



POLICY TITLE
Prior Learning Assessment

POLICY NUMBER
1.4160

Responsible Office: <i>Testing and Assessment</i>	Effective Date: <i>01/07/2022</i>
Responsible Official: <i>Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs</i>	Last Reviewed Date: <i>10/08/2014</i>
Policy Classification: <i>Academic and Student Affairs</i>	Origination Date: <i>12/12/2005</i>

I. POLICY STATEMENT

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) is a process that enables learners to translate knowledge acquired through work, military, or other certification processes sponsored by business and industry, professional organizations, or government agencies into college credit. College-level learning is validated through PLA when learners prove their mastery of the knowledge, skills, competencies, and abilities in a specific area of study that is offered by the college. Each academic department maintains final approval for all matters related to awarding credit.

II. POLICY RATIONALE AND SCOPE

Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC) recognizes that learning takes place in a variety of situations and circumstances. Many students have significant, demonstrable learning from experiences outside the traditional academic environment. Therefore, prior learning, not life experiences, is the basis for the award of college credit.

Students may be awarded up to 24 credit hours (one academic year) in PLA unless restricted by a specific program of study. Credit awarded for prior learning does not count as hours in residence required for graduation. Credit received through PLA at BRCC may or may not be transferable to other colleges and universities. Students are required to meet with an academic advisor and contact the college or university to which they plan to transfer upon completion of their program of study at BRCC.

One of the following methods, recommended by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) and the American Council on Education (ACE), will be used to assess prior learning:

1. Credit by Evaluation

2. Credit by Examination
3. Portfolio Evaluation.

Related to General Credit:

1. PLA credits satisfy prerequisite requirements in the same manner as their course equivalencies at the institution.
2. A student may not apply for PLA for a course in which they are currently enrolled or for a course in which they have attempted or completed.
5. For PLA in which a grade is not awarded, a “P” for pass is recorded on the student’s transcript by the end of the semester of PLA application.
6. BRCC accepts credit for prior learning awarded by other regionally accredited institutions as per the College’s Transfer Policy. These credits have the same limitations in their use in meeting graduation requirements as do PLA credits earned at BRCC and will be used in computing the total hours of PLA for which a student is eligible.
7. Credit received through PLA at BRCC may or may not be transferable to other colleges and universities. A student who intends to use credit for PLA in a course in which a grade has not been awarded to meet degree requirements at another institution should check the requirements of the receiving institution.
8. Students may apply for PLA only for courses directly applicable to curriculum requirements in the student’s declared program of study.

III. POLICY AUDIENCE

This policy applies to all current and prospective students of Baton Rouge Community College. This policy also applies to faculty and staff that award credit.

IV. POLICY COMPLIANCE

Failure to adhere to this policy will result in non-compliance with SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement Section 10: Educational Policies, Procedures, and Practices.

V. POLICY DEFINITIONS

Credit by Evaluation – the process of earning credit by departmental evaluation or professional certification and training such as industry-based certification.

Credit by Examination – the process of earning credit by proving mastery of content by earning an appropriate score on an exam such as College Level Examination Program (CLEP), Advanced Placement Examination (AP), American College Testing (ACT), Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT), Accuplacer, Dantes Subject Standardized Test (DSST), or departmental examination.

Portfolio Evaluation – the process of earning credit by creating a portfolio that displays mastery of content for prior experiential learning that does not have a standardized mechanism for college credit evaluation.

VI. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

A. Credit by Evaluation

1. Military Training and Experience Credit

Students who have achieved military education and training credit may apply for acceptance of these credits toward the appropriate degree. Students must be able to provide a Department of Defense (DD) Form 295 and DD Form 214 (where applicable) to apply for Military Training and Experience Credit. BRCC may award credit for military experiences based on the ACE Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services. A student may receive college credit if:

- training parallels a discipline area offered through BRCC, and
- credit meets a program requirement or is used as elective credit.

Upon request, individuals who have successfully completed Basic Training may be awarded three (3) credit hours in kinesiology as indicated in the ACE Guide. Official documentation of military training is required.

Students will obtain the appropriate form from the appropriate academic department and submit all required documents. They will then review the student's submissions and send the form to the Registrar's Office with their recommendation.

Earned PLA requests will be awarded upon receipt of all required documents.

Credit hours earned are assigned a grade of "P" and such credit does not enter into grade point average determination.

