Credit for Prior Learning
Student Handbook

(Credit for Demonstrated Competency)

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Degree Completion Program
William Jessup University
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Adults come to continue their education in an in-service program with an already-existing diverse set of learning experiences and competencies. These learning experiences may be categorized into three broad modes of education, each of which may provide university-level credit. A prerequisite for the William Jessup University (WJU) Degree Completion Program (DCP) is two years of formal accredited university-based learning. Formal education based learning may be directly transferred into a bachelors degree.

The second educational mode nonformal education provides structured, planned and staffed short cycle learning experiences. These learning experiences are commonly used as staff training, or continuing education in workshops, seminars, conferences, short courses, and the like. However, they typically are not offered for academic credit. This mode of education often focuses on skill development for immediate use.

The third and broadest educational mode provides what is arguably the most important learning. Informal education by definition is not planned or structured. Academic credit is not in focus with this kind of learning. This learning is sometimes called enculturation or acculturation. It is relational. One typically learns worldview, values, attitudes, one’s first language and other cultural forms informally. Informal education may be facilitated in internships, practica, time spent over coffee, walking together, specific observation, but it is not formally assessed and the learning remains serendipitous. Regardless of the culture, one can predict that a person will begin speaking the local language in the second or third year. By the time a person is seven or eight a person will have mastered even the most complex linguistic forms even though as a child he/she will not be able to explain what has been learned. One can learn highly complex skills and complex information informally. Even in traditional societies people learn complex economic, technical, and historical information informally. Virtually anything may be learned informally, but typically informal learning requires more time and is much more difficult to assess. To receive academic credit for informal learning one is asked to demonstrate what has been learned.

This Credit for Prior Learning Student Handbook provides information about how to receive credit for learning as seen in demonstrated competencies that were learned outside of an accredited college or university. The present edition of this handbook was adapted from the 2001 Credit by Demonstrated Competency Student Handbook edited by Kenneth W. Oosting.
The concept of Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) is based upon the assumption that adult learners have learned from a number of experiences in their past and that some of this learning is on the collegiate level. This collegiate-level learning to result in college credit must be retained, not duplicate other learning (such as college courses) and be learning which the student can explain and document. For example, a person who claims to have learned a second language may demonstrate that learning by speaking, writing and reading that second language.

In order to facilitate a successful assessment of credit for prior learning an interview is conducted between the student and the local Academic Advisor. One should complete the CPL worksheet provided in the introductory materials prior to the scheduled interview. The interview should take place in the very early stages of a prospective student’s association with the University as a part of the application process even before beginning the program.

The Academic Advisor will explore the potential learning presented on the prepared worksheet. Following this interview, the Advisor and student will agree upon an estimated number of credits which may be pursued from CPL.

Students are encouraged to begin working on CPL projects early in their Degree Completion Program (DCP). In order to facilitate these projects a Graduation Workshop in which CPL is introduced is provided by the University early in the program. Students needing CPL credit are expected to attend the workshop. The Academic Advisor can then meet with each one individually to discuss concepts and resolve issues and questions.

The Credit for Prior Learning concept was developed to help college and university students earn undergraduate college credit for what they have learned in situations outside the college classroom. Adult learners will often continue to engage in collegiate-level learning throughout their careers. CPL allows this learning to help the adult complete a college degree.

The Credit for Prior Learning Student Handbook is structured to help college and university students understand the concept and then follow a process to receive appropriate credit for university level learning. Segments which follow in this Student Handbook provide not only the process for CPL but also some examples of how the documentation may be prepared.
INTRODUCTION

William Jessup University requires a total of at least 128 semester hours to receive a bachelor's degree in the Degree Completion Program. The current majors in Christian Leadership, Counseling Psychology or Management and Ethics, along with an embedded Bible and Theology major, provide 54 of those credits. Each graduating student must also meet specific General Education Requirements of 54 credits. The remaining 20 semester units may be general electives.

Students entering the University are expected to come with two years of college completed or 60 semester credits that may be accepted in transfer. Some students may not need to earn credit beyond the required program in either General Education Requirement or elective credits. Other students with less transferable credits, however, need to earn both General Education and elective credits.

For students who have learned outside the classroom through seminars, training sessions, non-credit courses or even self-directed learning, Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) may be used to meet at least a part of the requirements. CPL is a process by which one may earn college credit for college-level learning based on nonformal or informal learning experiences.

THE CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING CONCEPT

When considering these three modes of education, it is relatively easy to “transfer” formal educational credit that that fits programmatically from one institution to another. Assigning credit for nonformal or informal learning requires additional scrutiny. The purpose of this Handbook is to detail the means for assigning credit for nonformal and informal kinds of learning.

