



## **Prior Learning Assessment Guide**

**Get Credit for What  
You Already Know**



# PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT GUIDE

Your step-by-step guide to earning credit through examination or portfolio assessment

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## WHAT IS PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT (PLA)?

Jarvis Christian College (JCC) seeks to ensure that its students are afforded every opportunity to decrease their time-to-degree and increase college affordability through prior learning assessment. The College recognizes that a great deal of learning occurs outside of the classroom, which is often worthy of college credit once learning is demonstrated.

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) provides a pathway for students to demonstrate that they have acquired relevant knowledge, skills and abilities outside of the traditional academic environment and earn college credit for it.

Prior learning may be formal, informal or experiential and knowledge may result from work experience, employer training programs, professional certification, non-credit courses, military training or experience, independent study, volunteer experience, civic activities, and the like. Credits accrued from PLA do not apply toward Jarvis's institutional residency requirement or transfer credit limits. PLA does not factor into a student's grade point average.

Prior learning assessment is a process by which individuals identify, document, have assessed and gain recognition for what they already know. PLA allows students to demonstrate knowledge equivalent to college-level coursework in a number of content areas for credit toward a degree. Credit awarded for prior learning **must** be college-level; that is, the learning demonstrated must be equivalent to the quality, rigor and level of achievement ascertained in a college-level course.

PLA is **NOT** a process by which credits are given away. PLA is evaluated on learning, **NOT** experience. PLA provides students the opportunity to validate their relevant learning.

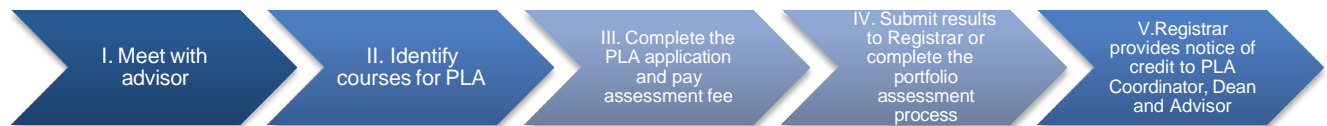
## GOOD CANDIDATES FOR PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT

Is Prior Learning Assessment for you? The following checklist may assist you in determining if you are a good candidate for Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) credit. Do any of these statements apply to you? If so, you may be a candidate for PLA credit.

- ☐ I am over the age of 21.
- ☐ I have a minimum of 5 years' work experience.

- ☐ My work experience includes leadership, management, or supervisory responsibilities (in any capacity).
- ☐ I have certifications and/or memberships with professional organizations.
- ☐ I have participated in corporate training programs.
- ☐ I have completed non-credit college courses.
- ☐ I have hobbies, personal interests, or have completed an *informal* independent study.
- ☐ I have been involved with extensive volunteer or community work.
- ☐ I am or was a member of the armed forces.
- ☐ I have lived in a foreign country and/or traveled extensively.

## PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT (PLA) PROCESS



**STEP I: Meet with advisor.** Students interested in accruing credit hours through prior learning assessment should first meet with their advisor to determine if they are a good candidate for prior learning assessment. The student should bring a resume, all college-level transcripts, formal certifications, score reports from testing agency(ies) (where applicable), and any other information that may be useful to the advising session.

**STEP II: Identify courses for PLA.** The advisor will review the student's transcript, current degree plan and preliminary evidence that demonstrate prior learning and make a recommendation to the student in consultation. If the student decides to proceed, the student and advisor will identify courses the student may be able to receive credit for through prior learning assessment. The advisor will review the process with the student.

**STEP III: Complete the PLA application and pay assessment fee.** The student should complete the Prior Learning Assessment Application and identify the type of PLA credit desired (e.g., credit-by-examination, portfolio assessment, etc.). The application is submitted to the Registrar's Office and routed accordingly. Evidence of payment should be submitted with the application. See the section on "assessment and transcription of credit fees" for payment information.

**STEP IV: Submit results to the Registrar's Office or complete the portfolio assessment process.**

- ☐ **Credit-by-examination:** Students who submit an application to receive credit through *credit-by-examination* should submit an official copy of their test results from the

appropriate agency to the Registrar's Office. Credit will be awarded based on predetermined scores identified by department faculty. See the *Credit-by-Examination* section.

