SUCCESS CENTER for CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING INITIATIVE

Findings and Recommendations
to Expand Credit for Prior Learning
as a Vision for Success Strategy

Executive Summary

Many students enter California community colleges with skills and knowledge gained outside of college classrooms. They hold industry certifications, are graduates of public service academies, and were trained for military service occupations, for example. Credit for prior learning (CPL) is credit awarded for validated college-level skills and knowledge gained outside of a college classroom. It is a strategy to grant students credit for what they already know and can do. Research suggests that CPL can benefit students and colleges, as it helps colleges increase completion and reduce achievement gaps. In California, this means CPL can help the system achieve the goals outlined in the *Vision for Success* and increase college funding through improving measures on the Student Centered Funding Formula metrics.

Research indicates that students who earn CPL:

- are roughly twice as likely to complete a degree than those who do not
- accumulate more credits through coursework at the institution than their counterparts, which translates to increased enrollment for colleges
- save an average of 6-10 months in time to degree compared to their non-CPL counterparts

What does CPL look like in the California Community Colleges? Two policies in the California Code of Regulations guide the award of CPL: Credit by Examination (Title 5, Section 55050) and AP exam credit (Title 5, Section 55052). Through credit by exam, students can request to take a written exam to earn credit for a course when the student thinks they already know the content. A 2018 survey indicated that California's 114 colleges use various methods to grant CPL–mostly through standardized exams such as AP, IB and CLEP, and through credit by exam. Data limitations keep us from examining the breadth of reported CPL practices or the impact of credit on students' success, though evidence suggests that practices are not widely understood or utilized.

Legislative mandates. Two 2018 laws indicate the legislature's ongoing interest in CPL. One (SB1071) requires the system to implement a consistent policy to award credit for veteran and military students using their Joint Services Transcripts. This law, while a welcome catalyst for CPL in the system, would impact a limited population. In fall 2017, about 33,000 veterans and active-duty military (any age) were enrolled in a California community college. When looking at the broader potential student population (6.8 million Californians age 25-54 with less than an associate degree), about 272,000 have military experience. This indicates that the legislature's focus on CPL for veterans and military excludes the vast majority of California workers. A second law (AB1786) requires an initiative to expand the use of course credit at the California Community Colleges for students with prior learning, with a report due to the legislature in January 2020.

CPL Initiative Launched in 2018. As demonstrated in approximately 24 other states' higher education systems and affirmed in research, expanding CPL policy and practice can increase the impact of CPL on student success while ensuring quality, integrity, and equity in the award of credit. The Lumina Foundation provided funding to the Success Center at the Foundation for California Community Colleges to create a policy and resource infrastructure to expand CPL in our system. The initiative—led by Vice Chancellor Alice Perez with the support of the Success Center—convened a statewide CPL Advisory Committee to inform recommendations that will help students have more equitable opportunities to earn CPL. The committee comprised

24 stakeholders from within the system (including appointees from the Academic Senate and representatives of faculty, articulation officers, counselors, Chief Instructional Officers (CIO) and other roles) and representatives from CSU, UC, and workforce. The initiative team proposed a framework to help structure the Advisory Committee's consideration of CPL. The framework included 11 components that, based on 24 other states' CPL policies, should be articulated in state-, district-, or campus-level CPL policy. The committee's recommendations on the specific components of this policy framework are detailed in Appendix A.

As a result of our year of working with the Advisory Committee, researching, connecting with internal and external stakeholders and subject matter experts, the initiative team recommends that the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) consider the following approach to expand and standardize CPL across colleges:

1. **Implement state-level policy**, including amending Title 5 Section 55050 to expand the types of prior learning assessments available to students and to catalyze equitable processes.

2. **Integrate CPL** as a strategy within Guided Pathways and equity-focused activities funded by the Student Equity and Achievement (SEA) Program.

3. **Provide guidance to districts** on implementing board policies and administrative procedures aligned with state policy.

4. **Collaborate with four-year systems to ensure transfer of credit.**

5. **Implement a CPL pilot**, including development of credit cross-walks based on industry certifications in seven disciplines, and development of a model cross-walk process that can be applied by faculty in other disciplines.

6. **Build engagement and provide resources** to support broad implementation of CPL.

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Introduction

Credit for prior learning—the awarding of credit to college students for the skills and knowledge they acquired outside of a classroom—can be a valuable strategy to help community colleges serve their non-traditional students,[1] increase degree and certificate completion as outlined in the California Community Colleges' Vision for Success and meet California's projected workforce demand. Around the nation, individual institutions and systems of higher education are implementing comprehensive credit for prior learning (CPL) practices and frameworks and are experiencing improved outcomes for their non-traditional students.

Chancellor Oakley and system partners have brought awareness to California's "stranded workers"—residents who are likely to have some college but no degree and years of valuable but not necessarily academically certified work experience. As tomorrow's jobs increasingly require specialized technical skills and degrees, these workers may become stranded in the workforce, jeopardizing the state's economic growth. The system's online college and Strong Workforce initiative are making great strides to help learners upskill and advance, and employers are training their own workers, but our 114 colleges can do more to help non-traditional learners increase their education and advancement. One strategy to attract these workers is honoring what students already know and can do by awarding CPL.

The Lumina Foundation awarded the Success Center at the Foundation for California Community Colleges $1 million to develop an infrastructure of standards, policy and practice recommendations, and resources to expand CPL in our system. These tools are intended to move students toward their goal of college completion and help the CCC system achieve its Vision for Success goals via the Guided Pathways framework. The purpose of this paper is to provide background information on CPL, report outcomes of the initiative, and make recommendations that can help create more equitable opportunities for students through CPL in all California community colleges.

What is Credit For Prior Learning?

The American Council on Education (ACE) defines prior learning as skills and knowledge garnered outside of the classroom and notes that it can be obtained through both formal (e.g., testing, workplace training, military training) and informal (e.g., volunteer work, independent study) means. CPL occurs when such skills and learning are evaluated and determined to be equivalent to the articulated outcomes of a college course and students are granted course credit.

In nearly all postsecondary institutions, faculty maintain purview over assessment. Prior learning assessment is the method faculty use to determine of a student should earn credit. There are multiple methods that can be employed, and different institutions use them to varying degrees. They generally fall within three categories, which are explained in more detail in Appendix A: standardized exams, credit by examination, and evaluation of training. ACE further clarifies that prior learning assessment "awards credit for learning, not credit just for your experience. What is being evaluated for college credit is not your learning experience, but the knowledge you acquired and how that knowledge translates into specific college-level courses."

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1   Non-traditional students are typically defined as 25 and older. They may have enrolled in college directly after high school and then stopped out, or they may have deferred enrollment. They typically have work or military experience, and they often do not attend college full time due to family and/or work obligations.

CPL in the California Community Colleges:
A 2018-19 Snapshot

CPL IN POLICY

Two state-level policies guide CPL:

- California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 5 Section 55050 offers guidance on the award of credit through Credit by Examination
- CCR Title 5 Section 55052 guides the award of credit through Advanced Placement exams

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) has passed resolutions in support of offering students credit for prior learning:

- #09.05 (fall 2008)
- #09.08 (fall 2010)
- #14.01 (spring 2014), a resolution to adopt the paper "Awarding Credit Where Credit is Due"

Current and past legislation demonstrates the California legislature's ongoing interest in CPL, particularly to benefit veteran and military students:

- State Law (SB1071, chaptered 2018) requires the Chancellor, in collaboration with the Academic Senate, "to develop a consistent policy to award military personnel and veterans who have an official Joint Services Transcript course credit for California Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum, California State University General Education Breadth, or local community college general education requirements, as specified"
- State law (AB1786, chaptered 2018) requires the Chancellor to implement "an initiative to expand the use of course credit at the California Community Colleges for students with prior learning. The bill would require the chancellor to submit, by January 1, 2020, a report on the initiative to the Legislature"
- State law (AB2462, chaptered 2012) required the Chancellor's Office to determine for which courses credit should be awarded for prior military experience; a resulting July 2016 advisory from the Chancellor's Office listed 102 unduplicated courses across the system for which students had been granted credit
- State law (SB466, chaptered 2015) requires California Community Colleges (CCC) nursing programs to evaluate Joint Services Transcripts for credit or risk negative action by the Board of Registered Nursing

CPL IN PRACTICE

In spring of 2018, the Success Center sent a survey to all Chief Instructional Officers and Chief Student Services Officers on all campuses asking about their CPL practices. We received responses from 86 campuses (75% response rate). The full analysis is attached as Appendix C. Data limitations did not allow us to determine the breadth of the reported practices or their impact on student success. Following are some notable findings:

- The most common methods of prior learning assessment were AP exams (96%), Credit by Exam (85%), CLEP exam (67%), and IB exams (65%)

- Colleges said CPL is used to waive course prerequisites (92%), to meet general education requirements (84%), to meet elective requirements (82%), to meet program requirements (76%), and to meet transfer requirements (66%)

- About 81% of colleges will award credit for military training, with one-third of colleges saying they consult ACE credit recommendations

- Conversely, only about 13% of colleges will award credit for workplace training

- In response to questions about levels of support for CPL among stakeholders, survey respondents reported strong support from Academic & Program Counselors, neutral support from Administrators and Staff, and neutral to moderate support from Instructional Faculty

- The main barriers to students earning CPL were reported as lack of awareness (81%), availability of CPL information (57%), availability and timeliness of assessments (43%), and complexity of process (40%)

- The main barriers to faculty are time constraints to review students' learning (58%), compensation for time and effort to complete assessment (56%), inability or insufficient information to determine whether prior learning matches course outcomes (49%), and inadequate direction or policy on CPL (42%)

Why is CPL important?