Neither nonformal training nor informally learned information or skills by themselves will qualify for academic credit. On-the-job training or professional training that grants Continuing Education Units” (CEUs) will not automatically result in the granting of academic credit. “Life experience” as such will not result in academic credit even if one is wise, well informed and highly skilled. What results in academic credit is the demonstration of the learning.
One may pursue college credit by demonstrating nonformal or informal learning in two major ways:

- **Nonformal education** for which credit may be granted may encompass any type of credentialed learning that relates to the University’s existing curricula. Licenses, certified seminars or workshops, continuing education unit (CEU) programs, unaccredited college courses, institute learning and other training programs all have potential for earning university credit.

- **Informal education** is demonstrated through a Learning Application Essay (LAE) to receive academic credit. This approach allows a student to demonstrate competency from significant informal learning in which no "piece of paper" exists to prove it. The LAE is typically a 5-7 page essay per proposed semester unit in which a student documents competency, skills and applied knowledge for a university faculty member to assess. The student should in his/her own words articulate and explain what has been learned about the given subject. The essay describes what the student has learned about the subject from both a theoretical and practical perspective. Each essay must have documentation as proof of personal involvement in the activity or learning experience. Commendations, pictures, brochures, and the like all may serve as acceptable documentation for Learning Application Essays.

One may earn between one (1) and three (3) semester credits for each CPL proposal. Each proposal is considered an application for credit that must be approved and granted just as one would pass a regular course.

The student will be charged a nominal fee per credit hour as listed in the current DCP Fee Schedule. The fee should be paid for the evaluation at the time of submission. Charges incurred are non-refundable, but if required a rewrite will not incur additional charges.
Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)

Nonformal learning / education
i.e. Licenses, certified seminars, continuing education units

Informal learning / education
Demonstrated by Learning Application Essay

FIGURE 1
CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING CATEGORIES

William Jessup University recognizes up to 15 semester credits through Credit for Prior Learning for either nonformal or informal types of learning. Every student brings a rich array of learning experiences to the institution as a degree-seeking student. Credit is awarded as students articulate and document their learning. The description of learning experiences will not by itself result in the granting of academic credit. This Handbook is designed to provide the direction needed to successfully construct and present one’s prior learning to the University for credit evaluation.

In pursuing CPL credits one is asked to demonstrate the specific learning that may be seen in competency, knowledge, applied skills and personal growth to a full-time or adjunct faculty member of the University.

Students may consider meeting credit needs for both General Education areas and free elective requirements through Credit for Prior Learning. Additionally, students may earn credit in the Social Sciences, the Humanities, and Science or Mathematics.
Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can I earn credit for my experiences?
A: It must be emphasized that credit is earned and granted as students articulate and document learning and competency. A report emphasizing experience alone (without describing the learning which took place) will not lead to credit being granted.

Q: How many units are permitted for me to earn from credit for prior learning?
A: One may earn as many as 15 semester units from credits for prior learning.

Q: On what level must my learning be?
A: The learning you present needs to be college level. This level is defined as satisfactory comprehension (or grade C) of a subject at the freshman level or above. In practice, many CPL topics fall naturally in the junior/senior level of knowledge because the subjects are specialized and focused just as more advanced courses are in a college degree program.

Q: How do I make sure that my CPL does not duplicate prior credit?
A: The University is careful to monitor your CPL requests to ensure they do not duplicate previously earned college credits. Talk with your Academic Advisor.

Q: What if my learning took place a long time ago?
A: CPL topics must reflect current knowledge at the college level. Obsolete subjects which are no longer applicable to current college contexts are not eligible for credit. For example, outdated computer science training would not be considered.

Q: What proof of my learning do I need to provide?
A: CPL subjects must all include documentation which verifies the student's actual involvement in the learning experience. This Student Handbook will explain how to prepare this documentation.

Nonformal Education (NFE)

A NFE proposal is the least labor intensive of the two CPL approaches in that it requires less writing. However, this proposal requires more in that one needs to
retrieve the documented materials. The University must have copies of original documents in order to evaluate nonformal education. Nonformal education often occurs as sponsored professional training within one’s work environment. To receive academic credit for planned and structured out-of-school learning a NFE proposal with five components is required:

_The Five "Cs" of Nonformal Education_

1. Certification of Learning
   a. Gather a copy or copies of original licenses, diplomas, certificates, etc.
   b. Submit with the proposal at the back of the document.

2. Content Description
   a. Include any syllabus, outline, brochure, workbooks or other representative materials.
   b. Copies of the cover and table of contents of textbooks as applicable are also useful.

