

Southern Oregon University

Ad Hoc Report

May 2015

Table of Contents

Introduction	i
Recommendation 2: Credit for Prior Learning	1
Credit for Prior Learning Policy	2
Concluding Statement	3

Introduction

In response to NWCCU's request that SOU respond to Recommendation 2 (Standard 2.6.7) of the Fall 2013 Year Three Peer Evaluation Report, we are pleased to submit a finalized policy on Credit for Experiential Learning (Standard 2.C.7). As stated in NWCCU correspondence of February 6, 2014:

Southern Oregon University has not yet finalized its policy on Credit for Prior Experiential Learning in conjunction with the Oregon University System and must do so to be compliant with NWCCU standards for Accreditation.

At the time of our previous Ad Hoc report (August 2014), SOU was preparing to introduce the Bachelor of Science in Innovation and Leadership, on which our Credit for Prior and Experiential Learning Policy would focus. Our intent was to phase in a CPL policy for the institution in stages, starting with a policy that would directly address the needs and attributes of students in the INL program. INL offers a cohort-based, intensive baccalaureate opportunity to students who hold college credit and are seeking to complete degrees after at least five years of work experience. The degree is suitable for a wide range of students, but is directly geared to adult students who are currently working in a career in which degree completion is required or encouraged.

INL requires 90 credits of lower and upper division general education course work; 30 credits of lower division support course work; and a professional development upper division sequence of 60 credits. Learning goals and outcomes focus on four primary disciplinary areas: business, communication, digital media and information science. Knowledge, skill, and dispositional outcomes focus on collaboration, critical and creative thinking, emotional intelligence, organizational capacity, critical analysis of information, and innovative and sustainable leadership. It is an intensive program that meets year-round, and its scheduling adheres to a professional rather than academic calendar. Each of the required courses is taught for a 5-week session and the entire sequence takes 21 months to complete.

INL was approved in February 2014 at the OUS Provosts' Council. The first cohort of 19 students entered the program in January 2015 and will complete the program in Summer 2016. Cohort 2 will begin in August 2015, and will complete its course sequence in Spring of 2017.

The program uses various delivery formats, including online and hybrid experiences, evening and weekend scheduling, and diverse methods to earn credit, including College Level Examination Program (CLEP), Credit by Exam, and Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning.

INL is distinct from traditional undergraduate degree programs in the extent to which it allows students to apply knowledge, skills, and competency areas to their professional development and practice. To that end, and due to the specific needs of the learners in this program, INL was deemed the most likely and most appropriate venue for students seeking credit for prior learning (CPL). Following this assumption, SOU will implement our CPL policy and practice within this program initially, refine and expand the policy based on evaluation and assessment of operational aspects of the policy in this context, and then adopt procedures that can be extended campus-wide.

Recommendation: Credit for Prior Experiential Learning

The following policy was developed over a 12-month period from March 2014 – April 2015. Input was provided by the INL Program Coordinator, the director for SOU's Center for Instructional Support, SOU's Provost and Associate Provost, faculty involved in INL, and faculty and staff who serve on the Academic Policies Committee. In addition, off-campus resources, including CAEL (the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning), the Higher Education Coordinating Commission's Credit for Prior Learning Advisory Committee, and other comparator institutions with prior learning programs or policies, including Eastern Oregon University and Marylhurst University, provided direction. This policy speaks directly to the needs that correspond to the priorities and learning objectives of the INL students, as well as the institutional intent to expand CPL opportunities to a broad range of students, from first-year to degree completion.

The proposal was generated and vetted through our institutional Academic Policies Committee and submitted for approval to SOU Faculty Senate in April 2015. On May 18, 2015, the policy was approved for adoption (22 votes for; 0 against). We note that we were not able to move the policy through each level of institutional oversight prior to the May 1st deadline for submission of this ad hoc report. Per instruction from NWCCU, we are submitting a final and ratified policy on May 21, 2015.

**SOUTHERN OREGON UNIVERSITY
CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING (CPL) POLICY**

1. Credit for prior learning is available to students who are admitted into the Innovation and Leadership (INL) degree program at SOU. Before seeking credit for prior learning the student must complete an SOU-approved prior learning portfolio course.
2. Students may not seek credit for prior learning for a course they have previously taken for credit and for which they have received a grade other than an audit, nor may they seek credit for a course more than once. If students register for a course for which they are seeking credit for prior learning, they must drop and submit an application for CPL for that course before the last day to drop without a grade record.
3. No more than 25% of the credits submitted for graduation may be credit for prior learning.
4. Credit for prior learning counts toward graduation residency requirements for INL majors.
5. Portfolios receive either a P (pass) or NP (no pass). A pass suggests the student has mastered material comparable to a grade of C- or better in the corresponding course. The Registrar records P grades on the student transcript, but does not count the P in grade point average calculations. The Registrar does not record NP grades. Transcripts will identify credits earned through prior learning assessment.
6. A non-refundable fee of \$150 will be charged to assess the credit for prior learning application, regardless of the outcome. A non-refundable fee of \$55 per credit hour will be charged to the student at the time that credits are awarded.
7. The INL Program Coordinator and appropriate program faculty, or other approved departmental or institutional representative, are responsible for reviewing the portfolio, interviewing the student, and making a recommendation. The INL program coordinator is responsible for initiating the process and contacting program faculty who will review the portfolio and recommendation and make a decision to grant credit.
8. The decision, along with the application, will be forwarded to the Registrar, who will keep it as part of the student's permanent academic record. The student's portfolio will be stored by the INL program coordinator or other appropriate administrator.
9. There is no guarantee of transferability of CPL credits awarded at or accepted by Southern Oregon University.
10. Credit for prior learning will be assessed for lower division credit only. Exceptions will be considered by petition, and approval by the INL Program Coordinator, appropriate program faculty, and the Registrar.

Approved by SOU Faculty Senate May 18, 2015

Concluding Statement:

Southern Oregon University has complied with Recommendation 2 following our Year Three Report by finalizing and submitting the policy on Credit for Prior Experiential Learning.