Prior learning assessment, or PLA, can help more workers complete training and degree programs sooner by giving them college credit for knowledge and competencies they’ve gained outside of the classroom. PLA can save students time and money, and the boost in credit-earning might also have a motivating effect for some students. CAEL’s multi-institutional study, “Fueling the Race to Postsecondary Success” found that **“students with PLA credits were 2.5 times more likely to persist to graduation than students without PLA credits.”**

Additionally, Washington State, in addition to other states, has made this a priority. Here is more info from CAEL and Washington State regarding the details:

“In 2010, the Washington State Legislature passed a bill that required the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) to work with other stakeholders to develop policies for awarding academic credit for experiential learning. Other stakeholders included the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, business leaders and representatives from higher education institutions. It was the intent of the legislature that transparent policies be developed



and that PLA activities be consistently applied at all Washington institutions of higher learning. A consultative workgroup met and focused its initial work on inventorying current PLA practices. In late 2010 a report was submitted to the legislature with proposed policies and procedures.”

Legislation in 2011, and reaffirmed in 2012 by ESSHB 2483

(<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/summary.aspx?bill=2483&year=2011>) was direct in its approach. It required the HECB, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Council of Presidents, the four-year institutions of higher education, the private independent higher education institutions, and the private career schools to work together to achieve the following goals:

- Increase the number of students who receive PLA credits
- Increase the number and type of PLA credits that count toward a major or earn a degree, certificate or credential, while ensuring quality
- Develop transparent PLA policies and practices in awarding academic credit for prior learning
- Create PLA tools to develop faculty and staff and share exemplary policies and practices
- Develop articulation agreements
- Develop outcome measures to track progress on goals

ESSHB 2483 defined Prior Learning as “the knowledge and skills gained through work and life experience; through military training and experience; and through formal and informal education and training from in-state and out-of-state institutions including foreign institutions.”

Pursuant to the legislation, the PLA working group, which is coordinated by the HECB and the SBCTC, has been meeting quarterly to address the goals in the legislation. Its first achievement was to create a directory of principal points of contact at each Washington higher education institution who have responsibility for PLA services. In a 2010 survey, fewer than half of the institutions reported a PLA point of contact. This new directory has helped to create more accountability at each institution and increase accessibility to PLA services for students.”

The revisions are based on the following principles:

- Students should consistently be awarded the maximum amount of college-level credit for prior learning which meets the college’s standards, as appropriate for the student’s educational and career path.
- Colleges and universities should retain the responsibility for assessing prior learning.
- Practices used in assessing prior learning should be consistent with outcomes assessment methodology used in other areas at colleges and universities

PLA serves veterans

The benefits of expanding PLA for veterans are many. Men and women gain extensive training, experience and knowledge in the military, but these skills and training are not always recognized in the college setting, or in industry. PLA is a method and a process that can help move that needle.



PLA can provide valuable benefits for veterans:

- PLA provides substantive, measured recognition of the skills and training earned in the military, shortening the path to a successful career transition.
- PLA can provide a path from military service to education and civilian careers.
- Providing PLA credits for veterans reduces the amount of VA education benefits needed to complete their certificate or degree. This allows veterans to use the benefits for additional education later if they choose.

In addition to grant requirements to better serve our veterans through our work, including Prior Learning Assessment, in February of 2014, the State of Washington passed SSB 5969. This new legislation requires that:

“Each public institution of higher education (in Washington State) (must) adopt a policy to award academic credit to individuals for certain military training courses or programs before December 31, 2015. Academic credit awarded for prior military training must be granted only for training that is applicable to a student’s certificate or degree requirements.”

Each Washington State public institution of higher education must:

- Adopt a procedure for receiving the necessary documentation to identify and verify the military training course or program that an individual is claiming for academic credit;
- Provide a copy of their policy to award academic credit for military training to any applicants who listed prior or present military service in their application; and
- Develop and maintain a list of military training courses and programs that qualify for academic credit.
- Submit its policy for awarding academic credit for military training to the PLA workgroup.

What are we required to do on this grant regarding PLA?

We have a commitment to advance PLA processes and procedures at the HeW Consortium institutions and implement best practices for all individuals and for military veterans in particular.



Promoting PLA

Setting up PLA – the basics

Below are general descriptions of suggested steps required when offering PLA at any college. A successful PLA process should include all of the 7 items below. These are not exclusive or definitive, they're just general guidelines to be considered for successful implementation and administration of Prior Learning Assessment delivery.

Transparency and communication

Information about credit for prior learning is often not readily available and apparent to new or prospective students at many colleges, or for that matter, to many staff and faculty.

