



Credit for Prior Learning Handbook

Northern Wyoming Community College District

*To be reviewed Spring 2020 by C&S
Committee and Faculty Senate*

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Preface

The Northern Wyoming Community College District (NWCCD) has prepared this handbook to provide new and returning students, military veterans, advisors, faculty, and administration with the information needed to complete Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) requests and processes. The handbook will be revised periodically to reflect changes in processes and prior learning assessment options.

The contents of this CPL Handbook have been specifically designed to address the unique needs of students applying for certificate and degree programs and used in advising unemployed, transitioning, and incumbent workers. NWCCD is continually evaluating and revising CPL processes and methodology. As processes are refined they are reviewed and adapted for use.

For more information about CPL at NWCCD, contact:

Gillette College Advising Services
(307) 681-6011 or (307) 681-6012
300 West Sinclair
Gillette, WY 82718

Sheridan College Advising Services
(307) 675-0100
1 Whitney Way
Sheridan, WY 82801

Equal Opportunity: Non-Discrimination Clause

Northern Wyoming Community College District prohibits discrimination in employment, educational programs and activities on the basis of race, national origin, color, creed, religion, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity, and any other class protected under state and federal law. The District also affirms its commitment to providing equal opportunities and equal access to its facilities. Inquiries concerning Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act may be referred to the Vice President for Administration, Cheryl Heath, NWCCD's Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator, Sheridan College, Whitney Building, Room W145E, 1 Whitney Way, Sheridan, WY 82801; 307-675-0505. Inquiries also may be made to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Federal Building, Suite 310, 1244 Speer Boulevard, Denver, CO 80204-3582; 303-844-3417; or TDD 303-844-3417.

Introduction: Credit for Prior Learning Assessment at NWCCD

Prior learning is gained through life or work outside structured higher educational courses. Many people learn through their experiences in life, such as those in professional endeavors (through business, the military, or other work/training experiences) or through other education experiences (through community programs, travel, or personal study).

NWCCD's Credit for Prior Learning Policy is covered by two sets of policy and procedure:

Series 5000 Student Affairs

- **Policy 5015 Admission to the College**
Procedure 5015 [Placement Testing](#)
- **Policy 5035 Student Records**
Procedure 5035.2 – [Transfer Credit](#)
Testing, transfer equivalencies, other transfers, credit for prior learning, military transcripts
- **Policy 5041 Tuition/Fees and Student Finances**
Procedure 5041.33 [Veterans Benefits](#)

Series 6000 Academics

- **Policy 6010 Degrees and Certificates**
Procedure 6010.30 – [Credit for Prior Learning](#)
Credit by examination, advanced placement examination, college level placement, institutional challenge examinations, standardized subject tests, industry certification and portfolio submission.

Students may request copies of these policies and procedures for additional information not covered in this handbook.

Why is NWCCD Adopting Credit for Prior Learning?

NWCCD's mission is to "welcome all learners, empower student success, and encourage and strengthen community development." The District's vision states: "We will be the premier higher education institution in the region; we will provide all students with a diverse range of experiences to prepare for a dynamic future."

As such the District's efforts, resources, planning, and evaluation is focused on creating new pathways to success for all students. This includes integrating CPL methods into the advising process as pre-assessment, which rewards experience and knowledge to rapidly educate students and increase the probability of credential completion.

What is Credit for Prior Learning?

Credit for Prior Learning is a process through which students identify and demonstrate areas of relevant learning through appropriate documentation. These artifacts and evidence are submitted to the district for assessment and the potential award of academic credit relative to specific course outcomes. Students must support claims of specific relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs), competencies, training, experience, and certification aligned with course outcomes. Collegiate learning acquired through non-traditional experience (e.g., work, training, research, civil or military service, and life experience) must be accompanied by a critical self-assessment of prior learning.

The Council of Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) defines CPL as:

“The recognition of learning gained from experiences that may be granted credit or otherwise certified. The assessment of learning attained through experiences irrespective of the time and place in which they occurred” (Fiddler, Marienau, and Whitaker, 2006, p. 12).

Credit for Prior Learning in Wyoming

All Wyoming colleges have CPL policies and processes, but they vary from institution to institution. Few have a complete CPL Handbook that is available to advisors and students, and several have no intention of updating those policies and procedures due to a desire to have students in the classroom.

At NWCCD, CPL is regularly evaluated for development and application across all programs within the District, but it is not yet a standard part of the advising process. As part of continual improvement, CPL is being incorporated into the advising process as part of pre-assessment and customized credential completion pathways. NWCCD prioritizes technical education programs as development proof-of-concept, as they most closely tie with the local and regional economic needs.

How Can Prior Learning Match the Learning Outcomes at NWCCD?

Prior learning provides students a way of thinking about broad categories of learning. The learning outcomes help academic and faculty advisors guide students during preliminary advising sessions and pre-assessment, aligning and categorizing prior learning with the learning outcomes at NWCCD.

What are the Learning Outcomes at NWCCD?

NWCCD’s core curriculum provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions indicative of an educated individual and foundation to lifelong learning. The three core abilities standard in the District’s general education curriculum are listed below:

1. Acquire and Apply Knowledge
2. Think Critically
3. Communicate Effectively

Prior Learning Assessment Methods

NWCCD uses several different testing formats to assess prior knowledge:

- **Advanced Placement (AP) Equivalencies**
 - Qualified beginning students applying to NWCCD may be eligible for credit in certain courses based on their College Entrance Examination Board Advanced Placement Test scores as approved by instructional departments. Course and credit hours awarded will appear on the student's official transcript, but will not factor into the student's semester or cumulative grade point average.
 - For more detailed information regarding Advanced Placement program please visit the College Board website at <https://apstudent.collegeboard.org/home>
- **College-Level Examination Program (CLEP)**
 - Criteria for the award of credit for CLEP subject examinations under the CLEP section this handbook; for more detailed information on NWCCD policies regarding CLEP, including representation on official transcripts, please visit the testing website at <http://www.sheridan.edu/services/testing-center/>.
- **DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST)**
 - Formerly known as Defense Activity for Non-traditional Educational Support testing, DSST is a credit by examination process available nationally and recognized by the American Council on Education; a full listing of exams offered at NWCCD's testing centers is available upon request; eligibility criteria may be found in the DSST section of this handbook. DSST credit will appear on students' transcripts.
 - For additional information on the DSST program, including study guides and practice exams, please visit the official website at www.getcollegecredit.com.
- **American Council on Education (ACE)**
 - The American Council on Education (ACE) is an organization providing program evaluation and transcripts for training acquired through specific employers, such as training received during a military career, and provides guidance to colleges and universities on the appropriate awarding of credit. NWCCD evaluates these recommendations, combining them with Military Credit for Prior Learning methods, to award credit as appropriate for the appropriate program of study.
 - A listing of employers participating in ACE recommendations can be found at <http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/College-Credit-Recommendation-Service->