A proven strategy

There are multiple studies on the impact of credit for prior learning (CPL); however, none are focused specifically on California. Nonetheless, this body of research collectively finds that CPL leads to stronger persistence and completion rates. For example, students earning CPL units persisted two times faster and had 50% lower attrition rates than their non-CPL peers (Council on Adult and Experiential Learning [CAEL], 2010; Klein-Collins & Olson, 2014; Plumlee & Klein-Collins, 2017; Rust & Ikard, 2016). In addition, students who earn CPL units have higher graduation rates than their peers who do not participate in CPL (Klein, 2017; Rust & Ikard, 2016), even when accounting for selection bias (CAEL, 2010; Klein-Collins & Olson, 2014; Hayward & Williams, 2015). In a study of the Colorado community colleges, 35% of CPL earners received their associate degree, compared to only 7% of non-CPL learners (McKay et al., 2016).

The Council on Adult and Experiential Learning's (CAEL) 2010 examination of more than 62,000 adult student records across 48 colleges and universities (public and private, non-profit and for-profit) found that:

- 56 percent of students 25 and older who earned CPL credit graduated from a degree program compared with 21 percent of their peers without CPL credit
- Students who earned CPL saved an average of 6-10 months in time to degree compared to their non-CPL counterparts
- Students accumulated more credits through coursework at the institution than their counterparts, on average
- These findings were true across ethnicity, gender, age, and socio-economic status, supporting CPL as an equity strategy

A large number of learners could benefit from CPL, significantly impacting Vision for Success goals

The prospect of completing their goals faster with CPL could incentivize adults who left college without completing a degree or certificate program to return to finish, or it could attract adults with no postsecondary education to enroll for the first time. Meeting the Vision for Success goals requires optimizing student success initiatives for a significant population of non-traditional students—those 25 years of age and up.[2] About 42% of students enrolled in California community colleges in fall 2017 were over age 25. Beyond our currently enrolled students, a much broader population of potential students is important to colleges hoping to stay competitive and meet Student Centered Funding Formula metrics. California Competes analyzed the "target" population of adults for this initiative (full report is available by request from the Chancellor's Office). Notable findings are outlined below.

- More than 6.8 million Californians age 25-54 have a high school diploma, some of whom attempted college but none of whom earned an associate degree or higher[3]
- Nearly three-quarters of this population is employed, 79% of whom are working 31 or more hours per week
- On average, 8% of adults are enrolled in a postsecondary institution
- Only about 4% (272,000) of the target population have military experience. Only 8% of the target population with military experience (21,760) are enrolled in any postsecondary institution, which indicates that the legislature's focus on CPL for veterans and military excludes the vast majority of California workers
- More than half of the target population are people of color; using CPL to advance them towards certificates and degrees could help reduce equity gaps

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2   Non-traditional students are defined as 25 and older for the purpose of this initiative. They may have enrolled in college directly after high school and then stopped out, or they may have deferred enrollment. They typically have work or military experience, and they often do not attend college full time due to family and/or work obligations.

3   We use the 25 to 54 age range from Georgetown's Center for Education and Work report (2015) to limit our study population. Although many adults work beyond 54 years of age, we truncated the sample here given their limited years of work remaining and low likelihood of pursuing a postsecondary degree to improve their economic outlook.

Calculations of return on investment indicate that expanding CPL can result in savings to students and the state and increased budgets for colleges through the Student Centered Funding Formula. Notable findings are outlined below (full report is available by request from the Chancellor's Office):

- If students reduce their time-to-degree by one term (an assumption based on research) the state would save approximately $6,750 per full time equivalent student
- If 4% of enrolled adults in the target population completed one term early as a result of CPL (an assumption based on research), the system avoids paying approximately $569,000 per cohort in state aid
- As more students complete faster, the system would realize a 0.02% increase in throughput, freeing up space for approximately 463 more students per term
- The increase in throughput translates to budget increases for colleges on the Student Centered Funding Formula

CPL: Designed with the student in mind

Fictitional personas are tools to help design processes and programs in ways that are easy to navigate by those they are intended to serve. Thinking about how CPL would better serve prospective students like Paolo and Valentina is part of a student-centered design process.

Paolo
IT security specialist, age 43, married with children

"It's been a decade since I've been in college, but I've kept learning throughout my career and need a degree to get promoted."

Key attributes:

- Born in the Philippines, Paolo is a bilingual IT security specialist at a major technology corporation, father of two, and the primary financial provider for his elderly aunt

- He wants to pursue an associate degree in enterprise security to advance his career and become a senior security specialist

- Paolo previously completed his Systems Security Certified Practitioner (SSCP) certification via his employer's educational reimbursement program and his certificate in network basics

- His maturity, IT experience and certification, and dedication to pursuing continuous career education would be an asset to any classroom

- Between juggling his familial and work responsibilities, getting credit for his professional experience and certifications would allow Paolo to save time and money in pursuit of his degree

Valentina
Army veteran, age 34, married with children

"To become an engineer, I need a bachelor's degree. But I've never stepped foot in a college classroom and am concerned I won't fit in."

- Valentina is a bilingual army veteran and native Los Angeleno who works full-time as a transportation engineering technician for a state transportation agency

- She wants to pursue degrees in engineering to advance to a transportation engineer

- Having enlisted after her high school graduation, Valentina completed the Army's One Station Unit Training and Cargo Specialist Training, as well as multiple engineering trainings and exams through her employer

- Her multi-organizational engineering experience, proven leadership skills, and ability to juggle her work and familial responsibilities as a wife and mother of three would be a boon to any campus

- Valentina's the first in her family to consider getting a degree, and earning credit for her military and workplace training might help her feel like she belongs in college

How can we expand CPL to make this a more equitable opportunity for students?

Lumina Initiative

The Lumina Foundation awarded the Success Center at the Foundation for California Community Colleges $1 million to develop an infrastructure of standards, policy and practice recommendations, and resources to expand CPL in our system. These tools are intended to move students toward their goal of college completion and help the CCC system achieve its Vision for Success goals via the Guided Pathways framework. Two Success Center staff supported the Chancellor's Office beginning in March 2018.

The project team was to establish CPL infrastructure and research through the following activities by April 2019:

- Form an advisory committee to inform efforts
- Identify sources of technical assistance through outside experts
- Collaboratively engage critical stakeholders such as the Academic Senate
- Determine data needs and initiate necessary changes
- Conduct a landscape analysis of existing CPL practices in CCCs
- Research and share best practices from other states and systems
- Advance strategic partnerships with existing campus-based efforts
- Develop written policy for regulation and implementation of CPL programs systemwide
- Develop a guide for CPL implementation including resources such as a CPL lexicon, an assessment tool for colleges to gauge readiness for CPL, best practices and models

These activities were to result in the following deliverables:

- Identification of up to ten potential pathway opportunities for coherent, complete and actionable, early CPL implementation
- A regulatory framework with model state and local policies (minimum recommended and ideal)
- A resource guide for CPL implementation that provides educational and training resources

The result of this initiative is a set of recommendations to help the Chancellor's Office expand and institutionalize equitable CPL policy and practice.

Strategies that informed the recommendations

The initiative—led by Vice Chancellor Alice Perez in partnership with the Success Center—convened a statewide CPL Advisory Committee to identify pathways and inform a regulatory framework to expand CPL. The committee comprised 24 stakeholders including appointees from the Academic Senate and representatives of faculty, articulation officers, counselors, Chief Instructional Officers, and other roles, in addition to representatives from CSU, UC, and workforce (see full roster in Appendix B). The Advisory Committee was not established as a decision-making body, but rather an educated group of stakeholders who could inform and advise the Success Center and Chancellor's Office in developing the promised deliverables. In exit surveys, they rated our process as highly inclusive, collaborative, and committed to students. These committee members are knowledgeable about CPL and can act as champions for CPL in their networks.

We also engaged other strategies to develop our initiative's final deliverables. They are summarized below:

- **Collaboration with the Academic Senate.** Dolores Davison, Vice President of the Academic Senate, was actively engaged on the committee and on advising critical initiative activities. The Senate appointed five faculty representatives to serve on the CPL Advisory Committee. The Senate adopted and has agreed to oversee the pilot designed as a result of this initiative (see below)

- **Consultation with outside experts.** We received technical assistance from subject matter experts (CAEL, ACE, Jobs for the Future) and we learned from colleagues at State University of New York (SUNY) Empire, Wisconsin Technical College System, American Public University System, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, the University of North Carolina, and others. We researched and documented model CPL policies and practices in other states in a series of memos that helped our Advisory Committee make informed recommendations

- **Engagement with equity and advocacy partners** such as California Competes, the California Edge Coalition, and the LA Chamber of Commerce

- **Engagement with internal stakeholders with existing CPL initiatives** and other strategies to serve non-traditional students (age 25+) such as West Hills, Saddleback, Norco, Palomar, Cosumnes, American River, Coastline and Shasta Colleges, and Sacramento State. We continue to learn from each other, make strategic connections, and support each other's activities. We also participated on the CCCCO CPL work group to ensure synergy in our efforts

- **Completion of a survey** of all campus's CPL practices. We found that practice varies widely and that campuses need more guidance to make more consistent and equitable practices

- **Compilation of resources to build capacity to expand CPL**, including curating best practices for CPL and establishing an interactive CPL community on the Vision Resource Center to make them available to all CCC stakeholders

- **Design of a pilot to operationalize CPL, and engagement of stakeholders as thought partners** to create credit cross-walks based on industry certifications

- **Partnership with Workforce and Economic Development**, which has made a $100,000 investment to fund the pilot we designed

What action can the Chancellor's Office take today?

Recommendations to expand CPL

As a result of our year of working with the Advisory Committee, researching, and connecting with internal and external stakeholders and subject matter experts, we recommend the following approach to expand and standardize CPL across colleges:

1. **Implement state-level policy**, including revising Title 5 Section 55050 to expand the types of prior learning assessments available to students, and to catalyze equitable processes

2. **Integrate CPL** as a strategy within Guided Pathways and equity-focused activities funded by the Student Equity and Achievement (SEA) Program

3. **Provide guidance to districts** on implementing board policies and administrative procedures aligned with state policy

4. **Collaborate with four-year systems to ensure transfer of credit**

5. **Implement a CPL pilot**, including development of credit cross-walks based on industry certifications in seven disciplines, and development of a model cross-walk process that can be applied by faculty in other disciplines

6. **Build engagement and provide resources** to support broad implementation of CPL

IMPLEMENT STATE-LEVEL POLICY

The committee recommends that the system:

- Revise Title 5 Section 55050 to achieve the following goals:

  — Expand types of prior learning assessments available to students beyond credit by exam.

