POLICY NAME
Credit for Prior Learning

POLICY NUMBER
1.7

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY
Academic Affairs

CREATION / REVISION / EFFECTIVE DATES
Created January 2003/ Revised Fall 2010; Fall 2011; Summer 2012/Effective Fall 2012; revised October 2017/Revised April 2019/effective immediately

PURPOSE
Awarding credit for properly documented prior learning can be a powerful tool for recruiting and retaining students, especially non-traditional students who have a wealth of experience. This policy outlines consistent, statewide processes for the valid and reliable assessment of experiential and extra-collegiate learning at the college level.

ORGANIZATIONAL SCOPE OR AUDIENCE
Degree seeking students

DEFINITIONS
ACE - American Council on Education:
A major coordinating body for higher education institutions in the U.S., providing leadership and a unifying voice on higher education issues and influencing public policy through advocacy, research, and program initiatives. A primary service of ACE is facilitating the review of learning opportunities outside college classrooms and providing 3rd party, unbiased credit equivalency recommendations.

AP - Advanced Placement:
Standardized high school courses generally recognized to be equivalent to undergraduate courses in college; college credit is applied based on exam score.

CAEL - Council for Adult and Experiential Learning:
A nonprofit organization that works at all levels within the higher education, public, and private sectors to facilitate education and training, linking learning and work.

CLEP - College Level Examination Program:
Tests published by the College Board and designed to measure college-level competence achieved outside the college classroom; course credit is given to students earning a satisfactory score on the CLEP examination indicating successful mastery of course material.
Crosswalk:
A diagram illustrating various learning pathways to degree programs.

DSST - Dantes Subject Standardized Test – Tests developed by Chauncey Group International and designed to allow a student to demonstrate proficiency in an area of study normally taught at a college or university.

IB - International Baccalaureate:
Program of international education offered in some high schools; credits are awarded to students who achieve a minimum score on the exams.

Learning Counts:
A resource developed by CAEL used by students to evaluate their lifelong learning and develop a portfolio through which they demonstrate their prior learning and receive a transcript defining college credit recommendations.

PLA Coordinator:
Regional contact person who assists students interested in seeking a credit award for prior learning by facilitating the College’s prior learning assessment process.

Residency Requirement:
In order to obtain a degree or certificate, students must earn 15 of the final 30 credit hours at Ivy Tech as a regular student and not awarded through transfer, test-out, or other means of advanced placement. Exceptions to this standard must “demonstrate structures or practices that ensure coherence and quality to the degree. Consortial arrangements are considered to be such structures”. (The Assumed Practices, retrieved October 27, 2017 at https://www.hlcommission.org/policies/assumed-practices.html)

V – Verified Competency:
A status for which credit is earned, but no grade is assigned.

POLICY
Ivy Tech Community College acknowledges the prior learning experiences of both current and prospective students by awarding credit for appropriate prior learning. Such prior learning could include but is not limited to the following: college-level credit from other institutions, nationally recognized testing and certifications, workplace learning, military experiences and training.

Advanced standing is achieved through Transfer Credit; Credit by Examination; Educational Credit for Certification and Training; and Prior Learning Portfolio.

Credit may be granted under the following circumstances:
- the student demonstrates the achievement of course objectives at a level that is comparable and acceptable in the classroom
- the student has completed the admissions process, is a degree-seeking student and enrolled in an Ivy Tech program,
the credit does not duplicate previous college credit,
- the minimum level of achievement is documented,
- and the course is applicable to the student's declared program area.

In order to obtain a degree or certificate, completion of at least 15 credit hours in the curriculum is required as a regular student of Ivy Tech, and not awarded through test-out or other means of advanced placement.

Students who submit documentation of prior learning are not excused from the requirements for entry assessment. Course prerequisite requirements must still be met or otherwise documented. At the discretion of a faculty advisor, it is possible to substitute other higher level courses for the credits represented by prerequisites that would otherwise have been taken.