[CREDIT.aspx](#). Transcripts for military training can be requested through the Joint Service Transcript at <https://jst.doded.mil/smart/signIn.do>.

- **Demonstrated Proficiency Tests**

- Institutional Challenge Exams ([Procedure 6010.30](#)) may be developed at the discretion of the department/division chair/director if there is no approved CLEP exam available. Requests for challenge exams should be initiated through the instructor, who will secure the signatures of the department/division chair and Dean/Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs.
- Currently enrolled students who present satisfactory evidence that they are qualified in a particular subject may be eligible to receive credit upon passing an examination developed and administered by the appropriate academic department. Permission from the head of the instructional department is required to take the examination, and will not be administered to students who have previously taken the exam for credit.
- Satisfactory evidence of equivalency may include but is not limited to work experience; non-credit coursework; courses completed at non-accredited institutions; military training; and industry-specific credentialing (e.g., Microsoft certifications, etc.).
- Challenge exams are available in many of the CTE and General Education courses, and competency demonstrations are optional in a number of CTE courses.

- **Portfolio Assessment**

- For courses that do not have prior learning assessments available, but for which a student believes he or she is qualified for credit based on prior training or work experience, the portfolio assessment option is an alternative form of CPL. To prove alignment of experience to specific course objective students are required to prepare and submit documentation supporting the attainment of relevant skills, knowledge, values, attitudes, understanding, competencies, training, experience, and certification. Completed portfolios must describe not only relevant experience but should identify the particular learning outcomes relevant to coursework for which credit is being requested.
- Details on the portfolio assessment process can be found in the Portfolio Assessment section of this handbook.

CPL will not be awarded until after the student has been admitted into a specific program and all official documentation of previous work or competencies demonstrated has been received. NWCCD reserves the right to accept credit in a way best calculated to preserve the integrity of its degree programs. CPL credit may be granted only in programs where NWCCD offers coursework in disciplines related to its certificate or degree programs. CPL credit awarded at another regionally-accredited institution may be transferred to NWCCD with the approval of the Registrar and the Division chair.

No more than 24 credits maximum may be applied toward a degree program. CPL credit will be posted to the transcript as credit earned, without a grade, and does not affect a student's grade point average. CPL credit may not be counted toward the residency requirement of a degree program.

What are the National Criteria for Quality Assurance in Assessing Learning for Credit?

- I. Credit or its equivalent will be awarded only for learning, and not for experience.
- II. Assessment should be based on standards and criteria for the level of acceptable learning.
- III. Assessment should be treated as an integral part of learning, not separate from it, and should be based on an understanding of learning processes.
- IV. The determination of credit awards and competence levels must be made by appropriate subject matter and academic or credentialing experts.
- V. Credit or other credentialing will be appropriate to the academic context in which it is awarded and accepted. The program of study and the student's major (i.e., core, upper-division, or graduate) determines the "academic context."

What are the Advantages of CPL?

Credit for Prior Learning assessment reduces repetition of relevant course-related material for students with prior learning or with prior degrees while reducing the time and money required to earn a certificate or an Associate's degree, although it requires the investment of both. Certain CPL components require fees for activities such as testing (e.g., departmental examination and standardized tests) and portfolio assessment. However, CPL generally requires less time and money to complete than taking regular classes.

By evaluating prior learning, NWCCD verifies that the particular learning of students is valuable, applicable, and is at the college level. Most importantly, CPL enables students to gain greater insight about themselves.

Eligibility

Prospective credential-seeking students who fit the following criteria are eligible for CPL assessment:

- Adults – Students who are 18 years or older and who have earned a high school diploma or equivalency.
- Non-Traditional – Students in this category include: adults who have not earned a high school diploma or equivalency; incumbent workers seeking additional training in order to advance in their careers or retain employment; and adult workers who have been laid off and require retraining.
 - NWCCD's Career and Technical Training (CTE) programs receive partial funding through Wyoming and U.S. Department of Labor grants as they come available, and CPL processes are developed, tested, and refined under these grants to address labor needs.
 - The U.S. Department of Labor defines incumbent workers as full-time paid employees seeking additional training to maintain current employment or seek advancement. Incumbent workers must be at least 18 years of age and a citizen on the United States or

a non-citizen whose status permits employment in the United States. Prospective students in this category may be requested to complete a release form for data research and analysis purposes.

- Underemployed and Unemployed workers who are prospective students may be requested to complete release forms prior to applying for CPL; this will allow the District to provide data research and analysis for agencies providing grant funding for retraining programs.
- Students who have learning experiences outside traditional college curricula.

Assessment Fees

Students applying for all forms of credit for prior learning assessment will be charged fees according to the type of assessment. Applicants for CPL may request a cost schedule from the Registrar's office, the Business Office, or refer to the college website at <http://>

Transfer to Other Institutions

Not all CPL options may be transferable to all schools, but that is often true in all cases of transfer. Almost any regionally accredited institution in the United States accepts at least some type of prior learning credits in transfer.

The transfer of CPL credits to other two- or four-year colleges and universities is governed by the receiving institution's specific transfer policy. Some schools accept CPL credit without question; others do not accept prior learning credit at all. It is recommended that students review the transfer policy of their institution of choice regarding CPL and work with their Academic or Faculty Advisor to ensure all transfer requirements are met prior to degree completion.

