

CREDIT FOR LIFE/EXPERIENTIAL CREDIT COMMITTEE  
FINAL REPORT TO THE ACADEMIC SENATE  
MAY 8, 1997

Overview

The formal charge to the Credit for Life Experience Committee was as follows: "To evaluate processes and procedures for granting credit to students as it applies to the AGS degree." The committee has had extensive discussion concerning the applicability of Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) to the General Studies Degree as well as the other degree options. We have reviewed PLA assessment policies at some local colleges and universities and we have reviewed the types of assessment already in place at the College.

Current Practice

A review of current practice at the College with regard to non-traditional credit options for students, makes clear that more is available for students than is generally known. Of the various options for earning prior learning or non-traditional credit, OCC participates in all but four: the College does not grant credit for Continuing Education Units, Challenge Exams, National League for Nursing Achievement Tests, and Portfolio Development (full listing attached). The committee found also that many students, staff and faculty are unaware of the options for experiential credit available to OCC students. Moreover, the availability of certain options like credit by exam or individual/independent study vary from department to department and discipline to discipline.

Currently, the College has several formal agreements or practices that grant credit for work experiences or non-credit bearing education, i.e. 15 credits in the Apprenticeship program for students holding a journeyman's card, thirty credits in the Cosmetology program for persons completing the coursework and/or holding a license. People enrolled in the Industrial Technology can use up to thirty credits of their technical training towards a degree or certificate. Beaumont hospital and OCC offer a cooperative program in Nuclear Medicine Technology where the student earns 35 credits through his training and education at Beaumont to be applied to his OCC degree. There is potential for additional programs of this type within the College.

Portfolio Assessment

Significant time was spent by the committee looking at the option of portfolio assessment. Portfolio Assessment usually involves documentation of the students' experiences (e.g. travel, military, on-the-job-training or work-related, independent study, non-credit courses) and written essays and or projects demonstrating the student's knowledge of the area for which credit is being evaluated. The addition of a portfolio assessment option would allow a student with a variety of experiences to have them evaluated as a whole for credit. The addition of this option would allow OCC to offer a service that is available to students at other institutions, and would seem particularly helpful to our returning and re-careering adult students. Concerns raised about portfolio assessment include the commitment of human resources for portfolio, development, assessment, and evaluation; the transferability of such credit, the numbers of students likely to participate in such an

option, and the suitability to the Associate degree. It was agreed that any consideration of the adoption of portfolio assessment should be made by the larger faculty.

Committee Recommendations:

1. Information concerning the awarding of non-traditional credit should be more broadly disseminated to students, faculty and staff, beyond the limited information contained in the catalogue. This information should include a discipline by discipline guide, indicating the program/ discipline/departmental practice of awarding credit and/or waiving classes.
2. That each discipline and program develop a statement of practice that conforms with the College policy on the awarding of non-traditional credit and prior learning assessment.
3. That the Senate consider supporting the use of credit by exam, proficiency tests and continuing education credits (CEU's) to meet the requirements for the AGS degree, and other Associate degrees offered by the College.
4. That a separate task force be convened to assess the feasibility of implementing portfolio assessment within the College.

## OPTIONS FOR EARNING PRIOR LEARNING OR NON-TRADITIONAL CREDIT

- Portfolio Development
- CLEP (College-level Examination Program): Students must score within the 50th percentile or above
- APP (Advanced Placement Program): Required score of 3 or higher
- DANTES (Defense Activity for Non-traditional Education Support)
- ACT-PEP (American College Testing Proficiency Examination Program)
- ACE-PONSI (American Council on Education Program on Non-collegiate Sponsored Instruction): The possibility of a credit award depends on the program in which a student is enrolled.
- ACE-Military (American Council on Education Military Evaluation Program): The possibility of a credit award depends on the program in which a student is enrolled.
- NLN (National League for Nursing) Mobility Profiles Achievement Tests
- Departmental or Discipline Generated Exams
- Challenge Exams
- State Sponsored Certification and Licensing: The possibility of a credit award depends on the program in which a student is enrolled.
- Police Academy: The possibility of a credit award depends on the program in which a student is enrolled.
- Military Service (Documented by a DU214): Automatic 4 credit hours granted toward Physical Education requirements
- Articulation Agreements with High School Vocational Programs: Tech Prep Advance Placement Agreements
- Continuing Education Units
- Independent/Individualized Study
- Other:
  - Journeyman's Card: 15 or 32 credit hours may be awarded depending on the degree program in which the student is enrolled.

Credit for Life Experience Committee  
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