2. Professional Certification and Training Program Credit

Students may receive college credit for a course by possessing appropriate Professional certification(s) or completion of appropriate Training Program(s). Students will obtain the appropriate form from the appropriate academic department to request credit. The department will then review the student's submissions and send the form to the Registrar's Office with their recommendation. To receive credit, the student must provide BRCC with the appropriate documentation to validate the industry certification award. The industry certification must be current and valid. As an example, training may be documented with an ACE transcript. ACE evaluates training programs offered by business, industry, and government and publishes its credit recommendations in *The National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs*. If a student has received training which appears in the guide, he or she may receive college credit if:

- training parallels a discipline area offered through BRCC, and
- credit meets a program requirement or is used as elective credit.

Earned PLA request will be awarded upon receipt of all required documents.

3. Department Credit by Evaluation

Students may apply for departmental credit by evaluation in certain courses by obtaining the appropriate form from the appropriate academic department and by completing necessary applications and requirements of BRCC, including tuition and payment of required fees. Fees are not refundable if a student fails to obtain credit. Students may not request:

- the evaluation of a course a second time.
- the evaluation of a course while currently enrolled in the course.
- to establish credit in a previously attempted or completed course.
- to establish credit for a lower level of a course in which credit has been received.

Certain departments have additional requirements that must be met before credit may be granted through departmental credit by evaluation. When credit is granted as outlined above, a notation of “credit by evaluation” with a grade of “P” and the number of credits will appear on the student’s transcript. These credits are not used in computing the grade point average. Credit by evaluation may not transfer to other colleges and universities. Students are required to meet with an academic advisor and should contact the institution to which they are planning to transfer for more information about whether the department credit by evaluation earned will transfer.

Students will be charged \$30 for Departmental Credit by Evaluation

Earned PLA will be awarded by the end of the semester.

B. Credit by Examination

1. Challenge Examination

Any student who believes they are qualified for college credit through previous training or noncredit coursework may request a challenge examination by obtaining the appropriate form from the appropriate academic department. The examination will be thorough and in keeping with the established goals and learning outcomes of the course(s) and the overall program. Theoretical knowledge will be tested by faculty recommendation through commonly acceptable measures (*e.g.*, written or electronic exams, etc.) with the possibility of a skills component. Both written and skills testing may be required to insure that “course rigor” is maintained and achieved. Passing grades will be determined by the individual departments. Successful completion of a challenge examination will be recorded on the permanent academic record as “credit by examination” with a grade of “P.” Grades of “P” are not used to compute the grade point average.

Students will be charged \$30 for each challenge examination taken.

Earned PLA will be awarded by the end of the semester.

2. Advanced Placement Credit

Advanced Placement Credit refers to college-level examinations delivered by a third-party vendor that allow students to receive college credits in certain courses. ACE has published credit recommendations for a number of national standardized examinations such as the ones listed below in the *Guide to Educational Credit by Examination*. BRCC uses these recommendations as guidelines to award credit for equivalent BRCC coursework as well as elective credit. Scores must be sent directly to the BRCC Registrar from the specific testing company before credit is awarded. All equivalency is subject to future review and possible catalog change. Types of Advanced Placement Examinations accepted by BRCC are as follows:

- a. Advanced Placement (AP) Examination
- b. College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
- c. DSST (DANTES Subject Standardized –Test)
- d. International Baccalaureate Diploma/Certificate

There is a \$30 proctoring fee for a CLEP and DSST examination taken at BRCC.

Credit received through CLEP may not be transferable to other colleges and universities.

English Composition: Students pursuing credit for ENGL 1013 MUST take the English Composition with Essay. BRCC does not award credit for ENGL 1023 through CLEP examination.

For CLEP examinations taken prior to July 1, 2001, BRCC will grant credit based on scaled scores.

Earned PLA will be awarded upon receipt of official scores.

3. American College Testing (ACT), Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT), and Accuplacer

BRCC may award credit to individuals who have received appropriate test scores in English and mathematics subject tests. Scores must be submitted directly from ACT, SAT, or Accuplacer to be considered for credit. Credit will be awarded by the BRCC Office of Enrollment Services at the end of the first term completed by the student after submitting the appropriate test scores. The Testing Center at BRCC is certified to provide testing using the Accuplacer exams.