Employment

Employers may consider CPL as equivalent to classroom instruction since the evaluation is based on specific course competencies. More colleges and employers are beginning to recognize the value of prior learning assessment and credit awards as such policies and processes may help increase credential completion by eliminating repetition of previously learned knowledge, increasing student retention, and reducing the time to credential completion.

The American Council on Education (ACE) evaluates courses of study offered through business and industry training sites. If these courses of study meet the academic rigor standards established by ACE a credit value is assigned.

Role Expectations: Advising, Faculty Assessors, and Students

Advisor Roles in Credit for Prior Learning

Students who believe they are eligible for academic credit through prior learning assessment methods should schedule an appointment with their Academic or Faculty Advisor. The advisor will discuss the appropriate method of assessment and provide the information necessary to complete the correct testing and evaluation processes, as well as provide a summary of assessment costs.

Role of the Faculty Assessor

Academic departments decide which courses can be assessed for prior learning credit. Several factors are considered in the decision:

- Electives versus required courses in the major
- First year versus second year courses
- Courses required for transfer or accreditation

Faculty are responsible for the development and evaluation of **Departmental Course Challenge Exams** and **Competency Demonstrations**. As these CPL methods are reviewed and modified faculty are required to update the availability of the assessment and evaluation guidelines to the Academic Advising and Testing departments.

Faculty Assessors work in consultation with their departments to define the level of experience reasonably comparable to classroom and/or lab instruction. Definitions of prerequisite experiences must be appropriate, defensible, and available for public review.

Depending on the CPL method employed Faculty Assessors will have varying degrees of contact with the student. Increased amounts of contact may bias credit decisions through personal influence; however, increased contact can reduce the potential for miscommunication of expectations. Students will receive the least contact through AP, CLEP, and DSST testing processes, moderate contact during Departmental Challenge Exams and Competency Demonstrations, and the most contact in the Portfolio Review process. Faculty Assessors will define the satisfactory and unsatisfactory evaluation standards. A satisfactory rating equals a grade of 70% or higher.

Role of the Student

Students applying for CPL assessment have specific responsibilities in order to ensure that prior learning is assessed appropriately and in a timely fashion.

- All applicants for CPL assessment must complete the standard Petition for Course Proficiency and the Application for Credit for Prior Learning. These forms may be requested from Academic Advising, the student's Faculty Advisor, the Office of the Registrar, or downloaded from the college website at <http://>. Information on how to complete the applications is available in Appendix A of this handbook, and sample applications are available in Appendix B.
- Students requesting credit for Advanced Placement courses taken at their high school should coordinate with their Academic Advisor during the enrollment or registration period to determine the applicability of completed coursework to their collegiate academic plan.
- Students requesting CLEP or DANTE/DSST assessment should coordinate with their Academic Advisor during their enrollment or registration period prior to contacting the Testing Center to determine which exams are applicable to their degree. Students will be required to contact the Testing Center a minimum of one week prior to the desired testing date to ensure the availability of a proctor, request study materials, and register with the testing system.
- Students requesting assessment through a Departmental Course Challenge Exam or a competency demonstration must request this form of assessment from the appropriate faculty member, and must submit a completed Petition for Course Proficiency and Application for Credit for Prior Learning at the time of the request. Additional forms may be required for the assessment and will be provided by the faculty member or department.
- Students requesting a Portfolio Assessment must request the review from the appropriate faculty member, and must submit a completed Petition for Course Proficiency and Application for Credit for Prior Learning at the time of the request. Once the faculty member has agreed to the assessment the student will be required to complete a Portfolio Review Checklist and a Portfolio Review Tracking Form; samples of these forms are available in Appendix B, and blank forms may be requested from Academic Advising, the Faculty Advisor, through the Office of the Registrar, or downloaded from the website at <http://>.
- Portfolio Reviews are an intensive process, and students will be required to work with the Faculty Advisor to develop the Portfolio Review Petition. A sample of a completed petition is available in Appendix B, with a listing of allowable evidence materials that the assessing faculty member may request available in Appendix A. A blank Portfolio Review Petition may be downloaded in Microsoft Word format at <http://>.

Advanced Placement

What is Advanced Placement?

Advanced Placement (AP) is a curriculum developed and administered by The College Board, and is usually available during high school. These courses are designed to challenge younger students who are capable of meeting prerequisite and collegiate requirements with course work, materials, with grading standards equivalent to the academic rigor and expectations common to college-level studies.

NWCCD makes every effort to reward ambitious students by recognizing 25 different courses taken through AP as eligible for assessment and credit. For a full listing of AP courses NWCCD will assess for credit, please refer to the District's Advanced Placement webpage at:

<http://catalog.sheridan.edu/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=320>.

How to Apply for Advanced Placement Credit Assessment

Students who have completed AP coursework should meet with an Academic Advisor to discuss educational goals and the academic requirements for their chosen program of study. The Academic Advisor will help the student complete pre-assessment paperwork. Some AP awards may not be applicable to degree programs offered at NWCCD.

Special Requirements

Students who have completed the American Government AP assessment must also pass the Wyoming Constitution Challenge Exam in order to receive credit for *POLS 1000 – American & Wyoming Government*. By completing both assessments students will have satisfied the US and Wyoming Constitution general education requirement. Students who complete only the American Government CLEP exam will receive two units of elective government credit and will not be considered as having completed the general education requirement.

Students who complete the United States History AP assessment must also complete the US and Wyoming Constitution Challenge exam to receive full credit for *HIST 1210 – US History I*. Completion of both the AP assessment and the challenge exam will satisfy the US and Wyoming Constitution general education requirement.

For all Advanced Placement examinations only scores of 3, 4, or 5 will be accepted by NWCCD. Appropriate credit awards for the applicable college course will be awarded, and a grade of "S" will be entered into the student's transcript.

College-Level Examination Program (CLEP)

What is CLEP?

CLEP exams are designed to test students on their mastery of college-level material in a variety of subjects. Knowledge equivalent to materials taught in traditional classroom environments can be gained through a variety of means, including general academic studies, significant independent study, or through extracurricular training. Developed by The College Board, the institution who created Advanced Placement (AP) courses and SAT testing, CLEP exams are the most used and accepted credit-by-examination programs in the United States.