- Students must be informed early in the application and admissions process that Credit for Prior learning exists, and the resources available so they can learn more.
- Staff and faculty must also be made aware of Prior Learning resources on campus, how it works, where to send students, as well as related web, phone and email contact information for PLA.

Action steps:

- ✓ Create written information about PLA processes on your campus (target audience should be students).
- ✓ Use PLA documentation from HeW Consortium as a resource.
- ✓ Disseminate PLA information to/educate advisors, admissions staff, and prospective students.
- ✓ Work with your college to have PLA information is posted on the admissions web page.

PLA point of contact

CAEL and the State of Washington BOTH recommend a single PLA point of contact on campus.

- In most cases, the point of contact for students, faculty and staff for PLA is the same.
- However, if there are different people who handle this, it is important to delineate contacts and responsibilities. For example, the main PLA contact might work with staff and faculty, or even vetted students, but there might be another student-facing PLA contact providing basic information on the program.

Action steps:

- ✓ Help establish or identify the PLA contact at your institution, and obtain contact information.
- ✓ If multiple staff are involved in PLA on your campus, document their respective responsibilities and contact information.

Informational process

The PLA contact should provide basic PLA information to interested students to help them evaluate whether or not they might qualify, and which type of PLA to pursue.

Action steps:

- ✓ Check with PLA contact and interested students to determine that process is working for everyone.



Application process

A PLA contact works one-on-one with student to assist them in selecting and applying for PLA.

- The PLA contact meets with the student to evaluate what PLA process might best suit their situation (if any) and any limitations, costs or other challenges the student might face (example: the college does not offer challenge test for certain classes or there is an additional cost for certain evaluations).
- The PLA contact will suggest the best course of action for the student.
- The student will fill out the PLA application, and pay fee (if required). Working with the PLA contact, the student will proceed to the next steps.

Action steps:

- ✓ Ensure that the standard PLA process is documented and reflects reality.
- ✓ Create written information for students, documenting the options and the process (or update existing materials).

Evaluation process

The PLA contact will provide a clear list of evaluation options, requirements, costs and outcomes. The PLA point of contact will describe the PLA processes available and make suggestions on path forward.

- Which standardized exams are accepted at your college? These may include AP Exams, CLEP Exams (<https://clep.collegeboard.org/>), DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST Exams) (<http://getcollegecredit.com/>), and others.
- Evaluation of corporate and military training on ACE transcripts.
- Program evaluations, usually performed by department faculty, to measure specific training from other sources and its applicability to intended coursework.
- Challenge exams, or customized exams offered to verify learning achievement.
- Individualized student portfolios or portfolio assessments, conducted by your college or CAEL's LearningCounts.org, a national online prior learning assessment service.

Action steps:

- ✓ Use PLA materials provided as a guideline.
- ✓ If a clear process exists, document it.
- ✓ If a clear process does not exist, work with college staff to create and document an effective process.
- ✓ Create written materials for students outlining the evaluation process.



Submission process

The PLA contact will assist students in submitting portfolios, materials, taking tests or whatever else is necessary.

- The PLA contact will assist the students in checking their materials (if necessary) before submission.
- The PLA contact will inform the student of all costs associated with submittal.
- The PLA contact will outline next steps, including dates and time frames for checking about credit.
- The PLA contact will outline any additional cost, and inform the student of all outcomes and rules.

Action steps:

- ✓ Follow up with the PLA contact and students to learn about barriers to success, and try to work with both to facilitate a smooth process.

Follow-up process

The PLA contact will follow up to check to learn the results of the student's progress.

Action steps:

- ✓ Check with PLA contact and students on follow-up.



Implementation Strategies

Identify and organize

Identify methods for PLA currently in use on your campus, and organize materials for use. Examples might include:

- CLEP/DANTES (DSST) and other standardized tests
- Challenge tests
- Industry and Military Crosswalks
- Portfolios

Improve and enhance

Evaluate if current methods can be improved, reevaluated or expanded upon. Identify new PLA strategies.

- CLEP and DSST review. Reevaluate CLEP and DSST tests to see if more and/or different tests can be used.
- Challenge test evaluation. Review ideas around creating new challenge tests, or using challenge tests from other sources.
- Form a PLA workgroup to foster and evaluate competency based learning, PLA and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), or other newer models of credit and learning.

Coordinate and share

Pull together campus PLA resources, and share them via web and other methods.

- Create a website and other materials to coordinate campus PLA offerings and policies, including links, flyers, contact info, etc.
- Group sections based on common usage and practices, such as CLEP and DSST tests, AP and IB challenge tests, or portfolios.
- Create materials to educate students and staff on campus offerings.

Manage and measure

Assign staff to manage student, testing and faculty interactions around PLA.

