

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT POLICY AND GUIDELINES

University of Louisville
College of Education and Human Development
Bachelor of Science in Workforce Leadership

As a part of the adult learner initiative in the state of Kentucky, a Double the Numbers plan has been put into place to double the number of Bachelor degree holders in the state by 2020. Additionally, this plan calls to increase the participation rate of adult learners from 3.6 % to 4.5% in the same time frame.

The University of Louisville's Department of Leadership, Foundations and Human Resource Education (ELFH) has an undergraduate program that has great appeal to this potential group of adult learners. The undergraduate Workforce Leadership Program is designed for working adults, and is offered online or in the classroom. Prior learning assessment (PLA) is used to give credit for life learning in a specialty area that has not previously been awarded credit. Students can earn up to 48 semester hours of credit in other than university classrooms. Most often this university prior learning credit is given for learning from on-the-job training and development, continuing educational units, or unaccredited college courses, as well as CLEP tests. Credit is not awarded for work experience per se, but for the learning that occurred as the result of work or life experiences that are comparable to college-level courses. The student must show that the learning is transferable to several contexts or settings, and not just the one work place. These credits may not be used for Workforce Leadership core courses or general education requirements, but are used to develop the required 48 hour specialty area. Experiences and training used to request credit need to constitute a specialty area based on the O*Net occupational details for a job or job cluster.

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT

Guidelines* for prior learning assessment in the Workplace Leadership Program are based on the Council of Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) standards. They are:

1. Credit should be awarded only for learning and not for experience.
2. College credit should be awarded only for college-level learning.
3. Credit should be awarded only for learning that has a balance, appropriate to the subject, between theory and practical application.
4. Competence levels and credit awards must be made by subject matter/academic experts.
5. Credit should be appropriate to the academic context in which it is accepted.
6. Credit awards and transcript entries should be monitored to avoid duplicate credit.
7. Policies and procedures (including appeals) should be fully disclosed and prominently available
8. Fees charged for assessment should be based on services, not amount of credit.
9. Personnel involved in assessment should receive adequate training.
10. Assessment programs should be regularly monitored, reviewed, evaluated, and revised.

*Adapted from Colvin, J. (2006) *Earn college Credit for What You Know*, 4th Ed. Dubuque, IO: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co.

At the University of Louisville, guidelines and procedures are in place to assess prior learning. These guidelines and procedures can be found on Blackboard under the ELFH Student Organization tab. Additionally, students are given a Prior Learning Assessment Handbook and an estimate of the required PLA credits that will be needed at the first advisement session. During the ELFH 300, Prior Learning Assessment course, students are taught to use a modified Kolb's Model of Learning to request and document credit for life learning. Documenting life learning involves three steps:

1. Searching O*Net for a comparable job and description.
2. Writing a life-learning essay
3. Submitting the required documentation

All students must document 48 hours of specialty credit, based on prior learning. These credits may come from any combination of previous coursework, on-the job training classes, work-place learning, or they may come from a single source.

This request is validated and supported through hard-copy documents and a CD with a single .pdf file of these same documents. Towards the end of the semester, each student will submit the request to the instructor and revisions may be necessary. After approval and evaluation by the instructor of the ELFH 300 course, each request will be reviewed by the Portfolio Review Committee, where credits will be tabulated. This committee will be comprised of faculty and staff of the Workplace Leadership Program. Credits are awarded and noted on the transcript when the student has completed 12 additional semester hours in the ELFH core with a B or better grade.

Students will be notified of the results via mail from the Workforce Leadership Program Manager. In many instances, final decision regarding requested credits will not be made until after the end of the semester. An appeals process is in place if the student wishes to appeal the granting of credit. The appeal is given to the Program Manager for consideration. If the appeal is not resolved at that level, then the Department Chair of the ELFH Department will convene an appeals committee consisting of faculty not involved in the original decision to resolve the matter.

Credits requested for prior learning assessment in the specialty area can come from three types:

Type 1. Courses taken at regionally accredited institutions that relate to the student's specialty area, based on the O*Net description, and not counted for general education

Type 2. Courses taken through the student's employer (current or former), such as military training, continuing education, licensure or certification that relate to the student's specialty area, based on the O*Net description, as validated through life learning essays and documentation from the employer

Type 3. Work place learning, related to the student's specialty area, based on the O*Net description, as validated through life learning essays and documentation from the employer

Credits awarded are posted to the University of Louisville transcript under these course numbers:

ELFH 290 Occupational Courses- 2 to 42 credits

ELFH 291 Occupational Learning-2 to 48 credits

ELFH 390 Advanced Occupational Courses-2 to 18 credits

ELFH 391 Advanced Occupational Learning-2 to 18 credits

Suggested guidelines for the awarding of portfolio credit are outlined below. It is the students' responsibility to demonstrate mastery of on-the-job training and learning by writing a paper for each job or course or series of courses that they have completed (for type two and three credits.) Students will also need supporting documentation for the experience, in terms of a certificate, letter, performance evaluation, military document, or other tangible evidence. This document must give the hours, as well as the occupational specialty that was covered.

ELFH 290—Occupational courses that qualify for these credits are those that are at the beginning or intermediate level of training, O*Net zones 1 through 3. The credit awarded these courses will be determined by the American Council of Education Military or National Guidelines. Courses that are not listed in these publications may receive credit using a standard formula. The formula used to convert these credits is:

Number of hours of training divided by 15 equals the number of semester hours of credit to a maximum of 42 hours. (15 hours of training equals one semester hour of credit).