In addition to increasing the probability of retaining students through the completion of their credential, this testing process provides students with an opportunity to save time and money while pursuing greater academic success. Exams cover material taught in courses that most students take as academic requirements in the first two years of their academic career. Satisfactory completion of a CLEP exam grants equivalent credit to course completion and appears on the student's transcript as having satisfied the educational requirement.

NWCCD currently administers and accepts CLEP testing for twenty-one of the thirty-three available CLEP exams. Each academic department determines acceptable CLEP scores, and NWCCD accepts the scores without requiring approval by the Curriculum and Standards (C&S) Committee or the Board of Trustees. Generally, NWCCD uses the American Council on Education (ACE) recommendations for acceptable passing scores, though some academic departments within the District have established their own requirements.

Who is CLEP Ideal For?

CLEP exams have been designed to be accessible to students who have completed high school or earned their equivalency and feel they have sufficient knowledge in and understanding of a subject to pass a college-level course. The exams also address knowledge that older students who have never attended or are returning to college may have acquired. College students who have done significant amounts of independent study are also eligible to take CLEP exams to address subjects they feel they have mastered, reducing the investment in time and money required to complete their program of study.

Military service members and veterans also qualify to take CLEP exams to receive credit for training and experience they may have received while members of the United States Armed Forces. These individuals may also qualify to take prior learning exams specific to military personnel through the DAN TES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST). For more information on CLEP please refer to the Testing Center website at <http://www.sheridan.edu/services/testing-center/> or call the Testing Center directly.

Accepted CLEP Credits at NWCCD

NWCCD modifies its CLEP offering on a regular basis, offering new exams aligning with District curricula as they come available or removing those that are no longer relevant. For a list of available CLEP tests at NWCCD please visit refer to the District's [CPL Policy](#), or visit: <http://>.

Applying for CLEP Testing at NWCCD

Prospective students enrolling at NWCCD will have discussions regarding pre-assessment with their Academic or Faculty Advisor during the initial advising session. Where applicable, students will be provided with CLEP exam information that specifically addresses the educational requirements for their chosen certificate or degree program. Once all applicable CLEP exam options have been identified the student will be referred to the District's Testing Center to complete testing prior to registering for classes.

CLEP Testing Process

Students taking CLEP exams are required to call the NWCCD Testing Center a minimum of one week prior to registering on the CLEP website in order to schedule the exam, ensure availability of equipment and proctors, and request study materials. Individuals with documented disabilities must make arrangements with the NWCCD Testing Center and CLEP a minimum of one week prior to registering for the exam.

For additional information on testing processes, please refer to the NWCCD Testing Center webpage at: <https://www.sheridan.edu/services/testing-center/#1483998156260-74382ea1-6ca2>

DANTES Subject Standardized Test (DSST)

What is DSST?

DSST examinations are subject-specific credit by examination tests originating from the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) program, consisting of 28 examinations in both lower- and upper-level academic areas. Unlike CLEP testing, DSST exams focus more on specific topics. People more often select CLEP tests because the tests have the broadest applicability to general education requirements. All DANTES/DSST exams for subjects must be requested through NWCCD's Testing Center with Academic Advisor recommendation.

Acceptance of DSST credit is determined by each academic department. *The Northern Wyoming Community College District accepts credits earned through this program on a case-by-case basis.*

Who is DSST Ideal For?

DSST exams are designed for U.S Armed Forces personnel and dependents. The exams also address knowledge that older students who have never attended or are returning to college may have acquired. Military service members are qualified to receive credit for training and experience they may have received while members of the United States Armed Forces. These individuals may take prior learning exams specific to military personnel through the DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST).

Applying for DSST Testing at NWCCD

Prospective students enrolling at NWCCD will have discussions regarding pre-assessment with an Academic or Faculty Advisor during the initial advising session. Where applicable, students will be provided with CLEP/DSST exam information specifically addressing the educational requirements for their chosen certificate or degree program. Once all applicable exam options have been identified the student will be referred to the District's Testing Center to complete testing prior to registering for classes.

DSST Testing Process

Students taking DSST exams are required to call the NWCCD Testing Center a minimum of one week prior to registering on the DSST website in order to ensure availability of equipment, proctors, and to request study materials. Individuals with documented disabilities must make arrangements with the NWCCD Testing Center and DSST prior to registering for the exam.

For additional information on testing processes, please refer to the NWCCD Testing Center webpage at: <https://www.sheridan.edu/services/testing-center/#1483998156260-74382ea1-6ca2>

Departmental Challenge Exams and Competency Demonstrations

What are Departmental Challenge Exams and Competency Demonstrations?

Students may request permission to take a Departmental Challenge Exam through the appropriate department chair. Challenge Exams ([Procedure 6010.30](#)) may be developed at the discretion of the department/division chair/director if there is no approved CLEP exam available. Requests for challenge exams should be initiated with the instructor, who will secure the appropriate signatures of the department/division chair and Dean/Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs on the application. A challenge examination may not be attempted more than once, and students who have failed to earn credit in an attempted college course are not eligible for this form of assessment.

Students will coordinate the time and place to take the examination with the Instructor and the Testing Center. Students must not have previously enrolled in the course for college-level credit. A successful exam earns a grade "C" or higher.

Competency Demonstrations are more often found as a type of challenge exam offered by programs under Career and Technical Education (CTE). While there may be a written component the bulk of the exam involves demonstrating applied technical knowledge.

For a complete listing of current challenge and competency exams offered at NWCCD please visit with an Academic or Faculty Advisor.

How to Apply for a Departmental Course Challenge or Competency Demonstration

Students interested in challenging a course should meet with their academic advisor, the course faculty member, or the department head to discuss the availability of an exam, and requirements to successfully pass. Students, advisors, and faculty must adhere to the following guidelines to determine eligibility for the exam and adhere to grading criteria:

1. Students may challenge a course once during the course of their academic career; no additional challenges will be allowed.
2. If a student has challenged a course at a previous institution, or taken a course at NWCCD or elsewhere and failed to receive credit, they are ineligible to challenge the course and receive credit on their transcript.
3. Challenge exams or competency demonstrations must be taken within the first month of the course if the student is currently enrolled in the course.
4. The minimum passing grade for a challenge exam or competency demonstration is 70 or higher. Course units will be entered on the student's transcript as completed, with a grade of "S" for satisfactory.