  — Create a consistent process to automatically refer eligible students to faculty for prior learning assessment, which will shift the burden from students to institutions and create more equity in process and opportunity

  — Prioritize CPL for General Education or program courses first, and electives only as a last resort, as necessary to support the student's goals

  — Require that policies and procedures be accessible to all stakeholders

  — Give students an opportunity to accept or deny credit awards, to protect their financial aid or GI Bill benefits

  — Condense all district policies related to credit for prior learning into one comprehensive policy

- Revise California Ed Code Section 78212 as an accompanying strategy to require CPL as a topic of discussion between student services staff and students in matriculation activities such as orientation and educational planning

- Expand the standardized exams that are accepted for credit, using the CSU's Coded Memorandum ASA-2019-03 on External Exams as a basis, which sets systemwide cut-scores and procedures for granting credit for Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, CLEP and Defense Language Proficiency Test exams

- Require reciprocal acceptance of CPL among all 114 community colleges. This is an important foundation that is needed before asking our four-year partners to trust our faculty's credit decisions. Affirm that CPL granted in C-ID courses should be subject to the same reciprocity as traditional credit offered in C-ID courses

INTEGRATE CPL INTO GUIDED PATHWAYS

The committee supports CPL as a student success strategy but recommends that it not be "another initiative." The committee sees the goals and objectives of CPL as directly aligned with Guided Pathways (GP) and as an equity strategy that could be part of the Student Equity and Achievement Program. The committee recommends that CPL be integrated in the following ways:

- Deploy the network of GP Regional Coordinators to expand awareness and build support for CPL as a strategy supporting the Vision for Success

- Identify opportunities for CPL within every mapped pathway and make that information available to students. Faculty could expand and replicate the review initiated as part of AB2462 (chaptered 2015), to identify opportunities to award CPL. For example, a student who holds a CompTIA certification might be eligible for credit in Information Technology certificate and degree pathways. Provide professional development so that faculty are equipped to identify opportunities, conduct cross-walks to determine credit recommendations, and apply the credit consistently for all students across campuses

- As counselors work to help students "get on a path," ensure that counselors ask students about their prior learning experiences and refer them to faculty for prior learning assessment, if appropriate. Provide professional development so that counselors are equipped to do this effectively

PROVIDE GUIDANCE TO HELP DISTRICTS EXPAND CPL

- The committee made recommendations concerning how state and district policies should address the following components related to CPL (see Appendix A):
  — Methods of prior learning assessment
  — Awarding Credit
  — Transcribing Credit
  — Student supports
  — Policy transparency and accessibility
  — Policy review
  — Professional development
  — Transfer
  — Finance

- We recommend systemwide adoption of a CPL definition and standards that should guide all district policy implementation (see Appendix A)

- We recommend that the CCCCO issue a system advisory or implementation module that incorporates these recommendations to guide districts and campuses in implementing CPL policy and practice. We recommend that the advisory include a value statement about the importance of CPL to achieving the Vision for Success

COLLABORATE WITH FOUR-YEAR SEGMENTS TO ENSURE TRANSFER OF CREDIT

- We recommend that the CCCCO establish an intersegmental agreement on the transfer of CPL with the CSU Chancellor's Office and the UC Office of the President

- We suggest that system stakeholders utilize mechanisms such as IGETC and CSU GE-Breadth certification and Associates Degree for Transfer to ensure that if CPL is granted in these areas, the four-year institutions will honor CPL for transfer. Ensure that transferability of CPL is a topic in intersegmental committees such as ICAS, GEAC, and others (see specific recommendations on policy levers to achieve this goal in Appendix A)

OPERATIONALIZE CPL THROUGH PILOTS IN 2019-20, WITH A GOAL OF OFFERING CREDIT BY SPRING 2020

The Academic Senate is poised to implement a pilot in partnership with the Chancellor's Office, to convene approximately 30 faculty in seven disciplines to create "cross-walks" that result in credit recommendations for students who gained college-level skills and knowledge through related military or industry training programs.

- Seven disciplines that lend themselves to CPL have been identified according to the following criteria: 1) popularity among veteran/military and adult (age 25+) students, according to CCCCO completion data (2015-17); 2) alignment with the priority sectors of the Workforce and Economic Development division, which are based on job growth and wage gains; and 3) alignment with industry certifications and/or standardized workplace training.
  The disciplines are:

  — Administration of justice

  — Automotive technology

  — Business administration and management

  — Cybersecurity

  — Fire science

  — Health

  — Information Technology

- We recommend that the Academic Senate offer professional development to help faculty complete the cross-walks. This might include technical assistance from subject matter experts. If the cross-walks are done over the course of the 2019-20 academic year, colleges will be poised to begin offering students credit by the end of spring 2020

- This pilot will result in cross-walks in several disciplines and a model process that can be applied by faculty across new disciplines to assess learning based on industry certifications and workplace and military training programs

The Success Center intends to use philanthropic funding to help interested colleges develop model board policies and administrative procedures to expand CPL and to integrate it with Guided Pathways. The process and outcomes will be documented and shared.

PROVIDE RESOURCES TO BUILD CAPACITY AMONG ALL STAKEHOLDERS TO EXPAND CPL FOR ALL STUDENTS

- We recommend that the Chancellor's Office help expand for statewide use Norco College's Military Articulation Platform (MAP). The database is currently designed to house the district's faculty-developed cross-walks from military trainings. To maximize the database's impact on students, we recommend that the system 1) expand it for access to statewide faculty, so that any cross-walk that is done for military trainings can be made available to other statewide faculty and applied to multiple students; and 2) support technical changes so that it may also house cross-walks from industry certification and workplace trainings, so that any cross-walk can be made available to other faculty across the state and applied to multiple students

- We recommend that the Chancellor's Office and the ASCCC build capacity for CPL through existing professional development mechanisms such as IEPI trainings, ASCCC plenary sessions, district professional development days ("flex days"), and others to develop faculty and staff knowledge and expertise in awarding academic credit for learning

- A CPL Community in the Vision Resource Center is now open to all California Community Colleges stakeholders to communicate and share practices and resources across campuses. We recommend that the Chancellor's Office and ASCCC populate this forum with resources, reinforcing CPL as a Vision for Success strategy. Some of the existing resources include:

  — Best practice policies and procedures from peer institutions

  — A tool for assessing institutional readiness for CPL

  — Curated research and white papers on CPL

  — Curated essays, commentaries, op-eds and blogs related to CPL

  — Videos and webinar resources

  — Results of the system's 2018 survey on CPL

CPL Initiative Policy Recommendations At-a-Glance

Strategy	Activities	Goals
Implement state-level policy	• Amend Title 5 Section 55050 • Revise Ed Code Section 78212 • Expand standardized exam policy • Require reciprocity among colleges for CPL	• Expand types of prior learning assessment beyond credit by exam to increase CPL and thereby increase completion • Enable greater consistency in local policy/procedure to increase equity • Ensure transfer of credit to increase completion and equity
Integrate CPL into Guided Pathways and other equity-focused activities	• Deploy GP Regional Coordinators as ambassadors for CPL • Identify opportunities for CPL within every mapped pathway • Ensure that CPL is embedded in matriculation services and educational planning	• Utilize existing Guided Pathways infrastructure and funding to reduce initiative fatigue
Provide guidance to districts	• Adopt systemwide CPL definition and policy standards • Provide system advisory or implementation toolkit to guide local policies and procedures	• Enable greater consistency in local policy/procedure to increase equity of opportunity for students
Ensure Transfer of Credit	• Establish intersegmental MOU or statement in support of CPL • Build upon and leverage existing models of intersegmental agreement (GE patterns, ADT) to ensure transferability of CPL • Utilize ICAS or other intersegmental committees to come to agreement	• Increase equity by ensuring that CPL will transfer
Pilot CPL in 2019-20	• Create a faculty community of practice to create cross-walks in seven disciplines • Facilitate a college-wide implementation pilot at one or more colleges	• Increase focus on CPL for all students – not just veteran and military students • Create model board policies and administrative procedures to activate and scale CPL more effectively
Provide resources	• Expand Norco's MAP to make cross-walks available to faculty across the state • Use existing mechanisms to build capacity for faculty and staff to expand and standardize CPL (IEPI trainings, ASCCC resolutions and trainings, district flex days) • Use CPL Community in the Vision Resource Center to share and scale practices, encourage communication and sharing among stakeholders • Collect data on CPL student progression and outcomes, impact of CPL on completion and equity	• Expand the scale of impact from one to multiple students for faculty cross-walks • Leverage existing resources to fund CPL professional development and sharing/scaling of best practices • Use data to review and improve policy and procedures

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Appendix A:
Credit for Prior Learning Advisory Committee Recommendations on the Policy Framework

Approximately 24 of 50 states have implemented state policies related to credit for prior learning (CPL) and/or developed comprehensive, statewide guidance for such policies at the institutional level. A review of many of these indicates that policies and/or system-level guidance typically include direction on 11 components. Usually, expectations are set at the state and/or system level through policy and guidance, but varying levels of details and implementation decisions within these categories are left to district and/or campus discretion:

1. Credit for prior learning definition
2. Policy standards
3. Methods of prior learning assessment
4. Awarding Credit
5. Transcribing Credit
6. Policy transparency and accessibility
7. Student supports
8. Professional development
9. Transfer
10. Finance
11. Policy review

A policy framework comprising these 11 components formed the basis for the work of the CPL Advisory Committee of the California Community Colleges. A compendium of memos provided background information on each policy topic, implications based on the existing policy and practice context in California, examples of how other states and higher education systems have addressed these issues, and policy alternatives. These memos provided the structure for four committee meeting discussions from 2018 to 2019. The committee's recommendations are outlined in this report, intended to help the Chancellor's Office guide system implementation of CPL policy and practice.

1. CPL Definition

The committee recommends that the CCCCO adopt the following definition of CPL: Credit for prior learning is college credit awarded for validated college-level skills and knowledge gained outside of a college classroom.