- Act as contact for students interested in obtaining PLA, and as the go-between between students and departments, including testing.
- Work with PLA workgroup to inform staff and faculty of progress and challenges.
- Promote PLA across campus to both student and faculty groups.
- Working with leadership and other departments, track PLA delivery.
- Work to expand PLA opportunities on campus.



Informing Students

Informing your college about PLA

Once a PLA contact and process has been established at your college, it is important that both staff and students know about the process. Students often have never heard of PLA or understand that they may be able to get college credit for their prior work experience.

Flyers or other general information sheets can let students know about PLA, including the PLA contact should they have additional questions. These flyers can also inform campus staff and faculty about PLA opportunities available to students.

This can work differently for each college, but suggestions on best practices are included under the PLA Implementation Strategies tab.

Information for students

Proactively provide students with information about PLA early in the admission process. This can be a flyer or document, and offered in print and online. The important part is making sure students know about the PLA process, what their options are, and what to do and who to contact if they want to apply for PLA. See example:

<http://dev.hiteducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Prior-Learning-Flyer-Student-8-13.pdf>

Action steps:

- ✓ Create written information about PLA processes on your campus.
- ✓ Use PLA documentation from HeW Consortium as a resource and template.
- ✓ Disseminate PLA information to educate advisors, admissions staff, and prospective students.
- ✓ Work with your college to have PLA information posted on the admissions web page.

Information for student veterans

Information on PLA for student veterans is similar to other students, but there are specific differences. Veterans are often not aware that areas of training and tests they passed during their service may provide them college credit. They also may not understand how certain experiences are creditable under one degree and not another, or that how much credit they can receive may differ, depending on degree plan. See example: <http://dev.hiteducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Prior-Learning-Flyer-Veterans-8-13.pdf>

Action steps:

- ✓ Create written information about PLA for Veterans.
- ✓ Use PLA documentation from HeW Consortium as a resource and template.
- ✓ Disseminate PLA information to educate advisors, admissions staff, and prospective students.
- ✓ Work with your college to have PLA information posted on the admissions web page.



Information for staff/faculty

Many faculty/staff don't know about PLA, or know about current practices. Create a flyer with similar information, but with a focus toward faculty/staff. This can be a flyer or document, offered in print and online. Faculty/staff will need general information in response to student inquiries, including: the PLA process, options available to students, and PLA contact information for the college. See example:

<http://dev.hiteducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Prior-Learning-Flyer-Staff-8-13.pdf>

Action steps:

- ✓ Create written information about PLA processes on your campus.
- ✓ Use PLA documentation from HeW Consortium as a resource and template.
- ✓ Disseminate PLA information to educate advisors, admissions staff, and prospective students.
- ✓ Work with your college to have PLA information is posted on the admissions web page.



CLEP (College Level Examination Program)

What is CLEP?

CLEP stands for College Level Examination Program. This nationally recognized program offers 33 exams in different areas of study, allowing students to earn college credits in a number of disciplines.

(<https://clep.collegeboard.org/>)

Who is eligible to take a CLEP test?

The CLEP program allows ANY student to take an assessment test to determine if they might be able to “test out” of certain classes. CLEP is commonly used in the military, allowing service men and women to obtain credit for their knowledge and experience, but it is available to any prospective student.

Why is CLEP a good PLA path?

Many of prerequisites for various programs have a matching or corresponding CLEP test, so CLEP testing might allow students to “test out” of several classes. CLEP tests are inexpensive for students, and free to military veterans using the Post 911 GI Bill Education Benefits.

Do most Washington State community colleges accept/offer CLEP?

- Most of the colleges in our consortium already accept CLEP. While many colleges accept CLEP credit from sources (usually military) most colleges in the consortium don't offer CLEP testing onsite.
- Many colleges accept CLEP credits, but limit students to 15 credits that can only be used for restricted electives (based on Direct Transfer Agreement policy).
- Each campus will determine if and how a passing grade on a given CLEP test will translate to credit for classes

How do students take CLEP tests, and what is the cost?

1. Currently, students must go to specific CLEP testing centers to take the test, not all consortium schools offer CLEP testing on site. Visit this URL to find a CLEP center near you:
<http://clep.collegeboard.org/search/test-centers>
 2. At most testing sites, the cost to take CLEP tests is around \$80 per test. Most sites also charge a \$35 – \$40 administrative fee. Students should be prepared for a total of around \$120.00 per test, usually earning 5 credits.
- Note: For military veterans using the Post 911 GI Bill, testing and administrative fees for both CLEP and DSST are fully reimbursable! You must retain and submit your receipts. Please read through the VA's testing FAQ for more information:
http://www.gibill.va.gov/resources/education_resources/programs/national_testing_program.html



Challenges and benefits:

Challenges	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some 2-year schools don't accept CLEP credit• Many 4-year schools don't accept CLEP credit• CLEP testing site might not be nearby• CLEP not accepted for transfer degrees according to WA state NWCCU rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CLEP tests are inexpensive for students• Many CLEP tests closely match the prerequisites of many programs.• CLEP is 100% reimbursable for veterans using the Post 911 GI Bill.• Up to two-thirds of a non-transfer degree or credential can be earned through CLEP and other methods• Providing PLA credit accelerates and greatly improves odds of degree completion• For veterans, receiving PLA credit allows them to use VA Education benefits for future education

General best practices for PLA:

1. If your campus does not accept CLEP, advocate for its acceptance providing the above explanation to campus stakeholders.
2. Many CLEP tests have been updated recently. If your campus doesn't accept certain CLEP tests, ask that the CLEP tests be reevaluated to see if the new tests meet the requirements.
3. CLEP has provided Test Information Guides for all CLEP tests. Each guide includes an extensive sample test, which should allow you and stakeholders to assess whether the test will meet the requirements. Click on 'CLEP Practice Tests' on the left menu bar to view them.
4. CLEP is often accepted at colleges, usually on the transcripts of veterans and active duty personnel. It is important to inform ALL students who are good candidates for PLA about CLEP tests, and that these test might allow them to test out of some classes. Remind veterans and active duty military that these tests can be taken at any time, by anyone, even if they took other CLEP tests in the military. (Note: Remind all veterans using the Post 911 GI Bill that all CLEP and DSST testing fees and administrative costs, are fully reimbursable.)
5. Look at the CLEP class list and then compare to the classes offered in your programs (particularly the prerequisites.) <http://clep.collegeboard.org/exam>
6. Work with faculty to determine which CLEP tests (if passed) meet the requirements for classes in your programs.

Useful links regarding CLEP

- List of CLEP Exams (<http://clep.collegeboard.org/exam>)
- CLEP Preparation (<http://clep.collegeboard.org/test-preparation>)
- CLEP Test Samples (<http://clep.collegeboard.org/test-samples>)
- Benefits of CLEP (<http://clep.collegeboard.org/benefits>)
- Find a CLEP Testing Center (<http://clep.collegeboard.org/search/test-centers>)



- Interested in offering CLEP exams at your college?
It is free to become a CLEP test center. A person must be the Master Site Administrator (MSA), and must fill out a detailed application. See <http://clep.collegeboard.org/test-center/open>



DSST (Dantes Subject Standardized Tests)

What is DSST?

The nationally recognized DSST Program (formerly DANTES) helps students receive college credits for learning acquired outside the traditional classroom through a suite of 38 exams in college subject areas such as Social Sciences, Math, Applied Technology, Business, Physical Sciences and Humanities.

(<http://getcollegecredit.com/>)

A form of prior learning assessment, DSSTs offer students a cost effective, time saving way to use their knowledge acquired outside of the classroom to accomplish their educational goals.

The American Council on Education's College Credit Recommendation Service (ACE CREDIT) has evaluated and recommended college credit for all 38 DSST exams.

Offering both DSST and CLEP to your students gives them a broader path toward degree completion. While both DSST and CLEP exams are both methods of prior learning assessment, the 38 subject areas of the DSST exams are unique and have little overlap with CLEP exam titles.

Why is DSST a good PLA path?

Some of prerequisites for various programs offered at the different schools have a matching or similar test offered by DSST, so DSST testing might allow students to "test out" of several classes. DSST tests are inexpensive for students, and free to military veterans using Post 911 GI Bill Education Benefits.

Do most WA State community colleges accept/offer DSST?

- Most of the colleges in our consortium already accept DSST, but a few don't. While many colleges accept DSST credit from sources (usually military) most colleges in the consortium don't offer the tests onsite.
- Because each campus is different, each campus will need to determine if and how a passing grade on a certain DSST test will translate to credit for a certain class or classes

How do students take DSST tests, and what is the cost?

1. Students must go to one of the approved DSST centers near them.
(<http://www.getcollegecredit.com/institutions/search/>)
 2. The cost to take DSST tests is \$80.00 per test. Most sites also charge a \$35.00 – \$40.00 administrative fee, bringing the total to ~\$120.00 per test, usually for 5 credits.
- Note: For military veterans using the Post 911 GI Bill, testing and administrative fees for both CLEP and DSST are fully reimbursable! You must retain and submit your receipts. Please read through the VA's testing FAQ for more information:
(http://www.gibill.va.gov/resources/education_resources/programs/national_testing_program.html)



Challenges and benefits:

Challenges	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some 2-year schools don't accept DSST credit• Many 4-year schools don't accept DSST credit• DSST testing site might not be nearby• DSST not accepted for transfer degrees according to WA state NWCCU rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DSST tests are inexpensive for students• DSST tests are 100% fully reimbursable for student veterans using the Post 911 GI Bill• Up to two-thirds of a non-transfer degree or credential can be earned through DSST and other methods• Providing PLA credit accelerates and greatly improves odds of degree completion• For veterans, receiving PLA credit allows them to use VA Education benefits for future education

Next steps:

1. If your campus does not accept DSST, advocate for its acceptance providing the above explanation to campus stakeholders to help explain.
2. Many CLEP tests have been updated recently. If your campus doesn't accept certain CLEP tests, ask that the CLEP tests be reevaluated to see if the new tests will work.
3. DSST is often *accepted* at colleges, usually on the transcripts of veterans and active duty personnel. But it is seldom offered on site, and it is important to inform ALL students who are good candidates for PLA know about DSST tests, as these test might allow them to test out of some classes. Remind veterans and active duty military that these tests can be taken at any time, by anyone, even if they took other tests in the military. Note: Also remind all veterans using the Post 911 GI Bill that all CLEP and DSST testing fees, including administrative costs, are fully reimbursable by the VA.
4. Look at the DSST class list and compare to the classes offered in your programs (particularly the prerequisites): <http://getcollegecredit.com/testprep/#courses>
5. Also view the Exam to Credit Equivalency sheet for information on where these credits commonly work: http://getcollegecredit.com/assets/pdf/DSST_equivalency_examples.pdf
6. Work with faculty to determine which DSST tests (if passed) meet the requirements for classes in your programs.
7. Only recommend students take DSST tests that will be accepted toward credit in their program.
8. If interested in offering DSST exams at your college, view this URL:
http://getcollegecredit.com/contact/?form=form_2

Useful DSST links and information

- Main DSST page (<http://getcollegecredit.com/>)
- Tests offered (<http://getcollegecredit.com/testprep/#courses>)
- List of ACE Credits recommended for the different DSST tests (http://www.getcollegecredit.com/images/uploads/documents/ACE_Credit_Recommendation.pdf)



- Technical Data Sheets on the DSST tests
(http://www.getcollegecredit.com/images/uploads/documents/Technical_Data_Sheets_rev_201001_08.pdf)
- DSST Exam- Credit Equivalency Chart
(http://getcollegecredit.com/assets/pdf/DSST_equivalency_examples.pdf)
- DSST Information Sheet (http://www.washington.edu/oea/services/testing_center/exams/dsst.html)



Best Practices in PLA for Veterans

Significant work has been done nationally to foster prior learning and prior learning opportunities for veterans. Not surprisingly, many of the leaders in PLA for veterans are colleges with close ties to military bases. Much of the work has come from specific colleges, but state programs have also developed military training crosswalks. Competency-based programs and systems also offer unique opportunities for veterans seeking to gain credit for their military training.

Below are links to different schools and programs, all which offer PLA tools, crosswalks and opportunities for veterans to shorten their time to degree completion, while reducing their costs.

State initiatives and programs

A few states have created initiatives to advance PLA throughout their college systems, creating tools and processes designed to promote prior learning opportunities throughout the state. Texas and Minnesota are two of those states:

Robust PLA Options for Military Experience Clearly Communicated Through Crosswalks

Texas College Credit for Heroes

<https://www.collegecreditforheroes.org/>

The State of Texas has created an initiative to identify military training, provide college credit for the experience, and create crosswalks from military training to college credit. The Texas College Credit for Heroes programs has over 35 participating colleges in the state. Below is a quote from their page which describes the program:

“Participating Texas colleges and universities agree to accept college credits recommended through the College Credit for Heroes System where appropriate. Some participating colleges and universities have developed or are in the process of developing accelerated programs of study that maximize college credits awarded to Texas veterans and service members for their military experiences and training thus enabling these students to progress toward a degree or certificate in a more expedient manner.”

Listed on their site is a Military to RN crosswalk offered through San Antonio College’s Associate of Nursing Program. This crosswalk lists training for Army, Navy and Air Force, the skills and outcomes that match the required outcomes, and training courses for any missing training. See crosswalk at the following URL: https://www.collegecreditforheroes.org/sites/all/themes/tcch/pdf/mil_to_rn_xwalk.pdf.

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities

<http://www.mnscu.edu/index.html>

The State of Minnesota has built tools into their entire system that allow military veterans to search which colleges and programs match their military occupations.



Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Military landing page

<http://www.mnscu.edu/military/index.html>

Lots of useful resources for veterans to use when considering a college, including an extensive military transfer crosswalk tool.

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Military credit transfer

<http://www.mnscu.edu/military/transfer.html>

The military credit transfer page allows veterans from all service branches to search on their MOS and identify certificate and degree programs at the various colleges in the state, based on their own military experience.