Challenge Exam or Competency Demonstration Process

Once a challenge exam or competency demonstration is authorized, students must complete the following process:

1. Students must visit the Records Office to pick up a Petition for Course Proficiency form or download the application packet from the website. The petition form must be completed by the student and signed by a faculty or staff member from the testing department before the exam can be taken. Applications can be requested from Academic Advising, the Testing Center, or at <http://>.
 - a. Challenge Exams and Competency Demonstrations include an assessment fee, payable at the Business Office at the campus where the test is to be administered; this fee is required prior to the exam, and is non-refundable.
 - b. Processed petitions require a date and signature from a member of the Business Office, receivable upon payment of the testing fee.
 - c. Upon completion of the exam the instructor or division administration assistant notifies the Business Office of a satisfactory or unsatisfactory score. Results are entered on the transcript as “S” for satisfactory, and the unit requirement for the course will be added to the transcript as complete. Unsatisfactory grades receive a “U” on the transcript, and no units are awarded.
 - d. Regardless of a satisfactory or unsatisfactory grade, the Division Chair, Chief Academic Officer, and faculty member administering the exam must sign the petition and submit the form to the Business Office before any results may be entered on the student’s transcript.

Creating a Departmental Course Challenge or Competency Demonstration Exam

Faculty developing a challenge exam for their course(s) must adhere to the following process to ensure academic rigor, grading rubrics, and departmental and college approval:

1. The Department Chair must approve of the creation of a challenge exam or competency demonstration prior to development. This requirement is waived if the Division Chair is the faculty member creating the exam.
2. A grading rubric must be developed and made publicly available for review, ensuring that the exam meets academic rigor standards in competency evaluation.
3. The Department Chair or Director to whom the faculty member developing the exam reports must review the exam and the grading rubric and approve the final product.
4. The Records Office will be notified of the approved exam in order to prepare for any students petitioning for this form of credit by examination.

Portfolio Evaluation

What is a Portfolio Evaluation?

Students who believe they have sufficient professional experience and training to meet the requirements for course credit may find standardized or departmental testing does not address their needs. For these students NWCCD provides an option to assemble a portfolio for review by faculty members within the courses and programs the student wishes to complete. Portfolio Evaluations include the review and crediting of current industry certification or licensure provided the assessing faculty member acknowledges the non-academic credential meets the learning requirements of the course.

Portfolios are an assemblage of documentation establishing a student's claim that they have, through alternative learning and training, acquired the specific knowledge, skills, comprehension, training, experience, and/or certification aligning with the competencies and objectives required by a college-level course. Students are required to develop a critical self-assessment of how selected non-traditional training and experience is comparable to a more traditional, college-based learning environment.

Who is Portfolio Evaluation Ideal For?

This format of assessment is intended for students with significant work and life experience for whom other forms of CPL are unavailable. Prospective students interested in receiving the maximum allowable credit through prior learning assessment strategies should schedule an appointment with the Advising Center or with the Faculty Advisor for their program of study; these individuals will assist the student in identifying and completing all relevant forms of assessment prior to beginning the portfolio process.

Portfolio evaluation is a time-intensive and cumbersome process for both the student and the evaluator, and all other forms of prior learning assessment should be completed before engaging in this process. However, portfolio evaluations are a significant learning tool; the documentation standards and critical self-analysis required can teach students pursuing this CPL option critical skills applicable to professional portfolio creation and job interviews.

Prospective Students who have completed non-academic training resulting in industry-recognized credentials (such as Microsoft certifications) or licensure (such as a Journeyman's license in a trade) may be eligible for assessment under this format. U.S. Armed Forces personnel, veterans, and in some cases their dependents may also qualify for assessment under a Portfolio Review depending on their training and experience. Applicants for this form of assessment should engage the instructor of the desired course in discussions to determine the applicability of this form of CPL prior to beginning the application process.

NWCCD is continually working to improve the development and assessment processes and requirements for a Portfolio Review.

What Courses Qualify for Portfolio Evaluation?

Students interested in applying for a portfolio evaluation should meet with their Academic or Faculty Advisor to determine which courses may be considered for evaluation in their program of study; however, it should be understood that eligibility for this process and resulting credit is not guaranteed. NWCCD considers other forms of prior learning assessment and traditional instruction methods to be more appropriate for certain courses, and may disqualify some courses from all CPL assessment to ensure academic standards remain high and consistent within the District.

NWCCD's CPL policy requires that no course for which an AP, CLEP, DSST, Departmental Challenge Exam, or Competency Demonstration is available are eligible for credit in the portfolio evaluation process. Courses for which a student has already enrolled and/or completed are also ineligible for evaluation under this form of prior learning assessment.

How are Portfolios Evaluated for Credit?

Portfolios are, in most cases, assessed by faculty members within the department from which the student is seeking recognition of prior training and experience. In cases with special circumstances a professional in a given field may be contracted to assess a portfolio, but these scenarios are rare.

The assessors evaluate the submitted portfolios using predetermined content standards such as learning, competencies, objectives, and criteria as outlined in documents such as the Curriculum and Standards course standards materials.

Satisfactory portfolios will receive a grade of "S" on the student's transcript and the appropriate units awarded. Unsatisfactory portfolios will receive a grade of "U."

When will Students Learn What Credit They Have Received?

Portfolios are due to the department managing the credential three weeks prior to the end of the semester for consideration for the award of CPL. The department will provide the student with an estimated grading timeline, which is generally an announcement of the grading decision to coincide with final examinations and the submission of semester grades.

If grades for the portfolio review have not been posted to the student's transcript by the time course grades have been posted the student should contact their reviewing faculty member(s) to determine if there is a problem that needs to be addressed.

Do Students Receive Feedback from the Portfolio Assessors?