Students requesting credit for prior learning must do so prior to registration for the course/s involved and not while enrolled in the course/s. Students who withdraw or fail a course may seek a credit award for prior learning, i.e. credit by exam, certification, portfolio, etc. but such credit award would not erase the previous grade. See 4.11 - GPA Calculation for complete policy.

Students shall be advised that Ivy Tech credits earned through prior learning assessment may or may not transfer to another institution as such determination is the decision of the receiving institution.

Transfer Credit
Transfer credit is awarded for appropriate grades from courses taken at other regionally accredited institutions of higher learning. The College will accept in transfer any course appearing in the Indiana Core Transfer Library (CTL). For courses not appearing on the CTL, recommendations for transfer and applicability of credit are made by the appropriate academic faculty within that discipline. Students wishing to transfer in technical courses that fulfill program requirements (non-elective courses) may be asked to demonstrate competency if the transfer coursework is outdated. Students are responsible for requesting an evaluation of credits within their first term and for requesting an official transcript from the transferring institution. (See 1.6 - Transferring Courses into Ivy Tech)

Credit by Examination
Credit by examination is granted for acceptable test results under the following programs: College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), Advanced Placement (AP), DSST (or DANTES), International Baccalaureate (IB) and tests given by Ivy Tech instructors as specific subject test-outs (TCE). CLEP, DSST, AP, and IB tests are the standardized tests chosen to verify competency in general education subjects. Students with other nationally normed advanced placement test scores may petition the Regional Academic Officer to have the particular test evaluated for possible credit.
Technical credit by examination (TCE) may be available when no nationally normed advanced placement test exists. Students may request and the College may agree to prepare and administer examinations to assess specific technical course objectives. Technical credit examinations may require written and verbal tests, performance test, portfolio review, or other evaluations. Students must complete the test at one sitting, unless it includes two parts, i.e. lab and written exams. TCE is not necessarily available for all courses.

Educational Credit for Certification and Training:
Credit may be awarded when students demonstrate learning through training and certifications that have been reviewed and recommended by the American Council on Education (ACE). Students must provide an ACE transcript or official documentation of valid and current certification or licensure.

Prior Learning Portfolio:
Credit may be awarded for properly documented college level learning achieved outside the college classroom that does not appear on an Ivy Tech crosswalk. Students are responsible for defining, demonstrating and documenting how they meet Ivy Tech course objectives through a portfolio that is developed and assessed through the Learning Counts program administered by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) or through a portfolio assessed by Ivy Tech faculty.

PROCEDURE

Transfer Credit
- Credit for courses taken at another regionally accredited institution of higher learning for which the student has earned a grade of “C-” or better may be awarded.
- Any student who wishes to submit a transcript for consideration of previously earned credits must have the other institution send an official transcript to the Registrar.
- The Registrar will accept in transfer any course appearing in the Core Transfer Library (CTL). For non CTL courses, the Registrar will forward information to the appropriate department or school for review.

Credit by Examination
CLEP and DSST: The CLEP tests and the DSST tests are available at several hundred centers in the United States, including the main campuses of Ivy Tech’s regions.
- Students should submit official CLEP or DSST scores to the Registrar for consideration of credit.
- If minimum acceptable scores as indicated on the CLEP/DSST course crosswalk are obtained, credit may be granted. Minimal scores for CLEP and DSST can be found on the College website in the section on Credit for Prior Learning. The test score report should be retained in the student’s record.
The use of such credit toward specific course requirements in general education and/or a program area is decided by the applicable statewide curriculum committee, and approved by the Vice Chancellors for Academic Affairs.

Students should contact their program advisors before taking the CLEP or DSST exam to ensure the exam will apply to their degree programs.

Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) tests: Advanced Placement Tests, also published by The College Board, can only be taken while a student is in high school.

- Students who complete these tests should request that results be sent to the Ivy Tech Community College specific region they plan to attend.
- Credit will be granted only if the AP or IB tests are applicable to the program concerned.
- Minimum acceptable scores can be found on the College website in the section on Credit for Prior Learning.
- The test score report should be retained in the student’s record.
- Fees for AP and IB are paid while the student is in high school. Students should contact their high school counselor for information about AP tests.