College PLA for veterans' programs

Below are links to colleges with excellent web resources around PLA, in particular schools that have done significant work creating pathways in PLA for veterans.

Ivy Tech Community College

Ivy Tech Community College is Indiana's largest public postsecondary institution and the nation's largest singly accredited statewide community college system serving nearly 200,000 students annually. Their pages include a crosswalk, listing the credits that might be obtained for different military occupations at their school.

Ivy Tech PLA

<http://www.ivytech.edu/pla/>

Ivy Tech Military Crosswalk

<http://www.ivytech.edu/pla/MilitaryCrosswalk7-22-2013.pdf>

Fayetteville Tech- Fort Bragg

<http://www.faytechcc.edu/>

Fayetteville Tech, located at Fort Bragg in North Carolina, created extensive PLA resources for veterans, a very straightforward military crosswalk, and other PLA materials specifically for their veteran populations.

Fayetteville Tech's PLA pages

http://www.faytechcc.edu/fort_bragg/

Extensive resources relating to Prior learning credit, methods and more.

Fayetteville Tech's Credit for Military Training pages

http://www.faytechcc.edu/fort_bragg/credit-for-learning.aspx

FCC Military pages provide a MILITARY CROSSWALK, which allows military veterans to enter their MOS (military occupational specialty), and click on the crosswalk tool to determine directly the likely



number of credits they would receive for their service when pursuing a standard Associate's degree in General Education at FCC. This is a simple, straightforward way veterans can explore an education at FCC.

Inver Hills- Community College in St. Paul, MN

Inver Hills has a large percentage of adult learners (learners older than traditional age) who might have work experience. They offer a two-class, for-credit option. Here are some of the details and benefits of the program.

- Adult Learners Take 2 Classes to Prepare for Prior Learning Assessments (PLA)
- PLA Credits Earned Increased by 19% Since 2010
- PLA Credits Transcribed as Actual Courses
- No Limit to Number of PLA Credits that can be Earned (unlike in Washington State)
- Navy Course Equivalency Grid
(<http://www.inverhills.edu/StudentResources/VeteranServices/PDFs/NavyCourseEquivalencyGrid0912.pdf>)
- National Guard Course Equivalency Grid
(<http://www.inverhills.edu/StudentResources/VeteranServices/PDFs/NatlGuardCourseEquivalencyGrid0912.pdf>)

Texas A & M- Corpus Christi

Texas A & M Corpus Christi, one of the participating schools in the Texas College for Credit Heroes program, offers a Military to Nursing program that is competency-based. Veterans experience is evaluated on an individual basis, a competency-based system that allows veterans to get credit for their training but ALSO measure their competencies in specific areas, and all of it to prepare them for national nursing certifications like the NCLECs.

See link for more information:

<http://www.tamucc.edu/news/2013/08/081213%20eLine%20Graduates.html#.UI2611Csh8E>.

Western Governors University

<http://www.wgu.edu/>

WGU's online, competency-based model allows all students to bring their knowledge to their program, and proceed at the pace they like. If a student can progress quickly through a program, this allows them to finish sooner. WGU's pricing model is based on time, not credits completed, so students can save both time and money through the WGU system.

WGU provides significant additional PLA options for military veterans. Like many traditional colleges, WGU accepts ACE and CLEP credit. These options allow veteran student to get credit coming in the door, allows them to proceed as quickly as their knowledge lets them.



Other Resources

Washington State PLA Workgroup Wiki

<http://wa-priorlearningassessment.wikispaces.com/SBCTC+Policy+Guidelines>

Working pages for the State PLA Workgroup which are made of participants from dozens of colleges and organizations across the state of Washington. The goal of this group is to create better PLA policy across the state to benefit as many students as possible.

- Assessing and Awarding Prior Learning Credit.pdf
(<https://www.dropbox.com/s/7nm2ddqvbc4eij/Assessing%20and%20Awarding%20Prior%20Learning%20Credit.pdf>)
- State Approaches to Support Prior Learning.pdf
([https://www.dropbox.com/s/mq70tzejdk3uclp/State Approaches to Support Prior Learning.pdf](https://www.dropbox.com/s/mq70tzejdk3uclp/State_Approaches_to_Support_Prior_Learning.pdf))
Giving Credit Where Credit Is Due (April 2011).pdf
(<https://www.dropbox.com/s/62ufhtfxpaxzevl/CLASP%20Report-%20%20April2011%20-%20Giving-Credit.pdf>)
- 2011 Report to the Legislature Credit for Prior Learning Experience in Washington.pdf
(<https://www.dropbox.com/s/siiy0w9oadg23rr/PriorLearningExperienceWA-2011.pdf>)

CAEL – The Council for Adult & Experiential Learning

<http://www.cael.org/home>

Since 1974, CAEL has worked with post-secondary institutions, state boards of regents, and individuals by establishing and disseminating high quality standards for the awarding of credit through assessment, by training faculty evaluators and administrators in PLA practices, and by conducting research on the outcomes of these efforts and disseminating it widely throughout the post-secondary community.