- **Portfolio Assessment Process:** Students who submit an application to receive credit through *portfolio assessment* should complete the steps outlined in the portfolio assessment section.

**STEP V: Registrar provides notice of credit to Student, PLA Coordinator, Dean and Advisor.**

## PLA REQUIREMENTS

### Eligibility

All students who have been admitted to the college and are currently in good academic standing are eligible to participate in prior learning assessment as it pertains to their program of study requirements.

### Number of Credits to be Awarded

Credit for prior learning may be awarded in three broad categories--credit-by-examination, externally evaluated credit and portfolio assessment—and can *only* be awarded when it applies to a JCC Program of Study. A maximum of 24 credit hours may be awarded through Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) and used to satisfy degree requirements. Of the 24 credit hours, no more than 12 credit hours may be awarded toward the completion of major course requirements and no more than 12 credit hours may be awarded toward the completion of general education requirements and/or electives. If a specialized accrediting agency imposes a specific maximum for PLA credits, the limits set by the accrediting agency will be honored.

### Transferability

PLA credit *cannot* be transferred from another institution.

## GAINING CREDIT THROUGH PLA: PROCEDURES

### Assessment Fees

Fees charged in relation to PLA are related to the assessment and transcribing processes and are not based on the number of credits awarded. Fees are to be paid to the Cashier.

PLA Option	Fee
Credit-by-Examination (transcription of credit)	\$25.00
Portfolio	
Portfolio Assessment	\$150.00
Transcription of Portfolio Credit	\$75.00
Credit Recommendations from External Evaluators	\$25.00
Fees for all military students are waived	

### Transcription of PLA Credit

Credits for prior learning will appear on students' transcripts as 'transfer' credit and the following information will be recorded in order to meet quality standards as well as to facilitate tracking and evaluation of PLA within the institution:

- **Course number** (Campus course number that matches learning evaluated & credit awarded)
- **Course title** (Campus course title that matches learning evaluated & credit awarded)
- **Grade** (CR—Credit, No Credit (NC). The grade will not be calculated in the student's grade point average (GPA).
- **Credit Hours**
- **Source of Credit** (e.g., PLA: CLEP®, PLA: AP®, PLA: DSST, PLA: Portfolio, etc.)

### Refund and Appeal

Prior learning assessment fees cover administrative and assessment costs incurred by the College and are therefore, nonrefundable if credit is denied. If the student is denied credit, the student can appeal the decision by following the institution's appeal process. No new information will be considered in the appeal process. Portfolios are limited to two submissions.

### Portfolio Assessment: Faculty Assessors and Remuneration

The decision to grant a student credit for prior learning will rest with the subject matter expert in the discipline. When an application for portfolio credit is submitted, a trained

faculty expert will review the documentation submitted by the student. Once the assessment has been assigned, the faculty assessor has up to four weeks to submit the recommendation for credit or no credit to the Dean.

To be eligible to assess a portfolio, faculty complete a professional development workshop in Prior Learning Assessment in accordance with the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning standards.

## **PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT OPTIONS**

### **Credit-By-Examination**

Credit-by-examination may be earned through the CollegeBoard Advanced Placement Program (AP®), the College Level Examination Program (CLEP®) Subject Examination, International Baccalaureate® (IB) Diploma Program; and DANTES Subject Standardized Test Program. Credit by examination may not be used to satisfy the minimum residence requirements for the degrees awarded at graduation. Credit-by-examination assumes the student has had no formal classroom instruction as an enrolled student or as an auditor. JCC has established equivalent course credit for minimum passing scores.

- I. College Level Examination Program (CLEP®)
- II. College Board Advanced Placement (AP®) Program
- III. International Baccalaureate® (IB) Diploma Program
- IV. Prometric DANTES Subject Standardized Test (DSST) Program

### **Portfolio Assessment**

Portfolio assessment enables student to document non-traditional learning experiences for review and evaluation by Jarvis Christian College (JCC) faculty members. JCC will not award credit based solely on years of employment. Students must demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes for the course credit requested. In addition to documentation, students may be asked to display specific skills and/or complete an interview to assess content knowledge. Students seeking credit by portfolio assessment must register for a one credit hour, non-credit Portfolio Development course.