3. Contact time / Structured time
   a. A semester unit normally is based on 15 hours of “contact time,” i.e., one hour per week for a fifteen week semester and thirty hours of other “structured time,” i.e., time devoted to the course including: reading, writing, and the completion of assignments. A unit of credit will then be expected to involved at least 45 “structured hours.”
   b. “Structured time” or “contact time” alone is not an adequate criterion for credit, even though it is an important component.
   c. The primary concern is a demonstration of prior learning.
   d. Structured time for nonformal education should be documented.

4. Competency Paper
a. The capstone of your NFE presentation is a descriptive 2-3 page paper per unit of credit.
b. The paper should include a description of what was done, what was learned, and how the learning has been/is being applied. The validation of what was done should require no more than a half page of writing.
c. The focus should be on what was learned and how the learning has been helpful professionally and personally.

5. CPL Proposal Form

A completed (top half) CPL Proposal form should be included as the cover page for the NFE proposal.

Learning Application Essay (LAE)

The Learning Application Essay aims to document informal learning that may be granted university level academic credit. Every adult student comes with significant informal learning. However, not all of this learning may serve as a base for academic credit at a University level. This kind of learning begins with experience and reflection about the experience. The essay that documents this learning should briefly describe the relevant experience and then move on to the learning. One useful model that presents a means by which to express this kind of learning is known as the Kolb Model. It is presented later in this Handbook in more detail.

Students are urged to read carefully the information under Kolb’s Structure of Prior Learning later in this Handbook. It provides a structure by which one’s thought and learning experience may be presented as relevant, and valid learning.

Learning Application Essay (LAE)

The LAE provides a means by which a student may present to appropriate faculty prior learning which has taken place outside the traditional classroom setting (formal education) or outside a structured learning environment for which no academic credit is offered in nonformal education. This experiential learning must be deemed to be college level. It must be extensive enough in scope to provide an adequate knowledge base to the subject presented.
One may be awarded credit by writing about the learning experiences and learning in a Learning Application Essay (LAE). In this essay a student is expected to demonstrate to university faculty that he/she has learned certain content and/or skills that are equivalent to what would be learned in a formal university environment related to the given subject. For example, someone who has been in sales for ten years with no college background in that area might discuss and illustrate concepts and theory ordinarily covered in a course on marketing and sales. Thus, the learning outcomes would be considered equivalent.

Topics are limited to disciplinary areas and courses listed in the current William Jessup University catalog. The policy of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) states: “Credit is awarded only in areas which fall within the regular curricular offerings of the institution and are part of the instructional program the student completes” (2001 WASC Handbook of Accreditation, p. 69). Topic guidelines are approved by your Academic Advisor as reviewed by the DCP Academic Committee. The amount of credit awarded for any prior learning essay will vary and is contingent upon the depth and breadth of a student's knowledge, understanding and ability to articulate relevant learning outcomes. Students normally seek 1-3 credits for each LAE.

**General Guidelines**

A student may not write an essay on a topic for which academic credit has already been granted whether that credit is for a local course, a transferred credit or another credit for prior learning. As much documentation as possible should accompany essays (where applicable). A bibliography is encouraged. These essays are assessed for credit by our University faculty. Your Academic Advisor serves as a liaison in this process.

In evaluating an essay, faculty members consider the level of technical skills and factual knowledge the paper demonstrates. In addition, the evaluator looks for an ability to understand, summarize, analyze and synthesize those skills or knowledge. The paper should show evidence that the student can draw conclusions about basic principles and apply them in new situations. Vocabulary, organization and ability to use standard English grammar and mechanics are important components of acceptable essays.

This essay is a unique document that seeks to articulate prior informal learning experiences in written form. The LAE is not a research paper although it might include elements of a typical research paper such as a bibliography and footnotes or parenthetical references. Further, the LAE is not a biographical sketch.
describing the person's life experiences, although it should include an adequate description of the relevant learning experience and context.

An LAE grows out of one's prior learning in which there was not any formalized training. If a student has been actively involved in a particular area of learning for an extended period of time, the learning may be equivalent to a university level course. Experience alone does not guarantee that learning has taken place. Familiarity with terminology and conceptual ideas of a given subject area does not mean that you understand the subject. One must meld personal experiences into an applied learning essay which emphasizes learning outcomes.

An LAE is written in the first person narrative as the student is required to blend personal knowledge of the subject with the theoretical concepts inherent to the particular subject. In identifying numerous learning outcomes (principles, concepts, ideas, theories, laws) pertinent to the subject area such phrases as "I have learned," "I have discovered...," and so on are appropriate. It is not acceptable simply to denote various principles without also applying these principles to personal usage of the principle. Examples and illustrations of integration of the principle into one’s life experience are strongly encouraged in a successful LAE.