Students' knowledge and skills might be gained through experiences such as:

- Industry training and certification
- State/federal government training
- Volunteer and civic activities
- Apprenticeships, internships, work-based learning, or other industry-based experiential learning
- Military training

This CPL definition does not include knowledge and skills already assessed and awarded credit through formal education at regionally accredited in-state and out-of-state institutions or at foreign institutions.

2. Policy Standards

The committee encourages all system CPL policies to elevate the following standards:[4]

Standard One: Equity
CPL policy ensures that all students have equitable access to consistent opportunities to earn credit for prior learning.

Standard Two: Philosophy and Academic Framework
CPL policy is grounded in the institution's philosophical and academic framework and is consistent with institutional mission, goals, and approaches to learning.

Standard Three: Integrity
CPL policy ensures that all stakeholders (including faculty, institutional representatives, students, and any external contributors) promote integrity in the evaluation and documentation of prior learning.

Standard Four: Faculty Qualifications
CPL policy assures the involvement of qualified discipline faculty and the preservation of discipline faculty purview over the awarding of credit.

Standard Five: Student Services
CPL policy assures that students have timely and continuous access to transparent information, resources, and services to guide them on CPL.

Standard Six: Credit Management
CPL policy clearly identifies how credits are organized and applied to student records.

Standard Seven: Planning, Resources, Improvement
CPL policy assures continuous improvement and scalability of processes by providing sufficient infrastructure and data to support policy implementation and review.

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4   Standards based on Brewer, Patricia and Lakin, Mary Beth. (2018). Credit for Prior Learning: Putting Standards for Policy in Place. American Council on Education: Washington, D.C. Retrieved from https://www.plaio.org/index.php/home/article/view/135/173

3. Methods of Prior Learning Assessment

Districts and campuses should consider approving and encouraging use of prior learning assessments and related procedures in three main categories:

Standardized Exams. Some third-party organizations offer standardized exams that will often be recognized for credit in postsecondary institutions. The College Board is the most commonly known organization, offering Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) exams for students who take specific high school courses and the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) for knowledge equivalency in a variety of other topics such as foreign languages, business, and math. Other exams come from institutions, such as the Defense Language Proficiency Test from the Defense Language Institute. To offer credit for these types of exams, faculty match the skills assessed by the exam to the learning outcomes of a course and award credit when students achieve a certain score. When this assessment is collaboratively developed, approved, and articulated in system or institutional policy, it can be scaled to impact many students. Students do not usually receive grades for this method of prior learning assessment.

Credit by examination is a method of prior learning assessment that involves discipline faculty administering a locally developed exam (sometimes a past midterm and/or final for the course) to determine whether a student can illustrate the learning outcomes of that class. Sometimes the mode of assessment includes the student developing a portfolio or completing a skills demonstration that is evaluated by faculty. Credit by examination has limited impact in that each proctored assessment will benefit one student; however, there is the potential to create efficiencies that could increase access if faculty share and redeploy assessments for articulated courses or those with common identifiers (C-ID designations).

Evaluation of training is the prior learning assessment method most applicable to veteran and military students and those who come to colleges with industry credentials or formal workplace training, or as graduates of public service academies. This method involves examining the students' training and determining whether the outcomes of a training match the outcomes of a course (creating a "cross-walk"). College faculty can be assisted in this evaluation by consulting credit guides, such as that published by the American Council on Education (ACE). ACE employs faculty at accredited institutions to evaluate common military and industry training and make credit recommendations. Because the credit recommendations do not articulate perfectly to the outcomes of a specific college course, discipline faculty at institutions usually must do their own "cross-walk." This typically involves mapping the competencies that the student received in the training and matching them to the student learning outcomes of a specific course. Faculty can consult the ACE guide or other documentation of the training to learn the content and intended learning outcomes of the training, methods of instruction and assessment, and other important factors. This method of prior learning assessment can be time-consuming for faculty, but it can be scaled. Once an assessment of the training has been done, it can be made available for other faculty to adopt and apply to other eligible students with the same certifications. For example, faculty might determine that if a student has a valid CompTIA certification, they qualify for credit in certain course(s). If this cross-walk is either made available to faculty for potential application, or collaboratively developed, approved, and articulated in system and/or institutional policy, it can be scaled to impact many students.

4. Awarding Credit

The Advisory Committee suggests the following guidance in determining how and when to award CPL:

- Students' educational goals should be the guiding factor in the award of credit

- Students should be able to have their prior learning assessed early in their educational journey. CPL affects students' educational planning – they should not have to plan to take a course for which they might receive CPL. Therefore, early advising is important

- Students should be assessed for prior learning credit prior to registering for a course. They should be able to access clear timelines and processes toward receiving a credit recommendation

- Faculty should be encouraged to award credit in General Education or program requirements before electives. Too much elective credit can negatively impact students' financial aid. For veteran and military students, consider a "shadow" educational plan that contains a placeholder for the course in which CPL is anticipated; this avoids the student getting too close to the financial limits on VA benefits

- Rely on existing minimum/maximum credit allowances already stipulated in transfer policy for prior learning credit

- Follow accreditation requirements

- If the student intends to transfer, consider the policies at their transfer destination

- Students should be advised of the recommended credit award and be allowed to accept or deny it

- Students, informed by a counselor, should decide when credit is applied

- Each district should decide whether its faculty will assess prior learning of potential students

- Each district might consider setting a time limit for how long prior learning remains valid and eligible for assessment for credit, aligned with transfer policies

5. Transcribing Credit

The Advisory Committee suggests the following guidance in determining how to note CPL on transcripts and in student data systems:

- The system, districts, and campuses should track student outcomes related to CPL and therefore should collect data related to number of CPL units awarded each term, trends in awarding CPL credit, outcomes of students who earn CPL (parsed by number of units earned, when they were earned), and other metrics. However, noting CPL on student records for tracking is different and separate from noting CPL on transcripts

- There was a lack of consensus among committee members about whether a student's transcript should note that credit was earned via prior learning assessment

Arguments in favor of noting CPL on transcript:

- Noting how the credit was earned ensures transparency and builds trust between 2- and 4-year institutions

- Noting CPL can elevate CPL as a student success strategy

- Noting CPL is consistent with current practice of noting all credit earned through "alternative methods" such as standardized exams

- Noting CPL is consistent with current practice of noting all credit earned at other institutions (private, out of state/country)

- Noting CPL is ethical

- There may be issues with accreditation to not note it

- Lack of transparency with CPL may disrupt other areas that require articulation between 2- and 4-year colleges

Arguments against noting CPL on transcript:

- The purpose of noting it is not clear

- CPL is not as valued as classroom credit – it will be questioned for transfer

- There may be equity implications for students if we note it

- Students might be judged differently in admissions decisions when transferring.

- Not noting CPL supports trust among faculty between segments – they should trust each other's credit awards no matter the method of assessment

- There was consensus that if CPL does get noted on transcripts, there should be naming conventions established. For example, should all credit awarded through alternative methods be noted as "CPL"? Or should the transcript note the method (i.e. AP exam, industry certification evaluation, JST evaluation, etc.)?

- Consider creating a supplemental transcript to identify specifics of CPL on transcript; this could help affirm rigor and value of the assessment

6. Transparency and Accessibility

Transparency in Processes

- Students have a right to receive information on CPL. This puts the burden on institutions to be transparent

- Transparency in the development of CPL policies and processes should be achieved by engaging stakeholders early and often, which could increase buy-in

- CPL policies and communications should stipulate that CPL should be transparent and accessible to all stakeholders, including current and potential students, faculty, staff, administrators, industry, and other community partners

- Stakeholders should clearly understand how CPL impacts student success, college completion rates and enrollment, course scheduling, student diversity

- CPL will be more transparent and accessible if faculty have a primary role

- CPL should be clearly identified as curriculum under faculty purview per Title 5

- Clear guidelines for faculty in prior learning assessment will help them trust their colleagues' credit award decisions

CPL Information Infrastructure

- Consider making CPL a part of orientation so that students have an opportunity to opt out of CPL advice from a counselor

- State and local policies could specify mechanisms, such as websites or college catalogs, to achieve transparency on CPL

- Consider a statewide, searchable database for students and potential students that contains credit recommendations within certain pathways for common student experiences such as industry certifications, military service occupations, etc.

- Stakeholders (especially students and discipline and counseling faculty) need clear information on how credit for prior learning will transfer to UC, CSU and between CCC campuses in both GE and program courses. An intersegmental database for CPL akin to assist.org could increase transparency and accessibility

- Students need a centralized online resource dedicated to CPL, such as a website that explains CPL, why and how it's available within the system, who to contact on their campus, what process to expect, what types of prior learning might qualify for credit, etc.

- Campuses need an implementation manual that will help provide some systemwide consistency in CPL but allows for campus flexibility

- Faculty, staff, and administrators need 1) a central repository for resources (templates, assessments, etc.), 2) on-going professional development (such as webinars), and 3) release time or compensation to conduct assessments/cross-walks

- Consider an online portal such as Reconnect Tennessee that provides an on-ramp for adult students, helps orient them to CCC pathways and services in a way that resonates with this audience (considering factors such as age, race/ethnicity, work/family obligations, etc.)

7. Student Supports

Integrating CPL into Counseling, Guided Pathways

- Counselors should be at center of informing students' use of CPL

- Student onboarding and placement processes should include methods to identify and share CPL opportunities to students

- Integrate prior learning assessment advising into educational planning

- CPL should be integrated with Guided Pathways. CPL should be part of the on-boarding process in Guided Pathways. Students should know in which pathways CPL is often granted – they should be able to see CPL in the pathway map based on industry certifications, military service occupations, or other common student experiences

- Students should be questioned about their prior experiences in their first encounter with a counselor or advisor. Therefore, all counselors and advisors (Veteran's Resource Center, Career Center, Adult Re-Entry Center, freshman orientation, etc.) need to be versed in CPL policies and practices

- Consider different types of counseling appointments based on the students' experience. For example, adult re-entry specialists, industry experience specialists, etc.

