

**SUBJECT:** Student Affairs

**PROCEDURE:** 306.1.1 Prior Learning Assessment

**EFFECTIVE:** June 2007

**REVISED:** December 2017

**REVIEWED:**

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### **Number of Credits and Assessment Methods**

- Credit for PLA experiential learning (i.e. portfolio assessment, individual performance or demonstration assessment, or other faculty-determined assessment methods) cannot constitute more than 25% of the required credits needed for a degree.
  - **NOTE:** The Division Director will designate the appropriate faculty member, Department Chair or Program Director to develop the criteria of the portfolio, individual performance or demonstration assessment and/or other faculty-determined assessment methods.
- Credit for PLA standardized exams (i.e. CLEP, DSST and UExcel) are evaluated as transfer work.
- Credit for PLA instructional based credits (i.e. AP (formal Advanced Placement passing exam score), IB (formal International Baccalaureate passing exam score), military training and educational programs (evaluated by the American Council on Education), faculty-developed course challenge exams, formal training and educational programs offered via business and industry evaluated by the American Council on Education (ACE) or the National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS). As such, these credits are not considered experiential learning-based credits and do not count toward the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU Standard 2.C.7) 25% PLA cap. At GFC MSU they are evaluated as transfer work.
- No assurances are made as to the number of credits to be awarded prior to the completion of the institution's review process.
- Credits earned via PLA are not considered part of the institutional residency requirements. Students must complete 25% of the coursework required in the degree program at Great Falls College MSU.
- **NOTE:** AP, CLEP, DSST, UExcel, IB, ACE and NCCRS recommendations may include many credits which will not apply to a student's degree program. Only recommendations directly applicable to the student's degree at GFC MSU will be accepted. If the student chooses a different degree, the assessment of the recommendations will be updated. Once credits have been applied to a transcript they will not be removed. PLA credits in excess of degree requirements may limit the student's eligibility for financial aid.

### **Credits Awarded**

#### **Credits earned through PLA:**

- Are posted on transcripts when the credit is awarded.
- Are applied to degree program requirements in the same manner as all other credits earned at GFC MSU.
- Will be designated on the student's transcript by the appropriate course prefix, course number, course title and number of credits awarded as aligned with the course for which the credit was awarded.
- Will be identified as earned via PLA on transcripts in accordance with BOR standards.
- PLA will not be posted on the student's transcript until the student has completed the institution's review process.
- PLA will be treated the same as transfer credit and it will not count toward the students' GFC MSU GPA.
- A "P" (pass) grade or "TP" (transfer pass) will be assigned.
- Materials and documents submitted for consideration of credit for PLA must comply with all GFC MSU and Montana University System Policies.
- All submitted materials and documents become part of the students' academic record and will not be returned.



- The student is responsible for providing the appropriate documentation as required by the guidelines and/or criteria established by the faculty member, program director, or department chair for the award of credit for PLA.
- No PLA credit is guaranteed.

### **Review & Grievance**

- A student who disagrees with the result of a prior learning assessment performed at GFC MSU may ask to have the assessment reviewed. A student who believes that an error has been made in the process of an assessment may file a grievance. Procedures for review and grievance are published at:  
<http://www.gfcmsu.edu/about/policies/PDF/300/300.pdf>

### **Fees**

- Fees are based on the type of assessment method and may be set by an external agency (i.e. the cost of CLEP exams is not set by GFC MSU.)
- GFC MSU may add an administrative fee to the cost imposed by an external agency
- Students will be assessed a \$25 per credit prior learning assessment fee for each course substitute attempted through challenge exams only. Students could also be charged for any challenge exam materials.
- GFC MSU makes no assurances to students regarding the number of credits to be awarded prior to the completion of the assessment process.