The natural tendency of many students is to explain what they have done in a particular area of experience. This type of commentary should be very limited in a successful LAE. The University is looking for the ability to articulate the knowledge base, not an extended commentary listing all of the accomplishments, responsibilities and experiences one may have acquired.

A successful Learning Application Essay will adequately explain the subject. It will include six to ten relevant learning outcomes. The essay will include a strong blending of the learning outcomes presented with the student’s usage and application of such principles to one’s own or other real-life situations. The essay is outcome driven and the synthesizing process should grow out of the learning identified. An essay which emphasizes experiences and personal responsibilities without articulating learning outcomes or competencies will not be acceptable. The length of the essay is recommended at 5-7 pages for one semester unit. The essay should properly discuss the subject and fully outline the learning which has taken place. It is a qualitative exercise and the length will vary from subject to subject.

If one is unclear about how to state a theoretical perspective, the book, A Primer in Theory Construction, by Paul Reynolds provides several different approaches to express a theory. A theory should provide a base to explain a set of phenomena, predict the future, provide a base for action, and suggest appropriate methods.
for verification of the theory. Reynolds’ little book shows how to describe these functions in terms of principles, rules, axioms and taxonomies.

**Documentation – Learning Application Essay (LAE)**

Evaluators look for appropriate documentation of knowledge resulting from learning experiences. Any essay must have documentation. Documentation is the verification of specific learning experiences. The following guidelines provide suggestions for this documentation:

1. **Documenting Professional Experience.** Employment records, awards, letters of commendation, letters of corroboration from supervisors, peers and clients, congratulations on high performance; promotion evaluations, evidence of promotion; evidence of suggestions adopted; samples of work produced; membership in professional or trade organizations; scores on licensing exams; military separation papers; rating forms; military records; and work samples.

   **Not acceptable as documentation, but useful in clarification:** Explanation of ranking, rating, or classification system in company or organization, performance standards, membership requirements and job descriptions.

2. **Documenting Community Service Activities.** Commendations, awards, newspaper and magazine clippings, letters of corroboration from co-volunteers, clients served, supervisors.

3. **Documenting Special Accomplishments:** Books published, pictures painted, music written, patents obtained, mementos from countries lived in and traveled to, machines designed, exhibits such as shells, plants, and the like, speeches given, programs from performances, writing samples, audio-visual presentation, proposals written.

   Useful as further insight into the learning process are the lists of books read, countries visited, consultations with experts.

   **Note:** Works of art should be submitted in an appropriate visual form.

4. **Using Letters as Documentation:** Letters may be used for verifying many learning outcomes. When someone is asked to write a letter...
of verification, the person from whom the letter is requested should be given explicit instructions on what the letter should contain.

Students should use the following guidelines in writing for letters of verification:

a. The individual writing the letter must know the student and have first-hand knowledge of the experiential activity which cited in the LAE.

b. The author of the letter should state clearly the nature of the relationship with the student.

c. The letter should be written on the official letterhead stationary of the company or organization with which the author is associated.

d. The content of the letter should focus competencies learned and then briefly describe the duties, responsibilities, tasks or activities which were inherent in the experience under consideration. In addition, the letter should set down the context of experience—the “who,” “what,” “when,” “why,” “for how long,” “where,” etc. The primary issue is what learning occurred as demonstrated in new competencies.

e. The student should make it clear to the author that the letter to be written is one of verification, not recommendation.

Remember that the University is interested in the fact that one can demonstrate what was learned from experience. It is best for one to spend time analyzing your experiences and spend just enough time collecting documentation to furnish sufficient verification to convince a reasonable person that the student has, in fact, participated in the experiences which have described in LAE.

The student should petition for the proposed number of credits from each LAE by submitting a completed Credit for Prior Learning Proposal (see instructions and form in Appendix A). The completed Credit for Prior Learning Proposal serves as a cover sheet to the LAE.

LAE Outline/Format

I. Introduction (should be a maximum of 1 page)

The student should describe the range of relevant learning experiences as an introduction to the evaluator. Years of service or
personal experience, books and articles read, videos and tapes reviewed, and any additional training related to the topic may be included. All of the above are not required to write a successful introduction. **REMEMBER: 1 PAGE ONLY!**

II. Topic Paragraph and/or Transition Paragraph

a. This space should be used to identify and list for the evaluator the 6-10 principles or keys which are crucial to the subject under discussion or in demonstrating competency.

b. One should answer the question, "What are the things one must know to understand this subject?" Or, if one were required to pass this knowledge of this subject/topic on to another, "What would that person have to know in order to adequately understand the subject?"

c. The student should spend uninterrupted intervals digesting and sifting out the 6-10 elements, principles, theories, keys, components, requirements, ideas, concepts, laws and focal points of the subject.

d. It is recommended that the student consult a textbook to assist with the language or theoretical concepts/constructs. For example, if one have been a supervisor, owned his/her own business, or served as in a particular position, it is quite easy to find texts dealing with principles of supervision, introduction to small business management or introduction to that vocation.

e. After identifying the key components of the subject (6-10+) they should be described in a transition paragraph signaling to the reader what will be presented in the upcoming pages in detail. This paragraph also serves as an overview or guide for the rest of the paper.