Amy Sherman – Value of PLA with Statistics (CAEL).ppt

(<https://www.dropbox.com/s/13drnr3dysa95mm/CAEL%20presentation-%20Value%20of%20PLA%20with%20stats-%20Amy%20Sherman.ppt>)

PLA Fueling the Race to Postsecondary Success (CAEL).pdf

(https://www.dropbox.com/s/uqj3v6tpin832ss/PLA_Fueling-the-Race-%20CAEL.pdf)

Washington Student Achievement Council

<http://www.wsac.wa.gov/>

Established as a new cabinet-level state agency on July 1, 2012, the Washington Student Achievement Council provides strategic planning, oversight, and advocacy to support increased student success and higher levels of educational attainment in Washington.



Your Guide to PLA Credit: Popular Exams & Online Schools That Accept Them

<http://www.collegeaffordabilityguide.org/college-for-free/your-guide-to-pla-credit-popular-exams-online-schools-that-accept-them/>

Online schools recognize that students don't just learn inside of organized classroom walls: students pursue independent study, learn through employment training or may have a genuine knack for a particular subject. Prior learning assessments (PLAs) make it possible for students to demonstrate proficiency and get college credit for courses in subjects they've already mastered through these independent learning experiences. But, there are several options that give students the potential to get credit through prior learning exams.



PLA Opportunities for Health IT

Health, Health IT & Common Prerequisite Courses	Potential PLA Assessment Options
A+ Operating Systems	CompTIA: Network+ http://certification.comptia.org/getCertified/certifications/network.aspx
Advanced SQL Programming & Tuning	Microsoft: Certified Solutions Associate, SQL Server 2012 https://www.microsoft.com/learning/en-us/mcsa-sql-certification.aspx Pearson Vue: Microsoft http://www.pearsonvue.com/microsoft/ Pearson Vue: Oracle http://www.pearsonvue.com/oracle/ Pearson Vue: OSS/DB http://www.pearsonvue.com/oss-db/
Applied English	DSST: Technical Writing http://getcollegedcredit.com/assets/pdf/dsst_fact_sheets/DSST_TechnicalWriting.pdf
Applied Mathematics for Business & Industry	DSST: Business Mathematics http://getcollegedcredit.com/assets/pdf/dsst_fact_sheets/DSST_BusinessMathematics.pdf
Applied Occupational Math	DSST: Business Mathematics http://getcollegedcredit.com/assets/pdf/dsst_fact_sheets/DSST_BusinessMathematics.pdf
Basic Concepts of Anatomy & Physiology	CLEP: Biology https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/biology
College Algebra	CLEP: College Algebra https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/college-algebra DSST: Fundamentals of College Algebra http://getcollegedcredit.com/assets/pdf/dsst_fact_sheets/DSST_FundamentalsOfCollegeAlgebra.pdf
Communication Skills	StraighterLine: Business Communication http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/business/business-communication/
Computational Skills	CLEP: Introduction to Information Systems https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/information-systems-computers DSST: Introduction to Computing http://getcollegedcredit.com/assets/pdf/dsst_fact_sheets/DSST_IntroductiontoComputing.pdf
Computer Applications Essentials	CLEP: Introduction to Information Systems https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/information-systems-computers DSST: Introduction to Computing http://getcollegedcredit.com/assets/pdf/dsst_fact_sheets/DSST_IntroductiontoComputing.pdf



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Database Administration, Backup & Recovery	Microsoft: Administering Microsoft SQL Server 2012 Databases https://www.microsoft.com/learning/en-us/book.aspx?id=16016&locale=en-us Pearson Vue: Microsoft http://www.pearsonvue.com/microsoft/ Pearson Vue: Oracle http://www.pearsonvue.com/oracle/ Pearson Vue: OSS/DB http://www.pearsonvue.com/oss-db/
Database Management Systems	Microsoft: Database Fundamentals https://www.microsoft.com/learning/en-us/exam-98-364.aspx Pearson Vue: Microsoft http://www.pearsonvue.com/microsoft/ Pearson Vue: Oracle http://www.pearsonvue.com/oracle/ Pearson Vue: OSS/DB http://www.pearsonvue.com/oss-db/
English Composition I	CLEP: College Composition https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/college-composition StraighterLine: English http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/english/
English Composition II	CLEP: College Composition https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/college-composition StraighterLine: English http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/english/
First Aid & CPR	StraighterLine: First Aid/CPR http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/health-science/first-aid-cpr/
General Nutrition	DSST: Here's to Your Health http://getcollegecredit.com/assets/pdf/dsst_fact_sheets/DSST_HereisToYourHealth.pdf StraighterLine: Introduction to Nutrition http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/sciences/introduction-to-nutrition/
General Psychology	CLEP: Introduction to Psychology https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/psychology StraighterLine: Introduction to Psychology http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/social-science/introduction-to-psychology/
Human Anatomy & Physiology I	StraighterLine: Anatomy & Physiology I http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/sciences/anatomy-physiology-i/