ELFH 390--Occupational courses that qualify for these credits are those that are at the advanced level of training, O*Net zones 4 or 5. The credit awarded these courses will be determined by the American Council of Education Military or National Guidelines. Once again, courses that are not listed in these publications may receive credit using a standard formula. The formula used to convert these credits is:

Number of hours of training divided by 15 equals the number of semester hours of credit at senior level to a maximum of 18 hours. (15 hours of training equals one semester hour of credit).

Students who have courses in their specialty area that were accepted by the University of Louisville but not counted as general education, or other documented coursework in Type 1 must complete a form to request credit. (See attached). Examples of these courses could be from military schools, community or technical colleges, and other universities, as long as they relate to the student's O*Net specialty area.

Type 2 credits are available with a brief description of the course work and documentation from the employer. These credits are typically from continuing education units or unaccredited schools.

Type 3 credits are available for learning from qualified work experience in the specialty area. Students must document their learning by letters, forms, performance evaluations, as well as by writing life learning papers based on a modified Kolb's Model. The following section details the courses and gives some parameters for assigning credit.

ELFH 291—Occupational experiences that qualify for these credits are those that are at the beginning or intermediate level of work experience, O*Net zones 1 through 3. The formula used to assign these credit hours is:

Number of years of education or on-the job-training (2000 hours constitutes one year) multiplied by 6 for a maximum of 48 semester hours..

ELFH 391-- Occupational experiences that qualify for these credits are those that are at the advanced level of work experience, O*Net zones 4 or 5. The formula to assign these credit hours is:

Number of years of education or on the job training (2000 hours constitutes one year) multiplied by 6 up to a maximum of 18 semester hours.

TYPE ONE PRIOR EDUCATION WORKSHEET

Prove it Counts! This credit request is supported by documentation: UofL Student Transfer Evaluation, College Transcripts, Course Catalogs, General Education Worksheet, etc. Courses listed here may not be counted for general education on your Student Transfer Evaluation.

Student Name

Student ID:

Date:

<i>Course Number</i>	<i>Course Title</i>	<i>Credit</i>
Total:		

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Department of Leadership, Foundations and Human Resource Development

TYPE II PRIOR EDUCATION WORKSHEET

Prove it Counts! This credit request is supported by the following documentation: Certificates, Course Catalogs or Descriptions, Worksheets, etc. that list the topics, the sponsoring organization and the contact hours of training. Credit will be awarded in conjunction with the American Council of Education Guidelines.

Student Name:

Student ID:

Current Address:

Date:

Course Title	Sponsoring Organization	Contact Hours
TOTAL CONTACT HOURS:		

Briefly describe each course that you have taken, and reflect upon the learning that you were able to use in your job. (You do not need to complete the Kolb's Model for these courses).

By signing this form, you certify that you have completed the courses listed here and are submitting them for evaluation as part or all of the 48 hours of Specialization Credit required for the Workforce Leadership Bachelor's program.

Student's Signature

Date

Instructor Evaluation:

University of Louisville
College of Education and Human Development
Leadership, Foundations and Human Resource Education Department

SPECIALIZATION CREDIT REQUEST

Student Name: _____ **Student ID:** _____
Current Address: _____
Date: _____

College Credit is requested for learning from Work Training and Work Experience related to a work specialization and evaluated in the Prior Learning Portfolio. Related college course (on a transcript) learning may be requested instead of or in addition to Work Learning. This request does not exceed a total of 48 credit hours.

<i>Course Number</i>	<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Initial Evaluation Credit Hour Recommendation</i>	<i>Supplemental Eval Credit Hour Recommendation</i>	<i>Total Hours</i>
ELFH 290	Type I Credit, Prior Education (lower level)			
ELFH 390	Type I Credit, Prior Education (upper level)			
ELFH 290	Type II Credit, Work Training (lower level)			
ELFH 390	Type II Credit, Work Training (upper level)			
ELFH 291	Type III Credit, Work Experience (lower level)			
ELFH 391	Type III Credit, Work Experience (upper level)			
TOTAL	Total:			

By signing this document, you certify that you have completed the courses listed here and are submitting them for evaluation as part or all of the 48 hours of Specialization Credit required for the Workforce Leadership Bachelor’s program.

_____ Date

Instructor Evaluation:

SPECIALIZATION CREDIT REQUEST

_____ DATE: _____

Instructor, ELFH 300 Prior Learning Assessment

_____ DATE: _____

Advisor, Workforce Leadership Program

_____ DATE: _____

Program Manager, Workforce Leadership Program

APPEAL PROCESS

_____ DATE: _____

Chair, Department of Leadership, Foundations, Human Resource Education

Grievance Procedure for Prior Learning Assessment

1. If a portfolio is not accepted for credit, the student first needs to schedule an appointment with the faculty member of ELFH 300 to review the reason for the discrepancy or concern in credit hours awarded. It might be that the issue can be resolved at this level with better documentation or explanation of the work learning or prior education. If the student's second request gains the approval of the instructor, it is then forwarded to the Portfolio Review Committee. Once that approval is granted, the student will be notified in writing.
2. If the portfolio is still not approved or there is still a discrepancy in the credit hour awarded, the student can request the Program Manager to review the application and to intervene in the process. If a decision cannot be reached, the Department Chair will then convene an appeals committee to review the portfolio.