- Add a question to CCCApply that will help counselors know if students might be eligible for CPL, and to provide information to students about CPL

Creating clear processes for students

- Have a clear process flow for students, including steps and timeline, so that students can manage their expectations

- Within the process flow, identify key decisional points for the student so that institutions know when action is required by internal stakeholders

- All stakeholders on campus who are affected by CPL (admissions, registrar, institutional research, faculty, etc.) should be aware of their roles and responsibilities related to CPL and should be able to advise students on process

- Consider having a CPL coordinator on each campus or for each district

- Students should be made aware that the CCC system may award credit for CPL, but it may not be recognized at CSU or UC, which is a potential barrier to transfer

8. Professional Development

- Campuses need guidance on how to incorporate CPL into Guided Pathways (i.e. into on-boarding processes, within pathway maps). Consider incorporating PD on CPL into Guided Pathways professional development

- All CCCs should have a CPL policy based on guidelines, best practices, and trainings developed by the ASCCC. This might be achieved by:
  - Creating a sub-committee of the ASCCC's curriculum committee
  - Leveraging IEPI training for faculty PD

- Faculty, staff, and administrators need 1) a central repository for resources (templates, assessments, etc.), 2) on-going professional development (such as webinars), and 3) release time or compensation to conduct assessments/cross-walks.

- Clear guidelines for faculty in prior learning assessment will help them trust their colleague's credit award decisions. Faculty need minimum standards for prior learning assessments

- All stakeholders on campus who are affected by CPL (admissions, registrar, institutional research, faculty, etc.) should be aware of their roles and responsibilities related to CPL and should be able to advise students on process. Consider holding a CPL conference or workshop for faculty or staff involved with CPL. Make faculty training on CPL a part of districts' "flex day" programming

9. Transfer

There was significant consensus among the Advisory Committee that CSU and UC need to be part of system-level conversations regarding the transfer of CPL credit. Suggested levers to ensure transfer between CCCs and university partners include:

- Intersegmental 'Joint Statement'/MOU/Position on CPL
- MOUs between campuses
- ICAS & GEAC Resolutions
- Intersegmental Faculty Discipline Review Panel
- A joint statement that leverages the strength of partnerships and seeks the state's support for resources
- An ASCCC resolution, affirming the need to honor faculty credit decisions
- Build upon existing models of intersegmental articulation such as TAG, ADT, AP exams, CSU Coded Memorandum ASA-2019-03, EO1036, GE reciprocity agreements
- Leverage signaling from state leaders about the importance of transfer, e.g. state budgets, new funding formulas incentivizing transfer completion
- Legislative & administrative pressure via statute & budget
- Use advocacy organizations such as The Campaign for College Opportunity, California Competes etc., as well as segment governing boards

Other guidance regarding transfer of CPL credit includes:

- Establish reciprocity across CCC's for CPL as a foundation for addressing university-level transfer
  - This would provide very simple messaging and process for students
  - This would require minimum standards for prior learning assessments
- Leverage C-ID as a model process for reciprocity
- If not reciprocity for course-to-course transfer of credit, consider reciprocity for GE categories, for example
- Consider guaranteeing reciprocity for certain types of CPL credit (for example, elective credit, program course credit or GE credit)
- Potentially limit reciprocity to courses with C-ID descriptors; exclude transfer courses
- Credit awarded through prior learning assessment should be included in all transfer policies and procedures
- Use existing standards (such as transfer minimum and maximum credit limits) that already accomplish similar/identical results
- Local policies should be aligned with CPL policies at CSU and UC to the greatest extent possible
- Consider communicating to faculty (CCCs and four-year partners) that they should trust each other's credit award decisions

10. Finance

Advisory Committee members suggest that funding is most needed to support:

- Counseling
- Articulation
- A database to house cross-walk evaluations
- Marketing and communications to all stakeholders
- Faculty participation in assessment process
- Integrated planning to institutionalize CPL
- Coordination of CPL training/PD
- Including CPL in matriculation activities (orientation, counseling)
- Curriculum review processes
- Local association/bargaining unit participation
- Amending CCCApply to determine a student's potential eligibility for CPL
- Conducting research on CPL and sharing outcomes
- Chancellor's Office support: cross-walks, marketing, joint statements/intersegmental coordination, integration with Vision for Success

The Advisory Committee offered the following guidance when it comes to funding CPL activities:

- Colleges should leverage existing program funds such as Strong Workforce, Student Equity and Achievement (SEA) Program, Guided Pathways, and the Student Centered Funding Formula
  - CPL should not be seen as a separate initiative; therefore, use existing funding where initiative objectives are aligned
  - Districts need flexibility with this funding to use it for CPL
  - The Chancellor's Office should specify how these funds can be used for CPL (guidance memo would be useful)
  - Colleges need incentives (such as a SCFF metric)
- System leaders need to signal commitment to and priority of CPL, consider incentives and/ or resources
- Colleges need new, separate funding for CPL; it should not be an unfunded mandate
- CPL should not be added to student costs, as this will curtail participation
- Invest in ASCCC to establish faculty panels to adopt and scale assessments
- Leverage funding from industry partners, particularly when giving credit for industry certifications
- Efficiencies can be made through a central repository for evaluations/cross-walks, central resource repository, consistent information for colleges, PD for faculty, online college, use NOVA and Vision Resource Center to scale CPL

11. Policy Review

The Advisory Committee offered the following guidance to review state and local policies regarding CPL:

- Policy language should set some expectation for an evaluation process, potentially including elements such as a review timeline, stated goals, and what factors will be assessed

- Policy language should make clear that CPL is a priority, that the expectation is that processes are improved and that credit awards should increase and credits should transfer

- State-level policy language should remain flexible and allow for district-level development and control

- CPL success needs to be clearly defined and measured by metrics such as CPL student persistence and degree completion

- CPL review should include qualitative data from students and "content experts" such as faculty

- It will be important to measure CPL student outcomes against non-CPL student outcomes.

- Evaluation methods need to be able to contribute to greater understanding of CPL's impact on equity gaps

- It is important to include end users and content experts in the process and incorporate student feedback

- Successful review processes include active involvement from key stakeholders such as Academic Senate, the Associated Student Government, and allow for local flexibility

- The C-ID process, EEO policy review, and the Advanced Placement assigning of equivalences at local institutions are efficacious review models

- District policies regarding acceptable assessments should be reviewed frequently to adapt to changes in local contexts (i.e. local employer training programs) and innovation in higher ed credentialing (i.e. digital badging, competency-based transcripts, etc.)

- Assessment should be reviewed periodically as part of locally established review cycles (e.g., program reviews)

In its first full meeting, the Advisory Committee undertook an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) related to CPL in the California Community Colleges. This resulted in identification of benefits, challenges, and potential beneficiaries of CPL in our system:

BENEFITS OF CPL

The committee identified some benefits and opportunities regarding CPL, including:

- CPL is an opportunity for colleges to expand services to non-traditional students in the community

- Can be an effective recruitment tool

- Can help students to complete degrees and certificates faster

- Can help students save time and money

- CPL can help create a welcoming environment for students

- Grow enrollment, incentivize students to return

- Supports completion, especially for short-term programs, reducing exit points

- Honors students learning, helps showcase their learning

- Addresses deficit model – sends message of validation to students who may feel like they do not belong in college

- Increases viability of part-time programs

- Aligns with multiple measures

- Builds upon prior learning pedagogy

- Acknowledges that learning gained beyond the college classroom in our communities can have educational value

- May help institution meet or exceed Student Centered Funding Formula metrics

- Conserves student resources

- May reduce current student obstacles (particularly for adults and veteran/military students)

- Increases skilled workforce faster

- Increases intersegmental communication and communication with labor/industry

- Reduces duplication

- Creates cost efficiencies for student and state

- Honors students' learning, acknowledging their experience and giving them a jumpstart

- Helps place value on students' experiences

CHALLENGES OF CPL

The committee identified some challenges to expanding CPL, including:

- CPL credit is not the same as credit for a classroom experience

- CPL credit may handicap some students if the credit does not transfer

- CPL might impact residency credit requirements

- Differences between theory/foundations and practice have to be bridged in prior learning assessment

- Quality of assessment of prior learning can vary among faculty

- Faculty might be reluctant to adopt

- Unknown whether CPL adds value to the student experience, institution, marketplace, workforce, etc.

- Faculty fear losing students in classes/course reduction/job concerns

- Unknown whether CPL meets industry needs

- Licensing requirements can vary

- Unknown whether CPL would result in cost savings to students, system, state

- Misalignment in CPL policies between CCC, CSU and UC

- Lack of knowledge about what CPL is by all groups on campus

- Faculty inclusion in CPL policy/process decisions is paramount

- CPL is complex for all stakeholders

- Could be perceived as a loss of enrollment by institution or specific disciplines

- Quality control is important yet difficult with CPL

- CPL might not contribute to program/major requirements and therefore not be helpful to students

- Excessive elective units can harm veterans on GI Bill

- Excessive units can affect students' qualification for financial aid

- Faculty need to be compensated for their work in prior learning assessment

- Policies and resources might not be sufficient to incentivize faculty to do CPL well and consistently across the system

- CPL could apply inconsistently to GE versus major/program credits, making it inequitable across the system

- Qualifications and preparation of students who receive CPL might be perceived as below that of students who earn credit through courses

- Campuses need to set maximum credit allowances for CPL

- CPL might channel students in too narrow of a direction, which might inhibit exploration and breadth in education

- Unknown how CPL relates to residency requirements

STUDENT BENEFICIARIES

The committee identified the following groups as students most likely to benefit from CPL:

- Returning adults

- High school students

- CTE students

- Online college students

- Nursing students

- Military veterans/active duty service members

- International students

- Incarcerated students

Appendix B:
CPL Advisory Committee Roster 2018-19

Daniel Avegalio – *Veteran's counselor, American River College*

Dolores Davison – *Vice President-Academic Senate for California Community Colleges*