III. Body should be 5-7 pages in length per unit of credit

a. Each principal should be introduced individually in this section. A description or explanation of the learning principle or idea should be presented. The student should explain to the reader his/her comprehension of this focal point or theory.
b. After fully discussing the principle, illustrations and examples from one’s personal learning experience should be included. The student should demonstrate to the reader the validity of the element as it is part of the subject matter. Both positive (i.e., what you did do) and negative (i.e., what was not done) illustrations and examples are effective in applied learning.

c. The student should indicate to the evaluator how this concept or idea has helped to develop professionally and personally. One should articulate how the learning has been or may be applied in different situations and contexts away from your immediate experiential realm. How is the point valid in other places or situations in life? Has the learning been implemented or passed on this concept to other people and/or in other situations.

IV. Final Impact (should be 2-4 paragraphs)

A summary statement is useful in which one restates the key components of the subject according to the student’s understanding. Other general observations of how this learning has impacted the student’s personal, professional and spiritual life would be helpful. The student should express how this experience has expanded personal horizons or led to new and different learning, enlightenment, or personal development.

Final Notes on the Learning Application Essay

- A completed CPL Proposal form should serve as the cover page for the presentation. A title page is acceptable, but only to follow the CPL Proposal form.
- A bibliography is expected for an LAE, but not an absolute requirement. Quotations, footnotes, and the like may be appropriate and helpful, but the learning should still be evident from one’s personal background and involvement with the topic.
- As such, the LAE is written in the first person as one is demonstrating one’s own personal learning.
- One should not think of this work as a research paper, even though it may contain some elements of one.
TO THE STUDENT—REMEMBER: Focus on what you have learned and limit the autobiographical discussion of what you have done. Credit grants are made when students articulate learning principles and validate the learning with applications through illustrations and examples. Use the checklist on the following page when you are finalizing your project.

Checklist

☐ Cover page (Credit for Prior Learning Proposal Form)

☐ Outline (optional)

☐ Introduction of your topic (1 page)

☐ Topic Paragraph and/or Transition Paragraph

☐ Body (5-7 pages per unit of credit)

☐ Final Impact (2-4 paragraphs)

☐ Bibliography (if applicable)

☐ Appendices (copies of related materials, if applicable)
CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING (CPL) POLICIES

In order to have the CPL program function effectively, the institutional policies which follow have been adopted by the University. Students with questions about any of these policies should confer with their Academic Advisor.

1. Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) recognizes that collegiate-level learning may occur outside the college/university classroom and that the institution should have the means of recognizing and evaluating that learning to grant credit to matriculated students.

2. CPL may be earned only for documented learning and is not granted based upon experience alone.

3. CPL is accomplished through a student-generated proposal for credit. The process will include completion of the appropriate institutional forms. For each segment of learning not accompanied by an earned credential, an essay which follows the Kolb Model will be constructed. Appropriate documentation is required for CPL essays to earn credit. Each request for CPL must be assembled together in the student's proposal for credit, which will be turned in to the designated college official.

4. CPL is limited to not more than 15 semester units of credit.

5. The guidelines of CAEL (Council for Adult and Experiential Learning) will generally be followed, except where they might conflict with existing policies of the University.

6. The fee for each semester hour applied for will be set annually.

7. Each CPL proposal (Credit for Prior Learning Proposal, Learning Application Essay and documentation) will be for 1, 2, or 3 semester units. Where additional units are sought, an additional proposal will be required in order to have credit awarded. The number of proposals is limited to the number of units permitted by the University.

8. The policies of the Western Association of School and Colleges Senior Commission apply

9. CPL will be granted only if approved by a full-time or adjunct faculty member. Credit will be denied in any instance where no qualified faculty member is available and willing to evaluate the proposals.
10. CPL will be administered by one’s Academic Advisor. The Academic Advisor will be responsible for assigning evaluation of the LAEs to the respective faculty members of the University, reviewing some professional CPL proposals using CAEL and American Council of Education (ACE) guidelines, ensuring academic integrity of the evaluation process, and advising the Program Director on CPL issues. The Academic Advisor will evaluate all proposals for which the ACE guidelines suggest levels of college credit.

