



MEMORANDUM

TAB G

November 6, 2019

Prior Learning Assessment Priorities and Timeline

The Utah Legislature passed House Bill 45 during the 2019 General Session. One of the directives from this bill is for USHE to establish policies that provide minimum standards for all institutions regarding:

- Accepted forms of prior learning assessments
- Awarding credit for prior learning
- Transferability of credit for prior learning between institutions
- Institutional procedures for maintaining transparency and consistency in awarding credit for prior learning
- Communication to faculty, advisors, current and prospective students regarding standards and costs related to credit for prior learning and prior learning assessments
- Required training of faculty and advisors on prior learning assessment standards and process
- Portfolio-specific prior learning assessments (53B-16-110)

USHE will provide an update on progress to the Interim Higher Education Committee in November 2019.

On October 11, 2019 the ASA Committee of the Board made changes to R472 and approved it to move forward to the General Consent Calendar for the November 15th Board of Regents meeting.

The USHE Prior Learning Committee met on October 21st and recommended additional changes. These changes are reflected in the attached draft document.

Commissioner's Recommendations

The Commissioner recommends the Board of Regents approve R472 with edits recommended from USHE Prior Learning Committee.

Attachments

R472, Credit for Prior Learning¹

R472-1 Purpose: To establish the process and standards by which students attending USHE institutions may earn academic credit through assessment of their prior learning.

R-472-2 References

2.1 Utah Code §53B-16-105, Common Course Numbering—Credit by Examination Transferability of Credits—Agreement with Competency-Based General Education Provider

2.2. Utah Code §53B-16-107, Credit for Military Service and Training – Transferability – Reporting

2.3 Utah Code §53B-16-110, Credit for prior learning—Board plan and policies—Reporting

2.4 Regent Policy R470, General Education, Common Course Numbering, Lower Division, Pre-Major Requirements

2.5 Regent Policy R471, Transfer and Articulation of Credit (pending approval)

2.6 Regent Policy R473, Standards for Granting Academic Credit for CTE Course Work Completed in Non-Credit Instructional Formats)

R472-3 Definitions

3.1 “Prior Learning” Knowledge, competencies, and skills acquired through formal or informal education outside a traditional academic environment or at the initiative of the individual learner, including through participation in employer training programs, military service, and independent study.

3.2 “Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)” A proven, validated process through which faculty subject matter experts evaluate a student’s previously learned competencies in a particular field and grant college credit when appropriate.

3.3 “System Transfer Guide” A USHE-licensed, online tool that enables students to easily and accurately assess credit transferability between USHE institutions.

¹ Adopted November 15, 2019

R472-3 System Responsibilities

4.1 Prior Learning Committee: The Commissioner of Higher Education shall appoint a Prior Learning Committee to establish and maintain a quality standards and best practices guidebook for USHE institutions. The committee will review methods of PLA through which institutions provide credit and the total amount of credit for prior learning the institution provides to determine trends, student academic outcomes, and policy efficacy. The committee will also ensure information technology systems will consistently record and track data collected related to prior learning, as well as enable accurate reports.

4.2 All prior learning assessment policies, services, and procedures will comply with the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) standards, as well as any specialized or program accreditation guidelines.

4.3 The System Transfer Guide will provide system-wide and institutional information on prior learning assessments and credit for prior learning.

R472-5 Institution Responsibilities

5.1 Institution PLA Policy: Institutions shall establish policies on credits earned in extra-institutional settings (structured and non-structured) through prior learning assessment that expand the range of educational opportunities, incorporate them into the credit award system, and remove restrictions to access.

5.2 Implementation: USHE institutions are responsible to implement credit for prior learning within the context of their missions, roles, student needs, and academic programs. Each institution's chief academic officer or designee is responsible to oversee of credit earned through prior learning. Institutions shall comply with this policy and provide students with prior learning assessment opportunities as deemed appropriate by its faculty. Institutions will work with the Board to support all prior learning assessment efforts.