Stacy Fisher – *Senior Director, Policy and Research, Success Center*

Sandy Fried – *Executive Director, Success Center*

Justin Garcia – *PLA coordinator, West Hills Lemoore*

Rita Grogan – *Assistant Vice Chancellor, Enrollment Management/Registrar, West Hills CCD*

Chantee Guiney – *Specialist, CCCCO Academic Affairs*

Kim Harrell – *Dean of Careers and Technology, Cosumnes River College, CCC Curriculum Committee*

Dorothy Hendrix – *Allied Health faculty, East Los Angeles College*

Jodi Lewis – *Director, Credit for Prior Learning Initiative, Success Center*

Leandra Martin – *Chief Instructional Officer, Mission College*

Ajita Menon – *Senior Advisor to the Chancellor, CCCCO*

Ben Mudgett – *Articulation Officer, Palomar College*

Terence Nelson – *VETS Program Coordinator/Veteran's Counselor, Saddleback College*

Patrick O'Rourke – *Director, Veteran's Affairs, CSU Chancellor's Office*

Alice Perez – *Committee Chair, Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs*

Matt Roberts – *Dean-Field Operations, Workforce and Economic Development*

Reagan Romali – *President, Long Beach City College*

Paola Santana – *Senior Director, Education and Workforce Development, Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce*

Lynn Shaw – *Visiting Dean of Sector Strategies, Workforce and Economic Development*

Evera Spears – *Associate Director, Advocacy & Partnerships, UC*

James Tompkins – *Student, Bakersfield College*

Melinda Tran – *Articulation Officer, Napa Valley College*

Donna Wyatt – *Director, College and Career Transition Division, California Department of Education*

Michael Wyly – *English faculty, Solano College*

CHANGES TO THE ORIGINAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ROSTER:

- Don Lopez, Vice President-Instruction, Fresno City College, replaced Leandra Martin
- Peggy Campo, Associate Professor-Norco College replaced Dorothy Hendrix
- Kathleen Scott, Vice President-Academic Affairs, Long Beach City College, replaced Reagan Romali
- Iiyshaa Youngblood, President-Student Senate for California Community Colleges, replaced James Tompkins
- Rita Grogan retired

Appendix C:
Credit for Prior Learning Landscape Survey
Final Report – July 31, 2018

In May 2018, all colleges received a survey asking about their credit for prior learning policies and practices and perceptions of awareness and support from campus stakeholder groups. The surveys were sent to Chief Instructional Officers and Chief Student Services Officers, who were asked to route the surveys to those on their campuses who could best answer the questions. This analysis summarizes unique responses from 86 colleges (75% response rate).

AVAILABILITY OF CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING

Q1. Nearly all (96%) of the colleges assess prior learning through Advanced Placement Exams with a large majority accepting Challenge Exams (86%) administered by instructional faculty. A smaller majority, between 65-67%, also use CLEP and IB exams. The most common "other" responses were ACCUPLACER (a placement test offered by College Board) and Military Training (see more in Q4-5).

Q2. The **vast majority (87%) of colleges do not award credit for workplace training.**

Q3. Inversely, **many colleges (81%) will award credit for learning that took place in military training.**

Q4. As proof of military training, **74% of the colleges award credit using the DD214** and 43% use the Joint Services Transcript. This was surprising given that ACE provides recommendations for credit on the Joint Services Transcript whereas the DD214 is simply a list of military experience. (Colleges were asked to select all that apply; 21% of respondents were unsure what documents are required to prove military training).

CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING AWARENESS AND DEVELOPMENT

Q5. Most students learn about credit for prior learning from counselors (97%) and the course catalog (93%). In addition, the Veteran's Resource Center/Adult Re-Entry Center (72%) and instructional faculty (63%) are significant sources of CPL information, compared to the registration and application process.

Which of the following modes of prior learning assessment are in use at your college?

Category	Percentage
Advanced Placement (AP) Exams	96.39%
Challenge Exams	85.54%
College Level Examination Program (CLEP) Exams	67.47%
International Baccalaureate (IB) Exam	65.06%
American Council on Education (ACE) Guides	31.33%
Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT)	26.51%
Other	19.28%
DSST Credit by Exam Program	13.25%
Evaluation of Local Training	8.43%
Portfolio-based Assessments	6.02%
UExcel Credit by Exam Program	2.41%
National College Credit Recommendation Service	1.20%
Excelsior College Examination Program	0.00%

Q6. **Colleges use credit for prior learning mostly to waive course prerequisites (92%)** as well as meet general education requirements (84%) and elective requirements (82%) with a fewer number of colleges, but still the majority, using for program/major requirements (76%). Very few of the survey respondents indicated CPL can be used to fulfill residency requirements.

How can students learn about credit for prior learning at your college?

Category	Percentage
Counselors	97.33%
Course Catalog	93.33%
Veteran's Resource Center/Adult Re-Entry Center	72.00%
Instructional Faculty	62.67%
Student Orientation	48.00%
School's Website	33.33%
Workshops	29.33%
Potential Student Outreach Events	29.33%
Registration FAQ	14.67%
Component of the Application Process	6.67%
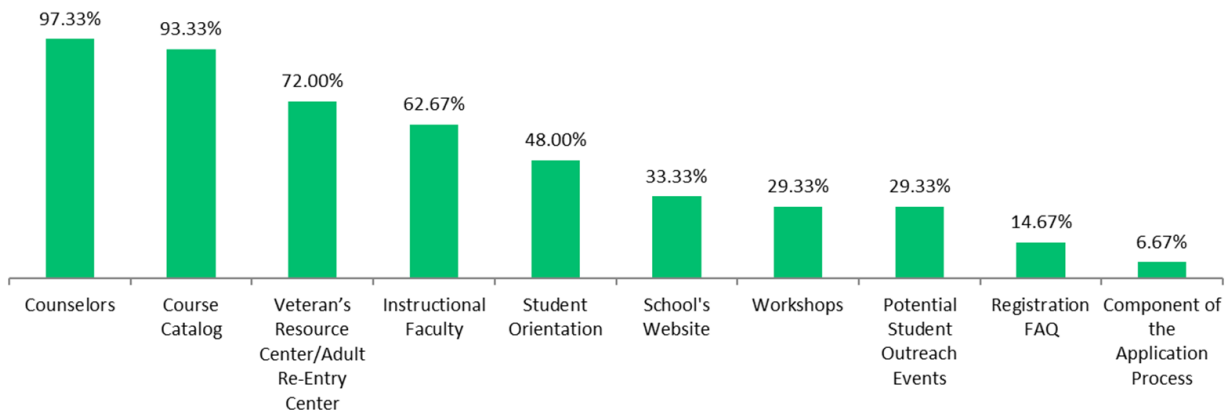
Q7-8. **The maximum number of credits per semester or quarter that a student may be awarded for CPL ranges from 6-32 credits.** A small number of the colleges (N = 7) impose a 50% limit or requirement that the coursework must be completed at their institution. By contrast, **26% (N = 22) either do not have a specific policy in place or do not limit the number of credits that can be awarded;** however, some (N = 2) of those overlap with the 50% requirement and others have lower (20-30%) requirements. Additionally, a few colleges (N = 9) have policies in place for the maximum number of credits based on the type of learning (for example military training or AP credits) or the area of study. However, the policies for certificates and degrees were largely the same with residency requirements being the only non-academic factor.

Q9. When rating the level of awareness about CPL, respondents indicated that **Instructional Faculty & Students are Slightly Aware**, Administrators & Staff are Somewhat Aware, Academic Counselors are Moderately Aware, and **Program Counselors know the most about CPL as Moderately to Extremely Aware.**

On a Scale of 1 to 5 please rate the level of support toward CPL from the perspective of:

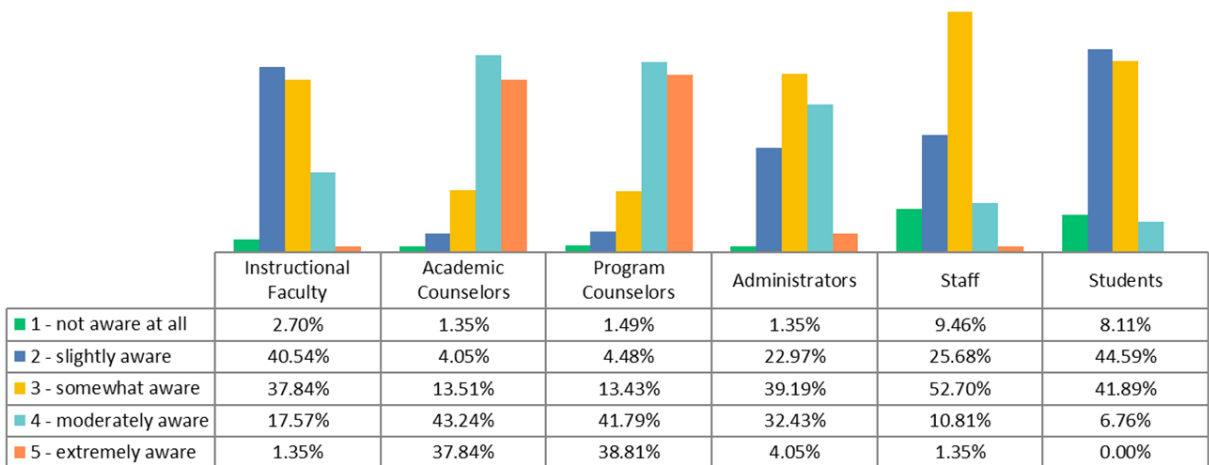|	Instructional Faculty	Academic Counselors	Program Counselors	Administrators	Staff	Students
■ 1 - strongly oppose	0.00%	1.37%	1.54%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
■ 2 - somewhat oppose	12.33%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.37%	0.00%
■ 3 - neutral	34.25%	16.44%	10.77%	20.55%	47.95%	23.29%
■ 4 - somewhat support	38.36%	35.62%	40.00%	46.58%	24.66%	27.40%
■ 5 - strongly support	16.44%	47.95%	47.69%	34.25%	26.03%	50.68%
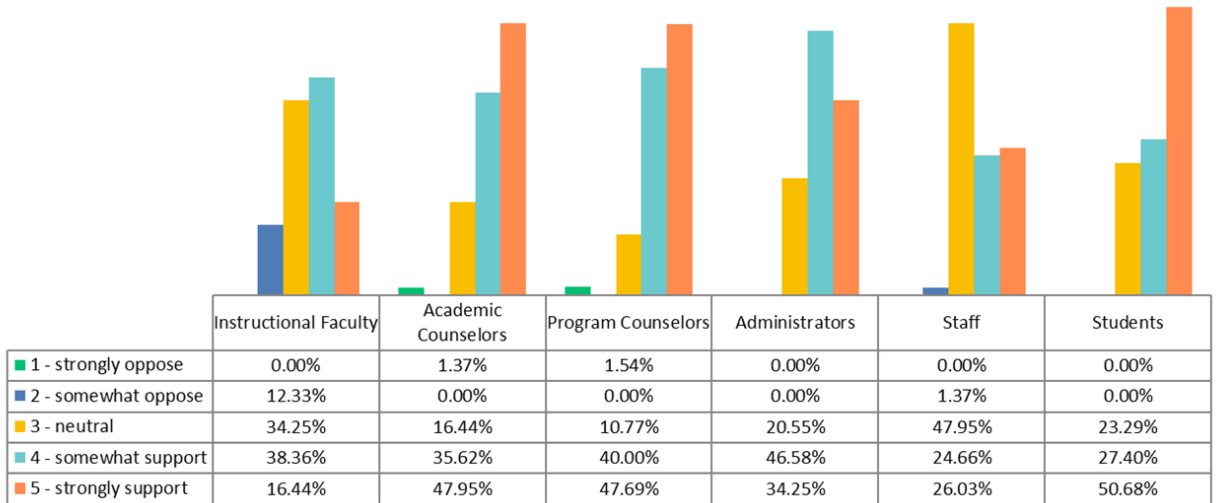
Q10. When it came to assessing support for CPL, **Academic & Program Counselors as well as Students Strongly Support** while Administrators Somewhat Support and **Instructional Faculty are Neutral to Somewhat Supportive** whereas Staff are mostly Neutral. The correlation between where students get information about CPL (Q5) and the levels of support among those groups indicates that counselors (97%) are encouraging students to seek credit for prior learning whereas instructional faculty (63%) may have varying perspectives on it.