Credit may be awarded for a satisfactory portfolio following the first submission, at which time the student will be notified that credit has been granted. For portfolios requiring resubmission the assessors may specifically outline areas for improvement and encourage student to resubmit their documentation during the next semester. Assessors will provide a report giving specific feedback to students upon notification of a need to resubmit.

How Do Students Resubmit Portfolio Assessment?

Resubmission policies for prior learning assessment is determined between Faculty Assessors and the appropriate academic department. Students receiving unsatisfactory ratings may be provided with several scenarios based on the recommendations and policies governing the type of assessment:

- No resubmission
- Resubmission of selected sections
- Resubmission of maximum portion of submission (e.g. 25%)
- Resubmission of entire documentation

Portfolio Assessments allow Faculty Assessors to validate that a student's experiences are authentic and valid through student-provided evidence. Appropriate documentation may include certificates, training materials, annual reports or supervisor evaluations, work products, photographic or video evidence, and testimonials. Review of these materials allows Faculty Assessors to justify the award of college credit through evidence of receiving training in equivalent course competencies.

Students may resubmit portfolios for reassessment one time for any given course. Resubmissions require that students include required documentation revisions as noted by the Faculty Assessor, and include additional materials as noted during the first review. Portfolios submitted for reevaluation are required to be submitted to their advisor in the semester immediately following the initial review (e.g., Spring evaluations require resubmission in the Fall semester).

Note: Portfolio Reviews are not evaluations of experience; they are evaluations of non-traditional learning. Faculty assessors must follow guidelines established by the District in evaluating documented evidence to ensure that training and education outside the college environment aligns to competencies taught in traditional classroom and lab environments. Portfolio submissions provide the strongest

evidence that the student has completed his or her training and ensures that submitted materials are the work of the student.

Portfolio Review Checklist and Tracking Form

The Credit for Prior Learning review process at NWCCD has been designed to be as streamlined as possible, with Portfolio Reviews intended to be the last stage for evaluating non-traditional learning and experience for credit awards. Students seeking evaluation for credit should print this checklist and meet with their advisor to ensure all possible avenues of evaluation have been used prior to beginning the portfolio review process. The Portfolio Review Tracking Form is required for the submission packet and ensures that the Portfolio Assessment follows the appropriate stages of review in a timely fashion.

A sample Portfolio Review Checklist, Portfolio Review Tracking Form, and a sample of a completed Portfolio Review Petition are available in Appendix B. Acceptable materials for students to provide as evidence for the review is provided in Appendix A. Blank forms may be requested from Academic Advising, the Faculty Advisor, the Office of the Registrar, or downloaded in Microsoft Word format from <http://>.

Appendix A: Assessment Applications

Students are required to submit a CPL Application prior to taking examinations for Departmental Course Challenge exams, competency demonstrations, or portfolio reviews. Academic or Faculty Advisors at either Gillette or Sheridan College can provide assistance with completion of the application form. Once completed, copies of the application will be maintained with the student's case file by the advisor and maintained in district records.

A CPL Assessment Application can be requested from the Academic Advising departments or Testing Centers at both Gillette and Sheridan colleges or downloaded from the District website at <http://>.

How to Complete the Application

Students seeking CPL are encouraged to work with the Academic Advising department or Faculty Advisor to ensure accuracy of information required by the application. For students completing the form independently, please refer to the following key points for information on completing specific sections of the form accurately. Sample applications are available for reference in Appendix B of this handbook, but may not completely align with the current applications in use by the District.

Student ID Number

A Student ID Number is a seven-digit number required for all academic activity at NWCCD. This is normally received when a student registers for an academic program, but may be assigned at the time the student takes college entry exams (mathematics and English placement tests).

Course & Prefix Number

A prefix and a course number identify all courses offered by NWCCD during a semester. Courses being petitioned for CPL are required to be identified in order to administer the correct credit on the student's transcript upon receipt of a passing grade.

Prefixes and course numbers can be found in the Sheridan or Gillette College websites in each semester's course schedule by visiting <http://www.sheridan.edu/academics/class-schedule/> and selecting the appropriate college and term. All courses available at NWCCD can be found in the course listing within the online District catalog at:

<http://catalog.sheridan.edu/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=336>.

Course Title

The title of the course for which CPL is being requested is required to ensure that the correct course is being tested and, upon receipt of a satisfactory grade on the exam, credited appropriately on the student's transcript.

Is this course required for your major?

To determine if the course is a requirement for a degree or certificate program, it is best to refer to the program materials for each credential in the NWCCD Course Catalog. Specific program of study can be found at <http://catalog.sheridan.edu/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=338>. Clicking the link for the program will provide a full listing of all required courses.

If the course is a requirement, enter the term "Yes" in the application. Some degrees require electives. If a course for which CPL is being requested is not a required course, enter "Elective" in the form. Most Career and Technical Education programs available through NWCCD have "No Options" student plans that will identify required and elective courses; these are available through the CTE Advisor.

For further assistance, please contact the Academic Advising department, the CTE Advisor, or the faculty advisor for the degree program.

Is this course a pre-requisite for other courses in your major?

Some courses require prerequisites be completed prior to enrollment, such as completion of Pre-Calculus Algebra (Math 1400) before Pre-Calculus Algebra and Trig (Math 1450). To determine if the course is or has a pre-requisite or co-requisite course, visit the page for the program in the catalog at <http://catalog.sheridan.edu/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=338>, and click on the link for the specific course for which CPL is being petitioned. The screen will expand to provide course details.

If the status as a pre-requisite cannot be determined through online resources provided by the District, please contact the Academic Advising department or faculty advisor for the program.

Will you need to transfer credit for this course to another college/university?

Some colleges and universities accept prior learning credit awarded at a different school. To ensure accuracy when addressing this item, it is best to discuss credit transferability to an intended two- or four-year college with your academic advisor or with the institution to which the student will be transferring. Once identified, please enter "Yes" or "No" in the application form.

If the intended college does not accept prior learning credits awarded at another institution, students may be advised to enroll in the course. For elective courses, an alternative credit option may be selected.

Notes

Any additional notes that the student, academic advisor, faculty reviewer, faculty assessor, or department head feels needs to be documented should be entered into the application form.