5.3 Communication to students: Institutions shall inform students of opportunities to earn college credit through PLA through advising, institutional websites, and the Utah Transfer Guide. Institutions shall provide students at minimum the following information:

- 5.3.1** Accepted forms of prior learning assessments;
- 5.3.2** How credit is awarded for prior learning;
- 5.3.3** Potential impacts on financial aid;
- 5.3.4** Transferability of credit for prior learning among institutions;
- 5.3.5** How prior learning is transcribed; and

5.3.6 Costs associated with PLA and earned credit.

5.4 Communication to faculty and staff: Institutions' chief academic officers shall communicate to faculty and advisors PLA methods, standards and all related costs.

5.5 Training: Institutions shall train faculty and advisors on PLA and processes as well as portfolio-specific prior learning assessments.

R472-6 Reporting

6.1 Institutions shall annually report to the Board each form of prior learning assessment through which they provide credit, and the total amount of PLA credit the institution awarded students.

R472-7 Accepted Forms of PLA Institutions shall grant credit for prior learning from the following sources:

7.1 Credits earned through extra-institutional settings., including military service.

7.2 Nationally recognized, standardized exams, including:

7.2.1 Advanced Placement (AP);

7.2.2 College-Level Examination Program (CLEP);

7.2.3 DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST); and

7.2.4 International Baccalaureate (IB)

7.3 Nationally recognized organizations, including:

7.3.1 American Council of Education (ACE);

7.3.2 National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS); and

7.3.3 Board-approved postsecondary associations.

7.4 Faculty-determined assessments for each institution, including:

7.4.1 Challenge Exams;

7.4.2 Portfolio Assessments;

7.4.3 Individual Performance Assessments; and

7.4.4 Program evaluations, completed by an institution, of non-collegiate programs or training courses to recognize proficiencies; and

7.4.5 Locally evaluated industry and workplace Credit.

7.4.6 To earn credit from the forms of prior learning listed in this subsection, students must demonstrate college-level learning and competence as determined by faculty/subject matter experts.

R472-8 Awarding Credit

8.1 If a student successfully demonstrates college-level learning, institutions shall award credit and transcript the credit as credit for prior learning. Institutions are not obligated to assess prior learning that would likely articulate with courses they do not offer.

8.2 Credit earned through prior learning will apply toward appropriate general education, degree, or certificate requirements.

8.3 Credit earned by passing a standardized examination shall be awarded credit unless the award of credit duplicates credit already awarded.

8.4 Institutions shall establish a process for students to appeal PLA credit determinations.

8.5 Credit for Current and Former Military Personnel: Pursuant to Utah Code 53B-16-107, all USHE institutions shall provide written notification to each student applying for admission that the student is required to meet with a college advisor in order to receive credit for military service and training. Upon student request, USHE institutions will provide credit based on a review of recommendations from a Regent-approved postsecondary association to include the American Council on Education and other sources as may be deemed appropriate by the institution. To receive credit under this provision, current and former military personnel must meet with an academic advisor to discuss applicability of credit to program requirements, possible financial aid implications, and other factors that may impact attainment of the student's educational goals, such as competencies that are transferable to a course of study. Upon transfer within the USHE, a student may present a transcript from a USHE institution to a receiving USHE institution to determine the applicability of credit to the student's chosen major. The receiving institution shall evaluate the credit to be transferred pursuant to this policy. To receive credit under this provision, current and former military personnel must meet with an academic advisor to discuss chosen major. The receiving institution shall evaluate the credit to be transferred pursuant to this policy.

8.5.1 Processes for Evaluation of Credit for Current and Former Military Personnel: Representatives from USHE institutions who have responsibility for veterans' services shall meet at least annually to review institutional policies and practices relative to awarding credit for current and former military personnel with the goal of maintaining consistent system-wide practices for evaluating and awarding credit pursuant to Section 8.5.

8.5.2 Reporting Credits Awarded to Current and Former Military Personnel: USHE Institutions shall report annually to the Board of Regents the number of credits awarded under Section 8.5.