On a Scale of 1 to 5 please rate the level of awareness regarding CPL from the perspective of:

	Instructional Faculty	Academic Counselors	Program Counselors	Administrators	Staff	Students
■ 1 - not aware at all	2.70%	1.35%	1.49%	1.35%	9.46%	8.11%
■ 2 - slightly aware	40.54%	4.05%	4.48%	22.97%	25.68%	44.59%
■ 3 - somewhat aware	37.84%	13.51%	13.43%	39.19%	52.70%	41.89%
■ 4 - moderately aware	17.57%	43.24%	41.79%	32.43%	10.81%	6.76%
■ 5 - extremely aware	1.35%	37.84%	38.81%	4.05%	1.35%	0.00%

Q11. **Only about half (57%) of colleges provide online resources for faculty and staff about CPL with even fewer (50%) offering professional development training.** The lack of information about credit for prior learning policies and practices warrants further attention. One survey respondent commented *"This survey has surfaced the need to develop efforts to communicate information campus wide regarding credit for prior learning options."*

How are faculty and staff informed about credit for prior learning policies and practices?

56.90%	50.00%	39.66%	34.48%	5.17%
Online resource for faculty and staff	Professional Development training	Memos or emails from campus leaders	Conferences	New Hire Orientation
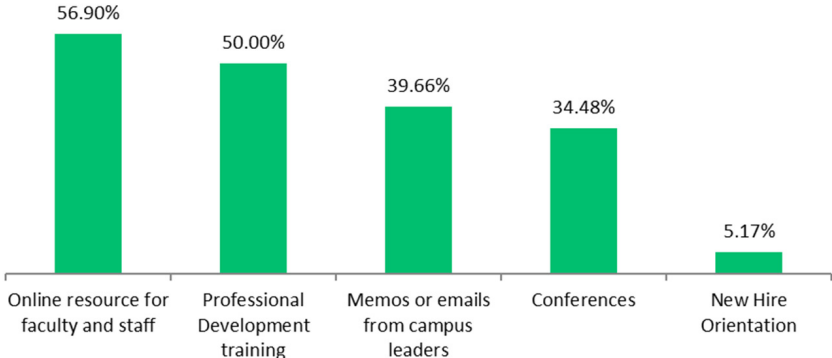
Q12. **Faculty are largely included in decisions about CPL policies and practices through policy and procedure vetting (81%) as well as participation in Advisory Committees/Groups (76%).** Additionally, a small number of colleges engage faculty through curriculum development and departmental policy setting (N = 8), the exam and evaluation process (N = 6), as well as through the petition process for CPL (N = 3) to inform policies and practices.

How are faculty included in decisions regarding credit for prior learning policies and practices?

|		
80.88%	76.47%	27.94%
Policy and Procedure Vetting	Participation through Advisory Committees/Groups	Other
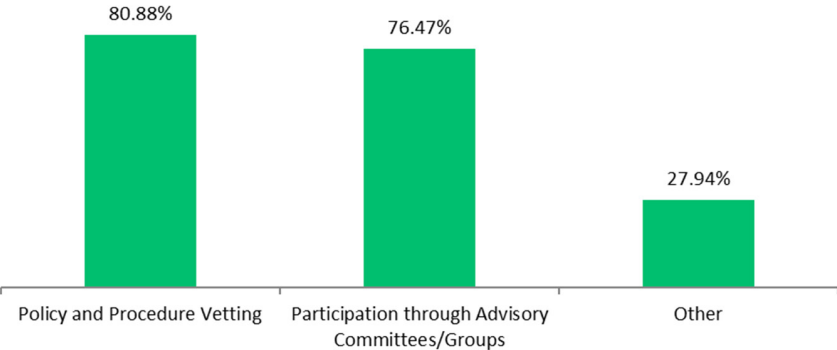
## CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING INFRASTRUCTURE, POLICIES, AND PROCESSES

Q13. **Less than half (43%) of colleges track data related to CPL and just as many of the survey respondents (46%) were unsure if their institution did or not.**

Q14. Similarly, **most of the survey respondents (45%) were also unsure whether their college received special funding or utilized existing funding for CPL** and a smaller number of colleges (37%) believed they did not.

Does your college track data related to credit for prior learning?
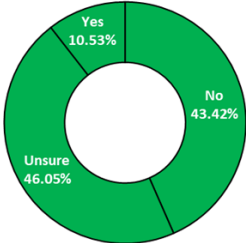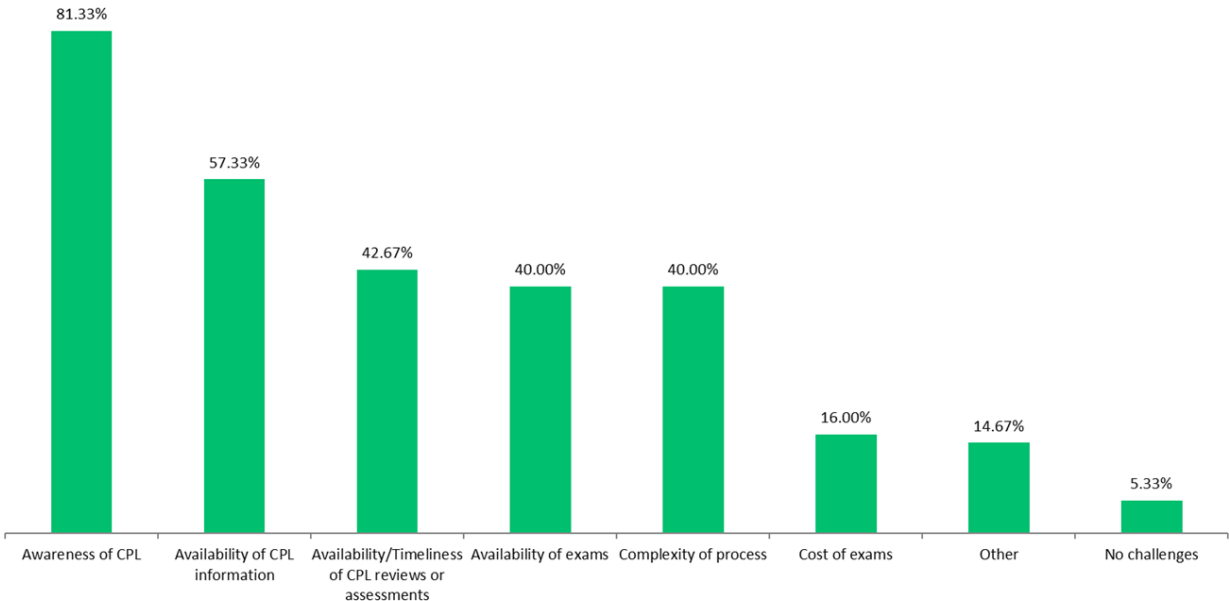

Yes 10.53%
No 43.42%
Unsure 46.05%

Does your college receive grant funding, Innovation Award funding, or other programmatic funding that is used to sustain credit for prior learning?

Yes 18.42%
No 36.84%
Unsure 44.74%
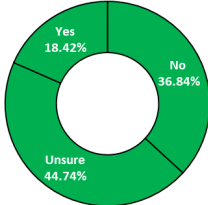
Q15. **Survey respondents (81%) said that awareness of credit for prior learning opportunities was the largest barrier students faced in the credit-granting process**, with more than half of the colleges (57%) indicating availability of CPL information was a challenge. The other challenges named varied from issues related to transfer to low priority level or faculty interest at the institution.

What kinds of challenges, if any, do students face during the credit-granting process for prior learning?

Awareness of CPL	Availability of CPL information	Availability/Timeliness of CPL reviews or assessments	Availability of exams	Complexity of process	Cost of exams	Other	No challenges
81.33%	57.33%	42.67%	40.00%	40.00%	16.00%	14.67%	5.33%

Q16. **Faculty on the other hand, are primarily limited by time to review student's learning (58%), compensation for assessment (56%) and inability or insufficient information to match prior learning to course outcomes (49%).** Some of the other challenges included lack of faculty awareness or support for CPL (N = 4) and technical issues with exams and transfer processes.