11. Students must pay all applicable fees before CPL units will be posted on the student's transcript.

12. Faculty-approved CPL units are posted on a student's transcript by course prefix and number and in a category labeled "Credit for Prior Learning." Each CPL subject will be listed in this category, in a place on the transcript indicating the date, the course title and the number of units granted. No grades are given for CPL.

13. Students are advised that such credit will probably not transfer to other institutions.

Procedures

The above policies are implemented by a series of procedures which are shown here for the student and the faculty member. The CPL process will be accomplished under the supervision of the DCP Office.

1. Students will be given an estimate of the number of credits they might earn in the CPL process at the time that they are applying for the program unless they have met all general education and elective credits required for graduation.

2. Students will be given instruction about the nature of CPL and how to complete each proposal for credit. The instruction will be done either in a workshop setting or through individual instruction.

3. The Academic Advisor will guide the CPL process as follows:
   a. Meet with the incoming student to estimate the number of credits that will be needed to complete the degree and identify those which might be met by the CPL process (CPL Estimate Interview).
   b. Answer student questions as they enter the program.
c. Organize the Graduation Workshop for students in which this set of issues is explained.

d. Conduct the Graduation Workshop.

e. Advise students on the procedure for completing proposals including the review of each LAE before it is submitted to the appropriate professor for evaluation.

f. Advise faculty members who evaluate LAEs.

g. Ensure the timely completion of the evaluation process and notification of the student of the outcome.

h. Work with the Business Office in providing information for tuition and fees to be paid by the student for the CPL process.

i. Work with the Business Office to ensure that faculty members are paid after they have completed each evaluation.

j. Work with Registrar to ensure that the appropriate credits are posted to the student's academic record.
APPENDICIES

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Appendix G LAE Learning Principles Introductory
Successful informal education (LAE) or nonformal education (NFE) proposals will be evaluated on the basis of their content and stated learning outcomes. The Kolb Model allows the student to develop and describe learning outcomes in a systematic way. It is suggested that an LAE be 5-7 pages in length for each proposed semester unit of credit in addition to documentation pages. NFE proposals should be contained in the space provided on the Credit for Prior Learning Proposal form. The following guidelines and questions are designed primarily to help guide you through the Kolb structure. DCP staff and faculty evaluators should also be familiar with this material.
While writing an LAE or NFE proposal, many students tend to overstate their experience. Credit is earned as the student articulates learning, not for stating what has been accomplished. Concrete experience should be limited to 1-2 pages (10-15%) in an LAE and confined to the appropriate space on the CPL Proposal form for a Nonformal Education presentation.

A. Questions to Consider When Writing an LAE Proposal
   2. How many other people were involved? Are my role, responsibility and contribution clear from that of the group or committee?
   3. What was the extent of my involvement?
   4. What techniques, methods, or procedures did I use? Why?
   5. What were my goals and objectives? How did they influence my approach?
   6. What resources did I use?

B. Observations and Reflections

In observing and reflecting, the student will in essence be taking inventory of the learning acquired from personal learning experience. This step is the brainstorming, thought-provoking phase of CPL development. It is usually the most difficult step. It requires serious thought and contemplation in order to organize and categorize the learning experience. Students are encouraged to include information gleaned from answering the questions below. In most instances Step B will lead one to the crucial Step C, formation of abstract concepts and generalizations.

   1. What were my thought processes? What were the considerations, decisions, and rationale?
   3. What was important, significant, different, unique?
   4. What worked and what did not work?
5. What can I say in retrospect?

6. What relationships have I noticed?

C. Formation of Abstract Concepts and Generalizations

In observing and reflecting, or brainstorming, the learning experience (Step B), students will identify and isolate learning principles relevant to the subject matter or topic. Steps B and C of the Kolb Model will flow together creating the bulk of a successful LAE or NFE proposal, at least 50% of the finished product. It must be remembered that credit is earned and in turn granted when one identifies, articulates and documents real learning. One is asked to identify several key concepts and principles (6-12 per subject) in the essay.

1. What ideas and insights have I had?

2. What hypotheses, rules, laws, theories, principles have I formed to explain why this is, why this happens, why this works, or does not work, why this is the same or different, why this trend, pattern, or relationship exists?