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Human Anatomy & Physiology II	StraighterLine: Anatomy & Physiology II http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/sciences/anatomy-physiology-ii/
Human Relations	StraighterLine: Business Communication http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/business/business-communication/
Humanities	CLEP: Humanities https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/humanities StraighterLine: Humanities http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/humanities/
Interpersonal Communications	StraighterLine: Business Communication http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/business/business-communication/
Introduction to Chemistry	CLEP: Chemistry https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/chemistry StraighterLine: General Chemistry I http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/sciences/general-chemistry-i/
Introduction to Computers	CLEP: Introduction to Information Systems https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/information-systems-computers DSST: Introduction to Computing http://getcollegecredit.com/assets/pdf/dsst_fact_sheets/DSST_IntroductiontoComputing.pdf
Introduction to Computers in Healthcare	CLEP: Introduction to Information Systems https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/information-systems-computers DSST: Introduction to Computing http://getcollegecredit.com/assets/pdf/dsst_fact_sheets/DSST_IntroductiontoComputing.pdf
Introduction to Pharmacy	StraighterLine: Pharmacology I http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/health-science/pharmacology-i/
Introduction to Statistics	DSST: Principles of Statistics http://getcollegecredit.com/assets/pdf/dsst_fact_sheets/DSST_PrinciplesofStatistics.pdf StraighterLine: Business Statistics http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/business/business-statistics/
Lifespan Psychology	CLEP: Human Growth & Development https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/human-growth DSST: Lifespan Developmental Psychology http://getcollegecredit.com/assets/pdf/dsst_fact_sheets/DSST_LifespanDevelopmentalPsychology.pdf
Math in Society	CLEP: College Mathematics https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/college-mathematics

Health, Health IT & Common Prerequisite Courses	Potential PLA Assessment Options
Medical Math	CLEP: College Mathematics https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/college-mathematics CLEP: Precalculus https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/precalculus DSST: Principles of Statistics http://getcollegecredit.com/assets/pdf/dsst_fact_sheets/DSST_PrinciplesofStatistics.pdf StraighterLine: Business Statistics http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/business/business-statistics/ StraighterLine: Precalculus http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/mathematics/precalculus/
Medical Terminology	StraighterLine: Medical Terminology http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/health-science/medical-terminology/
Microbiology	StraighterLine: Microbiology http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/health-science/microbiology/
Natural Sciences	CLEP: Natural Sciences https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/natural-sciences DSST: Here's to Your Health http://getcollegecredit.com/assets/pdf/dsst_fact_sheets/DSST_HereisToYourHealth.pdf StraighterLine: Sciences http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/sciences/
PC Hardware	CompTIA: Network+ http://certification.comptia.org/getCertified/certifications/network.aspx
Pharmacy II	StraighterLine: Pharmacology II http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/health-science/pharmacology-ii/
Precalculus I	StraighterLine: Precalculus http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/mathematics/precalculus/
Professional Office Applications: Word	Microsoft Office Specialist: Word https://www.microsoft.com/learning/en-us/exam-77-418.aspx
Professional Office Applications: Excel	Microsoft Office Specialist: Excel https://www.microsoft.com/learning/en-us/exam-77-420.aspx
Professional Office Applications: Access	Microsoft Office Specialist: Access https://www.microsoft.com/learning/en-us/exam-77-424.aspx
Professional Office Applications: PowerPoint	Microsoft Office Specialist: PowerPoint https://www.microsoft.com/learning/en-us/exam-77-422.aspx



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Small Group Communications	StraighterLine: Business Communication http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/business/business-communication/
Social Sciences	CLEP: Introduction to Sociology https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/sociology StraighterLine: Sociology http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/social-science/introduction-to-sociology/
Writing About the Sciences	CLEP: Humanities https://clep.collegeboard.org/exam/humanities StraighterLine: English http://www.straighterline.com/online-college-courses/english/



This workforce solution is 100% funded by an \$11.7m grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. The solution was created by the grantee and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Labor. The Department of Labor makes no guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the information or its completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability or ownership.