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION GUIDE

SUBMISSION TYPE	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION	DOCUMENTATION OF CONTACT HOURS	DOCUMENTATION OF CONTENT	OTHER REQUIREMENTS
Sponsored Professional Training	Evidence of successful completion such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate • Training Record • Transcript • Letter on company letterhead signed by appropriate official • Training or HR personnel record listing trainings and dates of completion 	Number of contact hours must be listed for each training topic or course <i>Note: CEUs (Continuing Education Units) are not standard units; therefore, documentation of actual clock hours or definition of CEU conversion is required.</i>	Evidence of training content such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus • Course description • Training agenda • Training Manual table of contents 	Credit Rationale Paper (one page) Contact information (phone and/or email) for training instructor or work supervisor
Experiential Essays	Physical evidence of the learning (artifact) such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work samples • Business plan • Publications • Job Performance Reports • Photographs • Power Point presentation • Validation of the experience by an appropriate official 	At least one year of experience related to the experiential essay topic	Selection of 3 credit matching course from an accredited post-secondary institution including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific course description • Course learning outcomes, objectives or competencies • Name and location of institution 	Experiential Essay (12 to 15 pages)
Non-accredited institutions or non-transferable credits	Unofficial transcript	Classroom hours must be detailed on letter from Registrar if not evident on transcript or in catalog <i>Note: Credit on transcript are generally not acceptable for proof of hours</i>	Course description from the college catalog	Credit Rationale Paper (one page)

Appendix B: Sample CPL Application Materials

Sheridan College
 1 Whitney Way
 Sheridan, WY 82801
 (307) 675-0100



Gillette College
 300 W. Sinclair Street
 Gillette, WY 82718
 (307) 681-6011

Petition for Course Proficiency

Students who desire to demonstrate already required proficiency in a course through a challenge examination or portfolio review should contact the appropriate Department Chair. The course being assessed must be a credit course. Charges must be paid in the Business Office prior to assessment. Please note the following information:

- A challenged examination may not be attempted more than once.
- Students attempting credit by examination for courses in which they are currently enrolled must do so before they have completed one month of the course.
- Only satisfactory examination results are posted on the student's permanent record.
- Portfolio review petitions must be submitted to the appropriate advisor. Students will receive the development packet and specific instructions for required materials upon approval

Name	Student ID
------	------------

Student Signature	Date
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Application is made to challenge the following course:

Department	Course	Course Title	Credits
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To be completed by the Record's Office: The student for the Course Proficiency Exam eligible: Yes No

Record's Office Staff	Date
-----------------------	------

Assessment Fee Paid: _____

Accounts Receivable Clerk	Date
---------------------------	------

Coursework Complete as (circle one): Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory

Instructor's Signature	Date
------------------------	------

Chair/Director Signature	Date
--------------------------	------

Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs Signature	Date
--------------------------------------------------------	------

Record's Office Only:

Registrar's Signature	Date
-----------------------	------

Posted to Records on: _____ By: _____

Northern Wyoming Community College District

Sample Application for Credit for Prior Learning

Please complete all information below before submitting the application for credit.

Name: John Quincy Public (first) (middle) (last)	NWCCD ID:
Major: Diesel Technology	Academic Advisor: John Smith (first) (last)
NWCCD email: jpublic@sheridan.edu	Date: January 15, 2016
Address: 111 Some St., Box 1 (street, apartment, box)	Telephone: (111) 111-1111/(222) 222-2222 (home) / (cell)
Gillette, Wyoming 82718 (city, state, zip)	Best time to call: 9AM to 9PM

Please attach the major's advising course checklist.

Information about the course for which you are seeking credit:

Course prefix & number: DESL 1540	
Course title: Heavy Duty Electrical Systems	
Is this course required for your major?	Yes
Have you satisfied pre-requisites (or equivalents) for this course?	N/A
Is this course a pre-requisite for other courses in your major?	No
Will you need to transfer credit for this course to another college/university?	Yes
<i>Notes – Add any other relevant information about the course.</i>	

Application for Credit for Prior Learning

Sample Portfolio Review Petition

Please complete all information below before submitting the application for credit.

Name: John Quincy Public (first) (middle) (last)	NWCCD Student ID: 1234567
Major: Diesel Technology	Academic Advisor: John Smith (first) (last)
NWCCD Email: JASmith@sheridan.edu	Date: 10/25/2018
Address: 123 4 th Street APT #5 (street, apartment, box)	Telephone: (307) 555-5555/ (307) 777-7777 (home) / (cell)
Gillette, WY 82718 (city, state, zip)	Best time to call: 8am – 5pm

Please attach the major’s advising course checklist.

Information about the course for which you are seeking credit:

Course prefix & number: HUMN 1060	
Course title: International Race & Ethnicity	
Is this course required for your major?	
Have you satisfied pre-requisites (or equivalents) for this course?	Yes
Is this course a pre-requisite for other courses in your major?	No
Will you need to transfer credit for this course to another college/university?	Yes
NWCCD Core GenEd Area for this course: I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII? See the Core at: http://www.sheridan.edu/site/assetlibrary/sc/offices/advising/General%20Education%20Requirements.PDF	GS/SB
Notes - Add any other relevant information about the course. <i>Student directions: The italicized print in the boxes below contains instructions and tips to help you successfully complete your portfolio. Ensure your submission is well written; have the MCPL advisor proof read your portfolio as well as the Writing Center. Remember, this IS NOT simply a telling of your experiences, but a proof of what you <u>learned</u> about race and ethnicity based on the places the military sent you and the things you did. REMOVE THIS PARAGRAPH AND ALL ITALICIZED PRINT BEFORE YOUR SUBMISSION.</i>	

Please describe the work or volunteer experience, training, courses, or other thing you have done that you believe have met the requirements of the course listed above.

This is where you tell what you did in the military. Describe your MOS(s), military training and courses, overseas duty stations, deployment locations, dates. This is a good place to introduce the different races and ethnic groups you interacted with. Later on, you will describe what you learned from interacting with these other races/ethnic groups/cultures.

This section should be 1 - 2 pages of typed, double spaced text.

