STUDENT GUIDE

CREDIT BY PRIOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Students may earn college credit for specific learning that they have achieved through life and work experiences. Through completion of a Prior Experiential Learning (PEL) Portfolio, a student may demonstrate that his or her life and work experience is equivalent to the learning outcomes of certain courses. Faculty with expertise in the course subject area assess the PEL Portfolios and award credit, where merited, for college-level learning, characterized by a balance of theory and practice, derived from experience. Credit is only awarded for learning and not for experience.

LIMITATIONS

- PEL credits, in combination with military and/or ACE credits, are limited to 25% of credits required for a Bachelor’s degree (32) or an Associate’s degree (16). Certain programs or divisions can further limit the number of credits awarded through PEL, military, and/or ACE.
- Credits are awarded only for courses in the current college catalog, or that are part of the required curriculum of a degree plan from a catalog still in force (no more than 7 years old at the time of the student’s graduation).
- Divisions or programs may limit credit by PEL to specific courses.
- PEL credits will not be awarded for courses that are the same, or similar to, courses the applicant has already enrolled in or audited, regardless of the grade the student received for the course.
- If you attempt PEL credits and are not awarded them, credit will only be available by enrolling in, and passing, the course.
- PEL credits do not count towards LCSC residency credits or towards Financial Aid.
- There is no guarantee that another higher-education institution will transfer credits earned through Prior Experiential Learning.

ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible to apply to begin the Credit by Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning process, you must meet each of the following conditions:

- You must have completed at least 3 college-level credits (numbered 100 or above) at Lewis-Clark State College.
- You must have completed ENGL 102, Research Writing, or the equivalent, with a grade of C or better.
- You must have satisfactorily completed, or be enrolled in, ID 321, PEL Portfolio Development.
- You must have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher.

APPLICATION & FEES
• Locate and print the Application for Credit by Prior Experiential Learning from www.lcsc.edu/registrar (Forms for Students).
• You will need to complete a separate application for each course for which you are applying for credit by Prior Experiential Learning.
• Provide print-copies of the following: your current LCSC transcript, your current Transfer Equivalency Report (if any), your current Degree Audit Report (all available on WarriorWeb). These documents are necessary to ensure that the credits you are applying for do not duplicate other credits you have earned and that they can be applied to your degree requirements.
• Complete the Summary of Prior Experience on page 2 of the Application.
• Make an appointment to meet with the Division Chair of the course(s) for which you are applying. Take the completed Application and all required documentation to your appointment.
• If the Application is approved, pay the required fee at the Controller’s Office and return the entire Application, with completed fee payment information, to the Division Chair who signed it. Keep a complete copy for your records.
• Separate fees are due for each separate Application.
• Remember that the Application only indicates that you are eligible to submit a Prior Experiential Learning Portfolio. Credit will be awarded only if there is a positive assessment of your completed portfolio.

COURSE REQUIREMENT
Gathering the materials, organizing your documentation, narrating a life-history and demonstrating in writing how your experiences have led to specific course learning outcomes is a challenging enterprise. You must complete ID 321, PEL Portfolio Development, a three-credit course that will guide you through the process of writing a Prior Experiential Learning Portfolio, prior to submitting your first PEL Portfolio. Completion of the course is separate from assessment and award of credits.

PORTFOLIO DUE DATES
Completed PEL Portfolios are due by 5:00 pm on the earliest of these dates:

(a) One-year from the date the Application for Credit by Prior Experiential Learning is initially approved by the Division Chair (i.e., if your Application is approved on September 5, 2011, you will have until September 5, 2012 to submit your Portfolio).

(b) Friday of the 10th week of the second full semester (Fall or Spring only) following the date of Application (i.e., if your application is approved on November 15, 2011, you have until Friday, October 26 to submit your Portfolio).

(c) Friday of the 10th week of the semester prior to the semester in which you intend to graduate, regardless of the Application approval date (i.e., if your Application is approved on September 5, 2012, you will have until October 26, 2012 to submit your Portfolio).
If you mail the Portfolios, it is your responsibility to allow sufficient time for the Portfolio to arrive by the due date.

PORTFOLIO SUBMISSION
- You must submit 2 complete printed (not electronic) copies of your PEL Portfolio, with a copy of your approved Application and attached documentation, and Attestation of Original Work, in each, to the Chair of the Division in which your Application was approved.
- PEL Portfolios must be word-processed (except where key evidence is hand-written), and must follow the formatting guidelines on the Template for a Prior Experiential Learning Portfolio. Portfolios that do not follow the formatting guidelines will not be assessed.
- PEL Portfolios become the property of Lewis-Clark State College and will not be returned. It is your responsibility to keep a copy for your records.

ASSESSMENT
- PEL Portfolios will be assessed by an individual, generally a faculty member, appointed by the Division Chair, with subject matter expertise appropriate to the course for which credit is sought.
- Assessment will factor in documentation of experience, evidence of learning that integrates theory and practical application appropriate to the subject, quality of writing and research. See the Assessment Rubric for Prior Experiential Learning Portfolios for more information.
- Assessments will result in an Award of Credit, a Request for minor revisions or additional documentation, or a Denial of Credit. Denials of credit will not be posted to your transcript.
- Your portfolio will be assessed and you will receive a copy of the Evaluation form, signed by the Assessor, within 4 weeks of submission.

APPEAL PROCESS
- Appeals of PEL Portfolio Assessment decisions must be made through the Grade Appeal procedure outlined in the Student Handbook and in the college catalog. Appeals must be made in conformance with the timelines outlined in that process.

TRANSCRIPT
- Courses for which credit by PEL Portfolio is awarded will be posted to your transcript with a grade of CR.
- Courses for which credit by PEL Portfolio is denied will not be posted to your transcript.