R472-9 Eligibility

9.1 Undergraduate students must be admitted and enrolled at a USHE institution to be eligible to earn PLA credits.

9.2 The number of credits earned through prior learning awarded by institutions may be limited. Some limitations may be imposed by the residency requirements of the regional and other accrediting bodies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the student degree plan.

R472-10 Transferability

10.1 Once recorded on a Utah System of Higher Education transcript, credit earned for prior learning is transferable on the same basis as if the credit had been earned through regular study at the awarding institution.

R472-11 Cost

11.1 Prior learning assessment fees must be transparent and reflect only the operational cost of administering a PLA program. Fees may not be based on the number of credits awarded.

The background of the slide features a close-up, slightly blurred image of a dark blue graduation cap with a gold tassel. The cap is positioned on the left side, and the tassel hangs down. The right side of the slide is covered by a solid blue rectangular overlay.

Transfer and Prior Learning Assessment updates

November 2019



Transfer

Regent Transfer Council

- Creation of council approved at Sept. SBR.
- Begin meeting late November/early December.
- Charge:
 - Establish higher level goals and standards for what transfer should look like in Utah;
 - Prioritize transfer problems to address, such as deviations from General Education Articulation.

Council membership:

- ❑ A regent from the Academic and Student Affairs Committee, who serves as the Chair of the RTC—Nina Barnes
- ❑ Student Regent—Sheva Mozafari
- ❑ One president (or designee) from the research universities—Noelle Cockett
- ❑ One president (or designee) from the two-year institutions—Deneece Huftalin
- ❑ One president (or designee) from the regional universities—Scott Wyatt
- ❑ One academic faculty senate leader regularly rotated among institutions—TBD Thursday.
- ❑ Chair of the General Education Task Force—TBD

Still needed for council membership:

- ❑ A transfer expert from each USHE institution, as recommended by the president, such as the president, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Student Affairs Officer, or other officers at the Cabinet level.

Transfer Guide:

	OCHE
Data Files	
Submit program data file for 8 institutions (includes all programs certificate through graduate degrees)	✓
Submit first round of top Bachelor's degrees for degree requirements to be coded in the transfer guide for the system (includes ~400 degrees) – Fall 2019	✓
Submit second round of top Bachelor's degrees – Spring 2020	
Upgraded Website	
Identify new URL: UtahTransferGuide.org	✓
Initial meeting with AcademyOne on main content sections and new look and feel	✓
Feedback on mock-ups from AcademyOne (iterative process)	
Launch new site with AcademyOne	12/19/19
Trainings	
Schedule group training for Transfer Profile	✓
Schedule group training for Transfer Agreement Management Center (TAMC)	✓
Schedule individual institution training for Course Equivalency Management Center (CEMC)	IP

Prior Learning Assessment

Prior Learning Committee

- Members selected by CAOs.
- Met on Oct. 21.
 - In progress: PLC members will report what forms of PLA are already available at their institutions (due Nov 15);
 - In progress: PLC members are working with their institutional teams to establish student-facing communication on acceptable forms of PLA with information on how credit will be applied, standards and learning outcomes that must be met, cost of the assessments and credit students will receive, and ensuring this information is easy-to-find on institutional websites (update due December 13);
 - Still to do: create a Prior Learning Assessment Credit Manual and identify priority courses for new PLA development to support Gen Ed pathways.

Policy and Legislative Report

- Nov 15: Policy R472 presented for Board approval. Draft includes a slight change recommended by the PLC.
- Nov. 20: Commissioner will report to Legislative Interim Committee.

Major Committees



Spring 2020

- Address lower-division program alignment per RTC standards.
- Review AP/CLEP/DSST/IB tables showing how credit for prior learning is currently applied within specific majors; begin standardizing how credit for prior learning should be applied across institutions.
- Later: Discuss development of PLA for priority Gen Ed courses as identified by PLC and RTC.