3. Is this explanation or theory appropriate for more than one situation?

4. What would also be true or relevant for other persons or situations? How can this be applied?

5. Can I look at my learning experience from a broader perspective and make generalizations from it?

D. Testing or Applying Concepts in New Situations

After identifying relevant learning outcomes (principles, theories, ideas, laws, etc.—Step C), it becomes crucial for the student to apply these concepts to new and different situations. Here one will demonstrate a fuller understanding of the subject by making use of learning in different situations. One is encouraged to demonstrate successful testing of the learning by including examples and illustrations where the learning outcome was put to use outside of the immediate learning experience. This phase of CPL forms a crucial (30% estimated) step in earning college credit. It projects the student outward and keeps the learner moving...
toward more enriching concrete experiences. By finalizing this step one will have demonstrated the liberating nature of all education.

1. Would my knowledge be useful in other situations? How?
2. Based on this knowledge, what have I done or what would I do?
3. Can I make predications based on my knowledge?
4. Have I tested my ideas, concepts, or those of others that I have learned? If not, can I guess what would happen? Why?
5. How does my knowledge affect or apply to other situations? Is it relevant or significant?
APPENDIX B

PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS (LAE)

Each CPL request must be accompanied by a Credit for Prior Learning Proposal (the form follows this section). Each proposal sheet should start on a right-hand page when presenting an LAE. Each individual proposal may be sent to a different evaluator and thus must be separate from the previous learning outline.

Credit for Prior Learning

Instructions: Please Fill Out Form Completely.

Incomplete proposals will be returned and will delay the evaluation process. One should seek the counsel of the Academic Advisor to correctly complete the proposal steps below.

Cohort Name:  Include Cohort name and number.

Department:  The discipline or department most appropriate for your course choice.

Course Title:  The course title you have chosen or created.

Credit Requested:  How many credits (1-3) should be granted for the learning outcomes of this experience? If evident outcomes cover more than three credits or one college course, it is better to develop two LAEs and write two proposals.

The Statement:  This statement uses one sentence to describe the concrete experience(s) and four or five sentences to summarize the knowledge and skills you discuss. If writing this description is difficult, you may want to evaluate the LAE. It may not be strong enough or may be unfocused. A portion of the introductory statement from the essay may serve as an adequate summary statement.

A well-written statement will call the evaluator's attention to areas that the student feels are strong points in each essay. It could be compared to the dust jacket on a book in that it tells you what to look for in the text. It may also be considered a summary of the LAE.

The Competency Proposal page will be copied after the evaluation of the CPL subject and may be sent with a transcript to future employers or colleges if
requested. Therefore, it should not contain cleverness, humor or "hard-sell" statements.

Subject Areas for Credit for Prior Learning

When considering subject areas for Credit for Prior Learning, one may examine a wide range of learning experiences. The CPL proposals will reflect college-level learning which has originated in these experiences. The CPL proposals will be read by faculty content experts to determine the credit earned. Students are encouraged to review the current University catalog to determine the range of possible subject and disciplinary areas in which they may demonstrate learning competencies. Students are encouraged to seek out the advice of the Academic Advisor concerning subject areas and titles.
APPENDIX C

CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING PROPOSAL

Name: ___________________________ Class: ID# ____________________
Dept. _____________________________ (Lower Division) (Upper Division)
Title: _____________________________________________________________
Faculty evaluator: _________________________________________________
Status: First Submission 1st Rewrite 2nd Rewrite Final Rewrite

Write a brief statement describing what you did and what you learned from this experience.

LEARNING APPLICATION ESSAY
Credits Petitioned _____Total # of Pages Documentation __________

NONFORMAL EDUCATION / SPONSORED PROFESSIONAL TRAINING
Sponsoring Organization______________ Instructor(s) ______________________
Site (City, State) __________________________Qualifications ______________
Date Taken ___________Contact Hours _______ Total “Structured Hours”____
Continuing Education Units (CEU's) Given Yes (#__) No _____
Credits Petitioned _______Total # of Pages ____________________
Office Use Only
APPENDIX D

EVALUATION CREDIT RECOMMENDATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Overall Presentation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Topic Choice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Concrete Experience — Kolb A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Observations and Reflections — Kolb B</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Concepts and Generalizations — Kolb C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Implications and Applications of Concepts — Kolb D</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Integration of Christian Faith</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Documentation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

Comments: (required if partial or no credit is given)

Return for Rewrite: Dept:

Meets Gen. Ed. Requirements: Yes  No  Title: _______________________
Evaluator: Units Awarded: ______

________________________    ______________________________
Evaluator's Signature  Date   Registrar's Approval  Date:
APPENDIX E

SAMPLE CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF
A LEARNING APPLICATION ESSAY

Faculty readers and student petitioners are encouraged to consult the following checklist for each Nonformal Education Learning proposal and Learning Application Essay (LAE) proposal being submitted for evaluation. Any "unacceptable" marks indicate the proposal needs revision before credit is recommended. This document is keyed to the formal Credit for Prior Learning Proposal. It is designed to help students, degree completion personnel and faculty evaluators understand the criteria for earning and granting credit.