## Credit Recommendations from Recognized External Evaluators

Credit recommendations are provided for credit after a recognized external evaluator reviews the training or learning material that is offered by the military, employers, or other educational or training institutions. The College will evaluate and consider credit recommendations from the following external evaluators. All credit received from external evaluators must be approved for transfer from a faculty advisor.

- I. American Council on Education (ACE) National Guide to College Credit for Workforce Training and the ACE Military Guide: expert evaluators review workplace training, military experiences and national exams for potential college credit matches.
- II. College Credit for Heroes: partnership between the Texas Workforce Commission and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to ensure that active duty, former and retired military personnel receive the credit they earned for their service to our country.

## CREDIT-BY-EXAMINATION

Credit-by-Examination offers students of any age an opportunity to demonstrate college-level achievement and receive credit for what they have already learned. Students have the opportunity to take nationally administered exams and submit evidence of learning. Jarvis Christian College does not administer challenge exams (i.e., non-standardized locally developed exams) for credit. Following are accepted exams and scores.

### College Level Examination Program (CLEP®)

CLEP Examination	Required Score	Hours Awarded	Equivalent Course
American Literature	50	3	ENGL 2326
English Literature	50	3	ENGL 2321
First-Year Composition	50	3	ENGL 1301
Principles of Macroeconomics	50	3	ECON 2301
Principles of Microeconomics	50	3	ECON 2302
Financial Accounting	50	3	ACCT 2301
Information Systems	50	3	COSC 1300
Introductory Business Law	50	3	BUSI 2301
Principles of Management	50	3	MGMT 3300
Principles of Marketing	50	3	MARK 3300
Calculus	50	4	MATH 2423
College Algebra	50	3	MATH 1314
History of the United States I to 1877	50	3	HIST 1301
History of the United States II -Present	50	3	HIST 1302

Western Civilization I to 1648	50	3	HIST 2321
Western Civilization II 1648-Present	50	3	HIST 2322
See the Department for additional information on other tests.			

### College-Level Examination Program (CLEP®)

P.O. Box 6600 | Princeton, NJ 08541-6600

Phone: 800-257-9558 or 212-237-1331 | Fax: 610-628-3726

E-mail: [clep@collegeboard.org](mailto:clep@collegeboard.org) (Professionals) | E-mail: [clep@info.collegeboard.org](mailto:clep@info.collegeboard.org) (Students)

## College Board Advanced Placement (AP®) Program

AP Examination	Required Score	Hours Awarded	Equivalent Course
English – Language and Composition	3 or above	3	ENGL 1301
English – Literature and Composition	3 or above	3	ENGL 1302
Psychology	3 or above	3	PSYC 2321
Calculus AB	3 or above	4	MATH 2413
Calculus BC	3 or above	4	MATH 2414
Calculus BC	4 or above	8	MATH 2413 & 2414
Statistics	3 or above	3	MATH 2342
Biology	3 or above	4	BIOL 1406 & 1006
Biology	5 or above	8	BIOL 1406 & 1006 BIOL 1407 & 1007
Chemistry	3 or above	4	CHEM 1411
Chemistry	5 or above	8	CHEM 1411 & 1011 CHEM 1412 & 1012
Physics: Mechanics	3 or above	4	PHYS 1401 & 1001
Physics C: Electricity and Mag	3 or above	4	PHYS 1402 & 1002
See the Department for additional information on other tests.			

### Advanced Placement Program (AP)

#### Students

Phone: 888-225-5427 | International callers: 212-632-1780 | Fax: 610-290-8979

Email: [apstudents@info.collegeboard.org](mailto:apstudents@info.collegeboard.org) | Web: <https://apstudent.collegeboard.org/home>

#### AP for Colleges and Universities

E-mail: [aphighered@collegeboard.org](mailto:aphighered@collegeboard.org) | Web: <https://aphighered.collegeboard.org/>

## Prometric DANTES Subject Standardized Test (DSST) Program

DSST Examination	Required Score	Hours Awarded	Equivalent Course
Technical Writing	400	3	ENGL 1302 or ENGL 1303
Principles of Public Speaking	400	3	SPCH 1311
See the Department for additional information on other tests.			

## PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

Developing a portfolio for academic credit is a rigorous process. Students are afforded the opportunity to reflect on their experiences and submit a collection of work that demonstrates what they have learned as well as the knowledge, skills and abilities gained from those experiences. JCC recognizes that students can gain college-level knowledge and competencies through their work and life experiences. Portfolios are limited to two submissions.

Jarvis Christian College offers a portfolio assessment process by which prior learning can be analyzed, articulated, documented, and assessed for credit.

### Accepted Programs

Jarvis currently has three programs of study eligible for PLA credit through portfolio assessment: Business Administration, Criminal Justice, and Religion. Each program has specific requirements for content and evidence to support learning. Students must be able to demonstrate that they have attained each of the learning outcomes through prior learning assessment.

Accepted courses for Portfolio Assessment \*:

<b>Bachelor of Business Administration</b>		
<b>Course Code</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Course Credits</b>
MGMT 3306	Principles of Management	3
MGMT 3307	Organizational Behavior	3
MGMT 3310	Productions and Operations	3
MGMT 3315	Human Resource Management	3
MGMT 4301	Organizational Theory	3
MGMT 4302	Small Business Management	3
MGMT 4303	Labor Relations	3
MGMT 4306	Fundamentals of Information Security	3
<b>Bachelor of Science, Criminal Justice</b>		
CRIJ 1301	Introduction to Criminal Justice	3
CRIJ 1306	Court Systems Practice	3
CRIJ 2314	Criminal Investigations	3
CRIJ 2328	Police Systems	3
CRIJ	Security	3
<b>Bachelor of Arts, Religion</b>		
RELI 1302	Survey of New Testament	3
RELI 2301	Survey of Old Testament	3
RELI 3303	Church Administration	3

## Portfolio Assessment Application Procedure

Below are the steps and timeline to be followed when applying to receive prior learning credit through portfolio assessment. When submitting a portfolio, the student should make and retain a copy of the entire submission, as the original will be kept on-file with the College. NOTE: Portfolios are limited to two submissions.

PHASE I	PHASE II	PHASE III	PHASE IV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with respective academic advisor</li> <li>• Review current transcript and academic goals</li> <li>• Determine if PLA is an option</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the course for which credit is desired</li> <li>• Review course student learning outcomes and determine if achievement of learning can be demonstrated for each outcome</li> <li>• Enroll in a Portfolio Development Workshop through <a href="http://www.learningcounts.org">www.learningcounts.org</a> and provide documentation of enrollment with the application</li> <li>• Develop a portfolio and include the basic components</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the PLA application and pay the portfolio submission and assessment fee (cashier)</li> <li>• Submit the PLA application, proof of fee payment, and portfolio workshop receipt to the Registrar.</li> <li>• The Registrar will submit the portfolio to the PLA Coordinator for review. The PLA Coordinator will forward the portfolio to the appropriate faculty assessor for review and recommendation of credit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty assessor will evaluate the portfolio for credit and provide results in up to four weeks of the evaluation for credit.</li> <li>• Results of the evaluation will be provided to the Dean for final credit approval</li> <li>• Notice of credit approval or denial will be provided to the student, Registrar, Faculty Assessor, PLA Coordinator, and VP for Academic Affairs</li> </ul>

### PHASE I OF PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

**Meet with advisor and determine if PLA is an option.** Students interested in accruing credit hours through portfolio assessment should first meet with their advisor to determine if they are a good candidate for prior learning assessment by portfolio submission. The student should bring a resume, all college-level transcripts, formal certifications and any other information that may be useful to the advising session.

### PHASE II OF PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

**Identify courses for PLA and develop a portfolio.** The advisor will review the student's transcript, current degree plan and preliminary evidence that demonstrate prior learning and

make a recommendation to the student in consultation. If the student decides to proceed, the student and advisor will identify courses the student may be able to receive credit for through prior learning assessment. The advisor will review the process with the student.

