

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY
PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT

This policy pertains to students.

Prior learning assessment (PLA) is the granting of credit in an associate degree or technical diploma program for knowledge and skills that directly relate to the program curriculum. Such credit may be granted for proficiency gained through previous work experience, previous military training or experience, business and industry training, coursework done at the high school level, or other prior learning experiences. This policy enables students to accelerate the completion of their educational goals.

Prior learning assessment for courses may be obtained through the following methods:

- **Credit by Examination** – Consideration will be given to any student who requests PLA credit by exam prior to enrollment in the related class. At the discretion of the division dean or designee, the evaluation of such credit is conducted through oral, written, or performance exam, portfolio development and review, or by a combination of these methods. If the student successfully completes the exam, credit will be granted for the course. Students may attempt to earn credit by examination for a specific course only once.

Students may be awarded credit for a course(s) by achieving an acceptable score on an exam with nationally recognized standards, including Advanced Placement (AP) exams with a score of 3 or above and the CLEP exams with a score of 50 or above.

- **Credit for Experiential Learning** – Credit may be granted for previous work experience, military education or experience, business and industry training, advanced high school courses comparable in content and level, or other prior learning experiences. At the discretion of the division dean or designee responsible for the course(s) under consideration, this assessment is conducted through methods such as, but not limited to, portfolio development and review, transcript and resume review, and personal interview. Skills and knowledge gained through experiential learning must relate directly to the program course(s) and be comparable in content and level of rigor. When available in the program plan, credit for experiential learning may also be used to satisfy an elective.
- **Credit through Articulation Agreements** – The College has established several articulation agreements with the area high schools to grant advanced standing credit to recent high school graduates who have successfully completed course work and have met the requirements of these specific agreements. This formal process to coordinate instructional programs enables students to move from one instructional level to another without unnecessary duplication. To be eligible for advanced standing credit, students must present appropriate documentation of high school course(s) completion that meets the conditions stated in the articulation agreement.

For students transferring from another technical college district, credit awarded for high school coursework covered by an articulation agreement at the originating technical college shall be accepted as credit toward completion of a comparable course or courses.

- **Associate Degree Prior Learning Assessment for Apprenticeship Training** – Apprentices who have completed a minimum of 400 hours of registered apprenticeship-related instruction and obtained journey-level status are eligible for 39 credits of PLA to meet the occupational-specific course requirements of an associate degree in Technical Studies-Journey Worker. Students must present appropriate documentation, including a Wisconsin Journey-Level Certificate. Students may be awarded a maximum of eight additional credits toward the associate degree for registered apprenticeship-related instruction beyond the 400-hour minimum at the rate of one credit per 36 hours of instruction.
- **Associate Degree Prior Learning Assessment for Technical Diploma Course Work** – PLA credit can be awarded toward an associate degree for technical diploma level course work. Any request for PLA of technical diploma credits toward an associate degree must be reviewed and authorized by the respective division dean. The division dean will review this PLA and provide appropriate credit for coursework completed at any WTCS college where the course competencies and outcomes is determined to be equivalent.
- **Prior Learning Assessment for Youth Apprenticeship Course Work** – Youth Apprenticeship instruction is granted in associate degree or technical diploma programs. Students must present appropriate documentation of successful completion of the Youth Apprenticeship program. Where formal articulation agreements exist, credit will be awarded based on those agreements. In situations where no formal articulation exists, this policy's Credit for Experiential Learning portion should be used to evaluate the Youth Apprenticeship experience.

A grade of AS (Advanced Standing) is designated on the student transcript for all of the above options. PLA credit is not calculated in a student's grade point average.

Students may only be granted PLA credit and/or transfer credit for up to 75% of the total required program credits. Students must complete at least one-fourth (25%) of the total program credits required in the degree or diploma through coursework undertaken at FVTC. The 25% of total program credits must be comprised of a minimum of 25% of the occupational course credits.

Students may appeal institutional decisions related to advanced standing and credit for prior learning through the formal academic appeals process.

Related Policies:

WTCS Board Policy #323 – Credit for Prior Learning

Current Assumed Practices (CRRT.C.10.010) – The Higher Learning Commission

Administrative Policy – Instruction: Graduation Requirements for Degree and Diploma Programs

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