(1) Unacceptable (2) Acceptable (3) Good (4) Excellent

I. Overall Presentation
   A. Is it well organized? 1 2 3 4
   B. Is it well written: correct grammar, spelling, punctuation? 1 2 3 4
   C. Are the subheadings appropriate? 1 2 3 4
   D. Is there one idea per paragraph? 1 2 3 4
   E. Is the essay buffered with examples? 1 2 3 4
   F. Is it longer than eight pages? 1 2 3 4
   G. If resources (books, printed materials, people, etc.) are used, are they cited correctly?

II. Topic Choice
   A. Is the topic appropriate for college credit? 1 2 3 4
   B. Is the topic clearly focused? 1 2 3 4
   C. Does the title match the learning being discussed (i.e., "Interviewing Techniques" rather than "My Professional Life")? 1 2 3 4
   D. Does the topic match an academic sufficiently (social science, humanities, etc.)? 1 2 3 4

III. Concrete Experience—Kolb A
   A. Is personal experience evident in the LAE? 1 2 3 4
   B. Has the student clearly described his/her own involvement in the experience? 1 2 3 4
   C. Are examples relevant to the topic? 1 2 3 4
   D. Is there enough detail to give a clear picture 1 2 3 4
E. Does the essay surpass the concrete experience?

IV. Observations and Reflections — Kolb B

A. Does the student adequately describe considerations, decisions and rationale? 1 2 3 4
B. Is depth of thought toward the subject evident and sufficient in the work? 1 2 3 4
C. Does the student articulate a clear understanding of what worked and what did not? 1 2 3 4
D. Is there evidence that the student has observed patterns (i.e., recurring behaviors, etc.)? 1 2 3 4
E. Do the observations and reflections apply to more than one situation? 1 2 3 4

V. Concepts and Generalizations — Kolb C

A. Does the student discuss principles, theories, laws or rules which apply to the topic? 1 2 3 4
B. Does the student discuss principles, theories, laws or rules which apply to the topic? 1 2 3 4
C. Can the knowledge, skills, techniques and/or ideas learned be applied to other situations, groups, times, etc.? For example, do the salesmanship techniques apply only to XYZ Company or can they be applied to industry in general? 1 2 3 4
D. Do the generalizations and concepts apply to the student’s subsequent situations as well? 1 2 3 4

VI. Implications and Applications of Concepts — Kolb D

A. Has the student adequately tested his/her ideas? 1 2 3 4
B. Does the student then apply these principles to new situations? 1 2 3 4
C. Does the student demonstrate learning from failure as well as success? 1 2 3 4
D. Does the student specify how applications
could be made in other situations?

E. How well can the student make predictions about the future based on his/her learning?

VII. Integrations of Christian Faith

A. Is it apparent that this experience has affected or was affected by the student’s Christian belief?
B. Does the student articulate how his/her learning can be used to enhance the Christian community?

VIII. Documentation

A. Is adequate and relevant documentation provided to support the student’s involvement in the experience?
B. If applicable, is the student’s experience adequately verified by letters, certificates or licenses, scores, scripts, audiotapes, videotapes, artwork, promotional literature, programs?
C. If the student has done outside research, has he/she included an adequate bibliography?
Students are encouraged to pursue general education credits. Obviously, one must possess background learning from personal or professional sources in a given subject area. In general education areas, what has been learned is often too broad to be useful in LAE preparation. The student and the Academic Advisor should review this material together to determine the potential for pursuing general education credit.

I. Experiences eligible for General Education credit should:
   A. Be broad and general
   B. Be liberal (liberating—open vistas of knowledge and appreciation)
   C. Affect life choices

II. Students writing essays warranting General Education credit should do the following:
   A. Describe the experience(s)
   B. Show that the experience(s)
      1. Broadened knowledge (What did you learn?)
      2. Enlarged horizons (How did it broaden your views?)
      3. Increased appreciation (How was meaning deepened?)
      4. Influenced the capacity and desire for a life of learning (How has it made a difference in the way you live?)
   C. Describe the newly developed competencies.
APPENDIX G

LAE LEARNING PRINCIPLES INTRODUCTORY PHRASES

Each LAE should include 6-10 learning principles. The following phrases or variations of them may be used to introduce specific principles in an LAE:

• I have learned . . .
• I have discovered . . .
• I have come to understand that . . .
• I have grasped the fact that . . . is a key component of . . .
• In order to be effective in . . . one must master the principle of . . .
• I have realized from my involvement in . . .
• It is imperative in . . . that one . . .
• I have found . . .
• It is crucial . . .