

## **Aims Community College Procedure**

### **Academic Affairs**

#### **Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Credit**

Purpose: Aims Community College shall maintain procedures for evaluating a student's knowledge or skills that have been obtained outside the traditional academic environment. The following procedures provide guidance for publicizing opportunities to students, methods for awarding credit, standards for awarding credit, the transfer of credit as well as the grading and transcription of credits.

#### **Definition of Prior Learning Assessment Credit**

Prior Learning in this procedure is defined as knowledge or skills that have been attained outside the traditional college academic environment and that have not previously been evaluated for and awarded college credit.

#### **A. Publicize PLA Credit Opportunities to Students**

1. Students should have access to clear and concise information about how PLA Credit may help them;
2. Aims Community College will provide students with information necessary to seek PLA Credit and will publish procedures on how to do so;
3. Information will be available for new students, as well as currently enrolled and returning students and any person seeking information about the institution;
4. Aims will provide guidance to students in optimizing the use of prior learning assessment towards their plan of study.

#### **B. Methods for Awarding Prior Learning Assessment Credit**

1. Standardized Tests:
  - a. Standardized tests include tests such as the College Board's College Level Examination Program (CLEP) and Advanced Placement (AP), the DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST) and Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT), the International Baccalaureate program (IB), UExcel Excelsior College Examination Program and the GED.
2. Challenge Examinations:
  - a. Challenge exams are developed and administered by the institution. Challenge exams are evaluated by Aims faculty subject matter experts.
3. Evaluated Industry Certificates and Training Programs:
  - a. Evaluation of non-college training programs or examinations as recommended in the American Council on Education (ACE) National Guide to College Credit for Workplace Training and the National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS).
4. Evaluated Military Training:
  - a. Credit for learning gained in the U.S. Military is based on the American Council on Education (ACE) Military Guide credit recommendations found on a Joint Services Transcript (JST), or a Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) report for current or former Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, or Navy personnel or on a Community College of the Air Force Transcript (CCAF) for Air Force personnel.

5. Portfolios:
  - a. Individualized assessment of portfolio or demonstration of learning from non-credit activities and other experiences including industry and workplace training and certifications. Aims faculty subject matter experts will assess student portfolios for credit, when it is determined to be appropriate for the course.
6. Please visit the Aims Community College website for additional information about the PLA methods listed above; information can be found under Registration and Records

C. Standards for Awarding PLA Credit

1. PLA credit is awarded for college level learning that entails knowledge, skills and competencies that students have obtained as a result of their prior learning experiences;
2. Once a student has been admitted to Aims CC and has chosen a program of study, the student becomes eligible for PLA Credit;
3. Academic credit will be awarded only to those courses directly applicable to the student's declared program of study;
4. PLA Credits do not count toward eligibility for Financial Aid or Veteran's Benefits (Federal Student Aid Handbook V.1 Chpt.1);
5. All work assessed for PLA Credit must meet or exceed C (70% or higher) level work,
6. Challenge Exams and Portfolios will be assessed by faculty subject matter experts as determined by the College.
7. A student may use PLA Credit to fulfill any degree, certificate or graduation requirement, (see Graduation Policy)

D. Transfer of Credit

1. PLA credit awarded as Challenge Exams are the only PLA credits counted as Aims course work, transcribed as Aims course work, and therefore count towards residency requirements (see Graduation Policy)
2. PLA credit awarded through all other methods is counted as transfer work
3. Aims does not govern how other institutions review PLA credit; if students are transferring to another institution they should check with the receiving institution for applicable PLA policies and procedures

E. Grading and Transcribing of PLA Credit

1. Please see Policy and Procedure on Transfer of Credit for information about how Prior Learning Assessment credit is transcribed

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**Responsible Administrator: Vice President for Academic Affairs**