C. Portfolio Evaluation

1. A portfolio is detailed documentation of college-level learning. BRCC allows learners to receive college credit through portfolio development for prior experiential learning that does not have a standardized mechanism for college credit evaluation. The documentation varies by course and may include the following: examples of documents developed or materials made (such as a machined part made at work, or during some civic engagement); a self- assessment; an essay or oral interview explaining knowledge

and experience; awards and honors; and certifications showing completion of workshops or seminars offered by professional organizations, business and industry or government agencies. Preparation and content of the portfolio are the responsibility of the student. It must be sufficient in breadth and depth to validate the student's stated learning, and it must provide the evaluator(s) with qualitative evidence for evaluation. Assessment by portfolio evaluation is a process through which a student documents that college-level learning has been obtained through non-college means. Assessment by portfolio evaluation may result in the awarding of credit for one or more specific BRCC courses. The prior learning competencies and skills must be matched to an existing BRCC course. The academic department that houses the existing course will maintain final approval for the credit awarded. All work assessed for Credit by Examination or Portfolio Evaluation must meet a minimum of "C" level proficiency for the course learning outcomes and/or technical competencies. This "C" level must be determined by the faculty to maintain academic integrity and rigor. The student will need to go to the appropriate department to obtain the appropriate form and submit it with the portfolio to the department. A fee is charged for review of the portfolio regardless of whether credit is awarded.

There is an \$85 fee for a portfolio evaluation.

Earned PLA will be awarded by the end of the semester.

A student may apply for Portfolio Evaluation only once in the same course.

Appeals

BRCC has established a process for Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) appeals. Students may challenge or appeal Professional Certification or Training Credit, Credit by Examination, or Portfolio Evaluation only.

Appeals involve the student, instructor, department chair or program manager and/or the dean of the division in which the course is housed. Appeals are not addressed beyond the division dean level. Students may challenge being denied PLA credit. The student must apply for a PLA appeal of a grade within 45 days of when the PLA was requested and/or the PLA examination was administered. Any challenge or appeal that is submitted beyond the prescribed deadline will be denied.

VII. POLICY RELATED INFORMATION

Further information on SACSCOC and all its guidelines can be found at <https://sacscoc.org>.

Advanced Placement (AP) exams are a series of examinations developed by the College Board for AP High School classes in 7 subject areas <https://apstudent.collegeboard.org/apcourse>. Students who have taken an Advanced Placement Course of the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) in their secondary school and who have taken an Advanced Placement Examination of the CEEB may receive course credit with a score of 3, 4, or 5 depending on the subject. Scores must be received directly from CEEB to the BRCC Office of Enrollment Services for evaluation before credit is awarded.

CLEP assesses proficiency in general education through 33 tests in five subject areas including mathematics, writing, communication, and science. Most CLEP examinations cover lower level and introductory knowledge in these subject areas. BRCC may award credit to individuals who have received an acceptable score on the CLEP examinations and who meet or exceed the ACE recommended scores for awarding credit on the CLEP subject examinations. The Testing Center at BRCC is certified to provide testing using the CLEP exams.

DANTES Subject Standardized – Test (DSST) examinations test knowledge in both lower-level and upper-level college material through 38 tests in six subject areas (Business, Humanities, Math, Physical Science, Social Studies, Technology http://getcollegecredit.com/assets/pdf/DSST_Exam_List.pdf). BRCC may award credit for DSST (formerly DANTE) Examination Program to individuals who meet or exceed the ACE recommended scores for awarding credit on the DSST subject examinations. BRCC does not award credit for ENGL 1023 through DSST examination. Credit received through DSST is transferable within BRCC but may not be transferable to other colleges and universities.

Students who present an International Baccalaureate Diploma/Certificate to Enrollment Services may qualify for college credit. BRCC grants credit for college- level courses only. A grade of 5 qualifies a student to receive credit for one introductory course. No credit is awarded for English as a Second Language.

VIII. POLICY EXCEPTIONS

The Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs must approve exceptions to this policy.

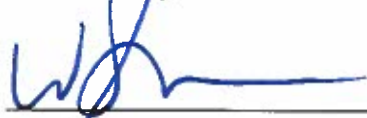
IX. POLICY HISTORY AND REVIEW CYCLE

This policy will supersede its previous policy. This policy is to be reviewed and revised, as needed, within three years of the effective date.

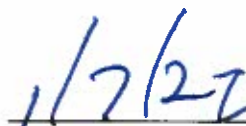
X. POLICY URL

This policy may be accessed on the BRCC website at www.mybrcc.edu.

XI. POLICY APPROVAL - SIGNATURE, NAME, TITLE, AND DATE OF OFFICIAL



Willie Smith, Ed.D.
Chancellor



Date
Effective Date of Policy