What kinds of challenges, if any, do faculty face in considering whether to grant credit for prior learning? Select all that apply

Challenge	Percentage
Time constraints to review student's learning	57.53%
Compensation for time & effort to complete assessment	56.16%
Inability or insufficient information to determine whether prior learning matches course outcomes	49.32%
Inadequate direction or policy regarding granting credit	42.47%
No challenges	12.33%
Other	12.33%
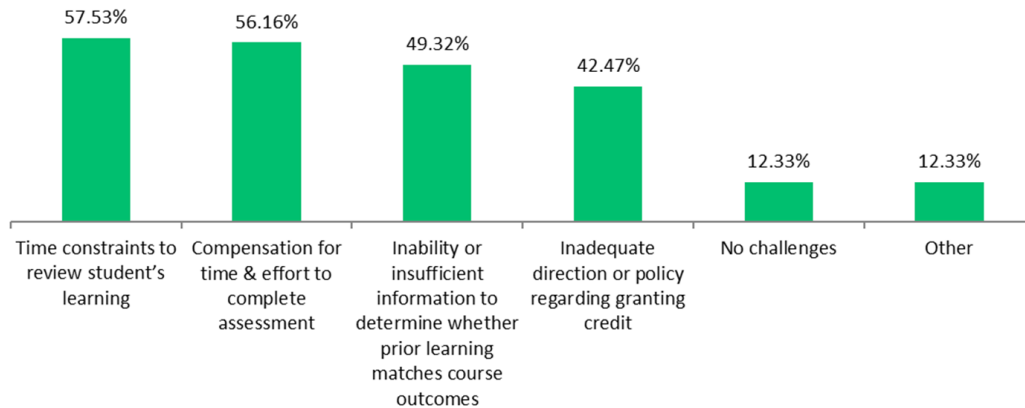
Q17. When asked "Would you suggest any changes in how your institution grants credits for prior learning, or in the process that students experience to receive it?" Several colleges (N = 11) named process improvements, i.e. the need to review and clarify their process for awarding credit for prior learning, awareness and distribution of information about their CPL practices (N = 6) and the need to establish or revise current CPL policies (N = 4).

COMPLETE LIST OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Survey respondents (N = 86) included American River College, Antelope Valley, Bakersfield College, Barstow Community College, Cabrillo College, Cerro Coso Community College, Chaffey College, Citrus College, Clovis Community College, College of Alameda, College of Marin, College of San Mateo, College of the Canyons, College of the Desert, College of the Sequoias, College of the Siskiyous, Columbia College, Compton College, Contra Costa College, Cosumnes River College, Crafton Hills College, Cuyamaca College, Cypress College, De Anza College, Diablo Valley College, El Camino College, Evergreen Valley College, Feather River College, Folsom Lake College, Foothill College, Fresno City College, Gavilan College, Golden West College, Hartnell College, Imperial Valley College, Irvine Valley College, Lake Tahoe Community College, Las Positas College, Lassen Community College, Long Beach City College, Los Angeles Mission College, Los Angeles Pierce College, Los Angeles Southwest College, Los Angeles Trade Technical College, Los Medanos College, Mendocino College, Merritt College, MiraCosta College, Mission College, Modesto Junior College, Monterey Peninsula College, Moreno Valley College, Mt. San Jacinto College, Norco College, Ohlone College, Oxnard College, Palo Verde College, Palomar Community College, Pasadena City College, Porterville College, Reedley College, Rio Hondo College, Riverside City College, Saddleback College, San Bernardino Valley College, San Diego Community College: City, Mesa, Miramar, San Jose City College, Santa Ana College, Santa Barbara City

College, Santa Monica College, Santa Rosa Junior College, Santigo Canyon College, Sequoias Community College District, Shasta College, Sierra College, Skyline College, Solano Community College, Southwestern College, Taft College, Ventura College, Victor Valley College, West Hills College Coalinga, West Hills College.

SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Name of College:

2. Which of the following modes of prior learning assessment are in use at your college? Select all that apply

   ☐ Portfolio-based Assessments—Evaluations of student portfolios such as those done through CAEL

   ☐ American Council on Education (ACE) Guides—Published credit recommendations for formal instructional programs offered by non-collegiate agencies, both civilian employers and the military

   ☐ Advanced Placement (AP) Exams—A series of tests developed by the College Board initially for AP High School courses, including 34 exams in 19 subject areas

   ☐ Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT)—A test administered by the College Board that measures the essential ingredients for college and career readiness and success.

   ☐ International Baccalaureate (IB) Exam—An international education Diploma Programme (DP) for students aged 16 to 19 that assesses student work through both internal and external assessment

   ☐ College Level Examination Program (CLEP) Exams—Tests of college material offered by the College Board

   ☐ DSST Credit by Exam Program—Formerly known as the DANTES Program, owned and administered by Prometric, tests knowledge of both lower-level and upper-level college material through 38 exams

   ☐ National College Credit Recommendation Service—(formerly known as National PONSI) evaluates learning experiences for non-collegiate organizations

   ☐ Evaluation of Local Training—Program evaluations done by individual colleges of non-collegiate instructional programs

   ☐ Challenge Exams—Local tests developed by instructional faculty to assess prior learning

   ☐ Excelsior College Examination Program—Formerly, Regents College Exams or ACT/PEP Exams, offered by Excelsior College, NY

   ☐ UExcel Credit by Exam Program—tests knowledge of lower-level college material; awarded Excelsior College credit can be transferred to other colleges and universities

   ☐ Other (please specify or share a URL linking to your policy)

3. Do you award credit for prior learning that took place in workplace training?

   ○ Yes

   ○ No

4. Do you award credit for prior learning that took place in military training?
   - ○ Yes
     - Which document(s) do you require for proof of training? Select all that apply
       - ▢ DD214
       - ▢ Joint Services Transcript
       - ▢ Not Sure
   - ○ No

5. How can students learn about credit for prior learning at your college? Select all that apply
   - ▢ Counselors
   - ▢ Instructional faculty
   - ▢ Course Catalog
   - ▢ Student Orientation
   - ▢ Registration FAQ
   - ▢ Workshops
   - ▢ School's Website (if yes, please provide a URL linking to that information at the end of this survey)
   - ▢ Component of the Application Process
   - ▢ Potential Student Outreach Events
   - ▢ Veteran's Resource Center/Adult Re-Entry Center
   - ▢ Other (please specify)

6. For what purpose(s) can credit for prior learning be used at your college? Select all that apply
   - ▢ obtain advanced standing
   - ▢ waive course prerequisites
   - ▢ meet general education requirements
   - ▢ meet program/major requirements
   - ▢ meet elective requirements
   - ▢ meet transfer requirements
   - ▢ fulfill residency requirements
   - ▢ meet program admission requirements
   - ▢ Other (please specify)

7. What is the maximum number of prior learning semester/quarter credits that can be applied to a certificate at your college? Please specify whether semester or quarter.

8. What is the maximum number of prior learning semester/quarter credits that can be applied to a degree at your college? Please specify whether semester or quarter.

9. On a Scale of 1 to 5 please rate the level of awareness regarding credit for prior learning from the perspective of:

	1 - not aware at all	2 - slightly aware	3 - somewhat aware	4 - moderately aware	5 - extremely aware
Instructional Faculty					
Academic Counselors					
Program Counselors					
Administrators					
Staff					
Students					

10. On a scale of 1 to 5, please rate the level of support towards granting credit for prior learning from the perspective of:

	1 - strongly oppose	2 - somewhat oppose	3 - neutral	4 - somewhat support	5 - strongly support
Instructional Faculty					
Academic Counselors					
Program Counselors					
Administrators					
Staff					
Students					

11. How are faculty and staff informed about credit for prior learning policies and practices? Select all that apply

   ☐ Online resource for faculty and staff

   ☐ Memos or emails from campus leaders

   ☐ Conferences

   ☐ Professional Development trainings

   ☐ New Hire Orientation

   ☐ Other (please specify)

12. How are faculty included in decisions regarding credit for prior learning policies and practices?

   ☐ Participation through Advisory Committees/Groups

   ☐ Policy and Procedure Vetting

   ☐ Other (please specify)

13. Does your college track data related to credit for prior learning? For example, could you examine learning outcomes of students who earned credit for prior learning? Could you examine how many students per year earn credits for prior learning and how many credits were earned?

   ○ No

   ○ Unsure

   ○ Yes (please specify what data is tracked)

14. Does your college receive grant funding, Innovation Award funding, or other programmatic funding (Student Services Support Program, Equity, Veteran's Resource Center funding) that is used to sustain credit for prior learning?

   ○ No

   ○ Unsure

   ○ Yes (please specify)

15. What kinds of challenges, if any, do students face during the process of granting credit for prior learning? Select all that apply

   □ Awareness of CPL

   □ Availability of CPL information

   □ Availability/Timeliness of CPL reviews or assessment

   □ Availability of exams

   □ Cost of exams

   □ Complexity of process

   □ No challenges

   □ Other (please specify)

16. What kinds of challenges, if any, do faculty face in considering whether to grant credit for prior learning? Select all that apply

   □ Compensation for time & effort to complete assessment

   □ Time constraints to review student's learning

   □ Inability or insufficient information to determine whether prior learning matches course outcomes

   □ Inadequate direction or policy regarding granting credit

   □ No challenges

   □ Other (please specify)

17. Would you suggest any changes in how your institution grants credits for prior learning, or in the process that students experience to receive it?

18. Is there is any additional information you would like to share regarding credit for prior learning policies and practices on your campus?

19. Would you be willing to share documents or point us to online resources that will help us better understand your institution's approach to credit for prior learning (e.g., data, guidelines, policy, handbooks, strategic plans)?

    — If yes, please attach these documents or share links in the box below.

20. Please list URLs that link to information to help us better understand your approach to CPL, including any information on your college's website.