

CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING POLICY

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RCC supports the concept of life-long learning to meet the retraining, upgrading and personal enrichment needs of students. It is the policy of Roxbury Community College that a student's experience outside the college classroom shall be evaluated for college credit at the request of the student.

Background

1. Roxbury Community College (RCC) recognizes that adult learners acquire knowledge and skills through life and work experience. Through Credit for Prior Learning (CPL), RCC will assess this knowledge and skills and grant credit/recognition for the learning that has taken place.
2. CPL is used to evaluate knowledge, skills and competencies which may have been acquired through, but not limited to, work experience, independent reading, hobbies, volunteer work, non-formal learning, travel and artistic pursuits.

The assessment and evaluation of prior learning and the determination of competency and credit awarded will be done by instructional or faculty staff who have the appropriate subject matter expertise, but other staff in an institution may have a supporting role in the process. The work required for CPL includes, but is not limited to, classroom-based and individual advising; classroom-based and individual assessment, training and upgrading; development of assessment tools; and training in the use of flexible assessment.

3. RCC accepts credit earned through CPL (as transfer credit) from accredited post-secondary institutions that have formally adopted quality assurance standards from a recognized organization such as the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, the European Union or UNESCO. Such transfer credit is applied in the context of RCC course and program requirements.

Guidelines

1. CPL Director/Dean

The Director/Dean acts as the contact person for CPL inquiries; (s)he offers orientation seminars, portfolio preparation courses and other CPL related courses; and acts as liaison between the assessor(s) and the learner.

2. CPL Assessor

Prior learning will be assessed by qualified specialists, approved by the relevant department/ program, who have expertise in the area to be assessed, and trained in assessment methods that meet quality assurance requirements for CPL. Assessors will be responsible for ensuring that the documentation provided by the learner supports the claim for credit/recognition. If the assessor determines that the knowledge the learner has demonstrated is sufficient and appropriate, credit/recognition will be granted.

The Director/Dean, CPL will work with assessors with content expertise to develop appropriate assessment methods and/or provide training to content experts in how to conduct CPL assessments.

3. Documentation and Demonstration of Achievement

a. Evidence

All CPL requires evidence. The learner has the primary responsibility for preparing the evidence that learning has taken place and that it contributes to an appropriate balance of theory and practical application. Tangible proof of competence can be provided through documentation of accomplishments or demonstration of skill and knowledge. Depending on the subject area, certain types of documentation or demonstration are more useful than others.

b. Examinations

The purpose of exams is to measure knowledge of the content of, or the achievement of, the learning outcomes that are equivalent to those of a specific course.

1. Challenge exams are created for students who have not attended the course but who wish to demonstrate that they have achieved the course outcomes. Challenge exams are designed by a course instructor or program department.
2. Standardized exams are prepared by national organizations, such as the College Level Examination Program (CLEP); are

applicable to a large population; and measure a specific level of achievement in a specific subject.

c. Equivalencies

Course equivalencies are awarded to learners who have completed and been evaluated in programs, professional licenses, or professional certificates outside of the college or university system. These non-formal programs and credentials are evaluated by RCC, and credit may be granted if the program or credential meets the assessment criteria.

d. Portfolios

Portfolios summarize the learning gained from non-formal learning experiences. A portfolio is a collection of information that demonstrates the depth and breadth of what the learner knows and/or can do. A portfolio can be used alone or in combination with other methods of assessment. It provides evidence of learning.

4. Eligibility

A learner requesting CPL must normally be admitted to a RCC program before the CPL process commences.

CPL can be used to accumulate credit in programs or to satisfy admission requirements to certain programs upon approval by the appropriate department chair or designate.

5. Conditions

- Credits granted for prior learning towards a specific program at RCC can be used in other programs at RCC where specific transfer credit exists.
- Credits granted for prior learning at RCC may not always be transferable to other institutions. It is the responsibility of the learner to determine transferability.
- For programs offered on RCC campus, a maximum of (45 credits for a degree program and 25% for a certificate) of the credits required in a program may be awarded for prior learning. Exceptions to this would be subject to recommendation by the appropriate faculty and approval of the Director/Dean.
- Not all courses are eligible for CPL; non-eligibility will be determined by the appropriate department after consultation with the Director/Dean.
- Credit awarded through CPL will be monitored to avoid awarding credit more than once for the same learning in a course/program.
- A successful CPL will apply only to the designated course and will not constitute a successful CPL of any prerequisites to that course.
- CPL will not normally be granted for a course previously transcribed without the special permission of the department and without reasonable evidence of the acquisition of new knowledge.
- Transcripts reflect the course being granted credit with a grade of TR, which will count as credits attempted and taken, but not for GPA calculations.
- If a request for CPL is unsuccessful, there will be no listing on the transcript.
- Learners who receive an unfavorable decision from the assessor will have access to CPL appeal process.
- Students are advised to consult with the Financial Aid office regarding any impacts enrollment in CPL courses may have on eligibility for student aid.

6. Fees

The cost of CPL is \$75 per credit per course assessed, with a non-refundable application fee of \$30. Students are responsible for all associated costs and all fees are non-refundable.