List each of the course competencies for the course for which you are seeking credit. After the competency, identify any artifacts (documents, Web pages, audio or video files, or other materials) that correspond to the objective and support your application for credit. For each of the artifacts that provide support for your prior learning, write a caption that will briefly describe the connections between the artifacts and the competencies:

Use the bulleted questions below to guide your thoughts as you demonstrate that you have met the competency. Simply answering the questions with one or two sentences won't be adequate. The caption for each competency should be 1.5 - 2 pages of typed, double spaced text and should include some type of supporting documentation called an artifact. The artifact could be a certificate, picture, hand out, page from your JST, orders, or service record).

Competency 1	Explore race and ethnic relations.
Artifact	<i>Describe what it is, label it enclosure 1, 2, etc. and attach to this application.</i>
Caption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Define and give examples from your experiences of the terms race and ethnic/ethnicity.</i> • <i>What does it mean to be of a particular race or ethnicity?</i> • <i>What's the relationship between race and ethnicity?</i> • <i>What are the causes of racial and ethnic tension?</i> • <i>Give an example, preferably one you've observed, of racial and/or ethnic tensions.</i>
Competency 2	Analyze the dispositions, traditions, and bodies of knowledge associated with past and contemporary expressions of cultural beliefs, behaviors, and experiences.
Artifact	<i>Describe what it is, label it enclosure 1, 2, etc. and attach to this application.</i>

Caption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose 2 or 3 ethnic groups to analyze that you have personal knowledge and experience with. This includes throughout your life, not just your time in the military. What makes the dispositions, traditions and bodies of knowledge between ethnic groups unique? What are their similarities and differences? How do people of different cultures interpret each other's cultural beliefs, behaviors and experiences? Why is it important to understand different races and ethnicities?
Competency 3	Identify the conditions, beliefs, behaviors, and practices of a variety of cultures.
Artifact	<i>Describe what it is, label it enclosure 1, 2, etc. and attach to this application.</i>
Caption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe a variety of religious, social, language, legal, economic, or military conditions, beliefs, behaviors and practices of at least 2 ethnic groups/cultures other than your own. What is the historical basis or reasons that caused them? Compare and contrast these other cultures to your own. How did you interact and relate to these differences between ethnic groups/cultures? What were your initial impressions regarding the different cultures and how did your thinking/feelings change over time?
Competency 4	Examine the importance and relevance of ethnic diversity in a variety of societies.
Artifact	<i>Describe what it is, label it enclosure 1, 2, etc. and attach to this application.</i>
Caption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why is it important to understand differences between races, ethnic groups, and cultures? What happens when people fail to respect or understand the ethnic differences within their society? What are the potential impacts (positive and negative) when people from one cultural background attempt to interact with those from another? How can ethnic diversity benefit a society?
Competency 5	Compare ethnic conflicts throughout the world.
Artifact	<i>Describe what it is, label it enclosure 1, 2, etc. and attach to this application.</i>
Caption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose 2 ethnic conflicts. This doesn't have to include actual fighting/war. Some conflicts are non-violent. If you don't have personal experience because of where you were stationed, then research two that interest you.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Examples might be: Sunni/Shite Bosnian/Serb American/Japanese (think US bases in Japan/Okinawa)</i> • <i>What are the similarities and differences between the 2 groups for each conflict?</i> • <i>What are the similarities and differences between the 2 conflicts?</i> • <i>What efforts are/did the international community take to prevent and/or stop the conflicts?</i> • <i>Were those efforts successful?</i> • <i>How do the 2 sides now regard each other?</i> • <i>What have you learned from examining ethnic conflicts?</i>
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Please provide any further notes that you believe will help support your claims for credit.

Certification	
"I certify that this application is true and correct, and that this portfolio represents my actual prior knowledge and experiences."	
(signature)	(date)

**Northern Wyoming Community College
Sample Portfolio Review Checklist**

Name:	NWCCD Student ID:
(first) (middle) (last)	
Major:	Academic Advisor:
	(first) (last)
NWCCD Email:	Date:
	Telephone:
(street, apartment, box)	(home) / (cell)
	Best time to call:
(city, state, zip)	

Please complete all information below as part of the required portfolio review documentation and attach to the advising/testing packet.

- The student has met with their advisor to discuss their non-traditional learning and experience, and how a Portfolio Review applies to their academic and career goals.
- The following CPL options prior to the Portfolio Review process:
 - College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
 - DANTES/DSST Exams
 - Course Challenge Exams
 - Competency Demonstration
- The student has acquired the course syllabi for each course to be evaluated for portfolio review.
- The student has completed the application packet for portfolio review; an application must be completed for each course for which the student is requesting a prior learning/experience evaluation. Applications for review must include all requested evaluation materials for consideration.
- The student has met with a faculty advisor to review the completeness of the application and all requested evaluation materials.
- The student has submitted the completed checklist, application, and tracking sheet to the appropriate faculty content expert. There is a ten day review period following submission while the application is reviewed prior to receiving approval or denial.
- The faculty content expert has submitted the approved application packet to the Director/Chair of the academic department.
- The Academic Director/Chair has submitted the approved application packet to the Dean or Associate Vice President of the academic department.
- The Dean or Associate Vice President has submitted the approved application to the Registrar for transcription and processing.

Student Signature

Advisor Signature

**Northern Wyoming Community College District
Sample Portfolio Review Tracking Form**

This tracking form must be completed and included with the application for portfolio review in order to be considered for evaluation.

Name:	NWCCD ID:
(first) (middle) (last)	
Major:	Academic/Faculty Advisor:
	(first) (last)
NWCCD email:	Date:
Address:	Telephone:
(street, apartment, box)	(home) / (cell)
	Best time to call:
(city, state, zip)	
(Course Prefix and Number)	(Course Title)

Signature blocks must be signed by indicated staff prior to advancement. Once the credit has been completed the Registrar will return a signed copy of the packet to the student’s advisor.

Student Signature:	
Advisor Signature:	
Faculty Advisor/Content Expert Signature:	
Academic Director/Chair Signature:	
Dean or Associate Vice President Signature:	
Registrar Signature	
<u>Registrar’s Date/Time Stamp Indicating Credit Award:</u>	