All students are required to enroll in the portfolio development workshop at [www.learningcounts.org](http://www.learningcounts.org) prior to submitting the portfolio for assessment. Following the completion of the workshop, the portfolio can be developed. All portfolios must at a minimum include all of the basic components (see below for the *basic components of the portfolio*).

### **PHASE III OF PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT**

**Complete the PLA application and pay the portfolio submission and assessment fee.** The student must complete the Prior Learning Assessment Application and identify the type of PLA credit desired (i.e., portfolio assessment, etc.). The application is submitted to the Registrar's Office and routed accordingly. Evidence of payment and portfolio workshop completion must be submitted with the application.

The Registrar will submit the portfolio to the PLA Coordinator for review. The PLA Coordinator will forward the portfolio to the appropriate faculty assessor for review and recommendation of credit. See the section on "assessment and transcription of credit fees" for payment information.

### **PHASE IV OF PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT**

**Student receives notice of credit approval or denial.** Trained faculty assessors within the respective program of study will evaluate the portfolio for credit and provide results within four weeks of the evaluation. Results of the evaluation will be provided to the Dean for final credit approval. Notice of credit approval or denial will be provided to the student, Registrar, Faculty Assessor, PLA Coordinator, and Vice President for Academic Affairs. If the student is denied credit, the student can appeal the decision by following the institution's appeal process. Portfolios are limited to two submissions for credit.

## **Basic Components of the Portfolio**

Each program of study is unique as it relates to the evidence required to show that learning has occurred and all course student learning outcomes have been achieved. However, the basic components of a portfolio are all the same. Portfolios must be typed and presented professionally.

### **1. Cover Sheet (Prior Learning Assessment Form)**

The cover sheet is a copy of your Prior Learning Assessment Form that has been completed and signed.

### **2. Table of Contents**

### **3. Résumé**

The résumé should include relevant information, outlining the students' experiences, education, and skills.

#### **4. Course Syllabus**

Credit for prior learning through portfolio assessment can only be awarded if learning can be demonstrated for **each** learning outcome from the course syllabus. Course syllabi can be found at: <http://www.jarvis.edu/>. Students are strongly encouraged to review each learning outcome and ensure that learning can be demonstrated before deciding to complete a portfolio for assessment. If learning cannot be demonstrated for each learning outcome, credit will not be awarded.

#### **5. Degree Audit and Transcript**

Credit can only be requested and awarded if it is a requirement for the student's declared degree. Students should provide a copy of their most recent transcript as well as evidence of any transfer credit.

#### **6. Essay**

Each portfolio must include a comprehensive essay that specifically addresses each learning outcome in the course syllabus. For each learning outcome, the narrative should analyze and articulate 1) what was learned, 2) how it was learned and 3) how the knowledge has been applied.

#### **7. Evidence of Learning**

This is the bulk of the portfolio where students provide documentation reflecting the learning and skills that has been achieved. There are two ways to provide evidence of learning: direct and indirect. There are no standard guidelines on how much evidence to provide. It is up to the student to make the case. Courses have a varying numbers of learning outcomes that must be achieved. As such, each person's experiences are different and learning can be demonstrated in a number of ways. The goal is to be thorough, yet concise.

- ☐ **Direct evidence** directly supports a student's assertion and demonstrates learning. It may include any product that the student has produced, such as (but not limited to) an original written work (e.g., essay, research paper, etc.), an audio or video recording of a performance or presentation, original creations of product or art, programs developed, or curriculum plans created, etc..
- ☐ **Indirect evidence** supports your assertion of learning, but **DOES NOT** itself demonstrate learning. Indirect evidence includes documentation that provides information about your abilities, such as (but not limited to) certificates and awards, work samples, job descriptions, licenses and certifications, published articles, performance evaluations, and letters of recommendation.

## **8. Submitting the Portfolio**

Students can submit portfolios to [priorlearning@jarvis.edu](mailto:priorlearning@jarvis.edu) or to the Office of the Registrar. All documents must be submitted at one time.

Office of Student Records (Registrar)

P. O. Box 1470 | Hawkins, TX 75765 | Phone: 903-730-4890, 2453 | Fax: 903-769-1282