Technical Credit by Examination (TCE): Technical Credit by Examination (TCE) tests administered by Ivy Tech instructors may be available in many technical courses for which no nationally recognized, standardized test exists.

- A student who would like to take a TCE exam should contact his or her program advisor before signing up for the course.
- Students requesting credit via TCE must attempt the test-out prior to registration for the course involved.
- Test-out examinations for specific courses are to be taken only once, unless the Regional Academic Officer or designee approves a re-test request.
- A nominal fee for administering the test must be paid by the student through the Regional Business Office before a TCE test is administered.
- Upon the recommendation of the instructor and the approval of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs or designee, the registrar may record a “V” on the student’s record. Documentation of the test taken and the results received should be retained in the student’s record.

Educational Credit for Certification and Training

- Credit will be awarded for workforce certifications that appear on the certification and training crosswalk. The crosswalk may be found on the College website the section on Credit for Prior Learning.
- Students wishing to have credit awarded for workforce certifications or training must provide an ACE transcript or the applicable licensure or certification. This documentation should be retained in the student’s record.
- Faculty or PLA Coordinator evaluating and approving such a request will complete the Collegewide Course Evaluation Summary Certification Crosswalk form and forward to the registrar.
- Students are not charged for certification or training on the crosswalk.
- Refer to the complete policy on Awarding Credit for Noncredit Training.

Prior Learning Portfolio
- Prior Learning Portfolio credit is granted for learning accomplished outside of and prior to college enrollment. Like all PLA credit awards, students must be currently admitted as degree-seeking students and enrolled at Ivy Tech to be awarded credit for learning demonstrated via portfolio.
- The awarding of credit for prior learning portfolios is limited to technical coursework. (General education competencies must be validated through nationally recognized testing.)
- If program accreditation or licensure issues in certain programs preclude the awarding of PLA credit, the College will not award PLA credit for coursework in that program.
- Students meet with the local PLA Coordinator to initiate the credit evaluation process. Student portfolios will be developed and assessed through Learning Counts. Upon completion of the Learning Counts program, students shall submit their transcript including credit recommendations to the PLA Coordinator. Program faculty shall review the transcript, complete and return the Course Evaluation Summary to the PLA Coordinator. The student is responsible for the fees associated with the Learning Counts program. If credit is awarded for PLA, this must be documented in the student’s record, including a description of the evidence received to support the awarding of credit.
- In exceptional cases and only with the approval of the Vice Chancellors for Academic Affairs, a student may independently develop a portfolio to be assessed internally by Ivy Tech faculty. Students, faculty and staff shall adhere to the Prior Learning Portfolio Standards and Prior Learning Portfolio Assessment Process policies including developing a portfolio for each course where credit is sought, documented proof of achievement of course objectives, $50 charge per course for portfolio evaluation. The portfolio evaluator makes a recommendation as to the acceptance or denial of credit, which must be approved by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. If credit is awarded for a portfolio, this must be documented in the student’s record, including a description of the evidence received to support the awarding of credit.

Status Recorded for Prior Learning Credit Awards
Once the student has been admitted as a degree-seeking student, is enrolled and presents the required documentation, the registrar will record a “V” (Verified Competency) on the student’s record for the course identified on the crosswalks or for the courses on the approved PLA Course Evaluation Summary.

Credit awarded for prior learning does not apply toward credit computations for financial aid programs or student grade point average, however is included in earned hours.

REFERENCES
ASOM 1.6 - Transferring Courses into Ivy Tech
https://www.ivytech.edu/files/transferring-courses-into-IvyTech.pdf
ASOM 1.9 - Prior Learning Portfolio Standards https://www.ivytech.edu/files/prior-learning-portfolio-standards.pdf
ASOM 8.1 - Awarding Credit in Corporate College Courses
ACE College Credit Recommendation Service - http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/College-Credit-Recommendation-Service-CREDIT.aspx
PLA Course Evaluation Summary through Portfolio
PLA Course Evaluation Summary Crosswalk

RESOURCE PERSON
Vice Chancellors for Academic Affairs, Deans and Program Chairs