



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony presented before the
House Committee on Higher Education
February 04, 2014 at 2:01 pm
By Dr. John Morton
Vice President for Community Colleges
University of Hawai'i System

HB 2206 – RELATING TO COLLEGE-CREDIT EQUIVALENCY PROGRAMS

Chair Choy, Vice Chair Ichiyama, and members of the House Committee on Higher Education:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) appreciates the interest of the legislature in college-credit equivalency programs. UH recognizes the importance of these programs and has taken steps to ensure that students are able to gain college credit for learning outside of the traditional college classroom.

According to the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), “When people receive college credit for what they know from life and work experiences, they earn their degrees and credentials faster, saving money on tuition. They also learn the value of their experience, which gives them confidence to complete their degrees.”

Through Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) and dual credit agreements, students are able to earn UH college-level credits. PLA consists of four types: equivalency exams, non-collegiate sponsored education, credit by exam, and portfolio-based assessment. To support PLA, UH community college policy #5.302 (attached to this testimony) was promulgated in November 2013 to: a) ensure consistency in awarding credits; b) maintain the credibility of college-level learning; and c) seamlessly transfer credits among participating UH campuses. PLA primarily focuses on adult learners with life experiences. Dual credit focuses on high school students who are able to get high school and college credit simultaneously. Jump Start, for example, initiated through the support of then-state-senator Norman Sakamoto and current Senate education committee chair Jill Tokuda, offers high school students the opportunity to receive both high school and college credits through career and technical education programs. In addition, there are UH CC system and DOE agreements to award dual credit.

The University has taken steps to communicate with current and potential students about these opportunities to gain college-credit equivalency through brochures (example attached), websites, and events. The UH PLA coordinator visits campuses to conduct town hall types of gatherings to provide information about these programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

COMMUNITY COLLEGES POLICY

UHCCP # 5.302 Prior Learning Assessment Program

November 2013

I. Purpose

The purpose of the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Program is to award college credits to students who are enrolled in a degree or certificate program at the university or community college and have successfully completed, at a high school, business school, trade school, adult education school, or military training program, courses that are equivalent to courses offered for credit in the University of Hawai'i (UH) System.

The intent is to ensure consistency in awarding credits, to maintain the credibility of college-level learning, and seamlessly transfer credits among participating UH campuses (Attachment A).

II. Related University Policies

- A. Board of Regents Policies, Section 5-14.b Student and Credit Transfer Within the University
www.hawaii.edu/offices/bor/policy/borpch5.pdf
- B. UH Systemwide Executive Policy E5.209, University of Hawai'i System Student Transfer and Inter-Campus Articulation
www.hawaii.edu/apis/ep/e5/e5209.pdf

III. Definitions

- A. Prior Learning Assessment - PLA is the process through which students can earn college credit by identifying and documenting college-level learning that has been acquired through life experiences such as military and/or work experience, training, professional certification, independent study, volunteer activities, and hobbies (e.g., astronomy, history, travel, cultural and/or fine arts). This policy is also known as a credit equivalency program.

The options for granting credits include:

- B. Credit by Examination (CE) - Students who feel competent that their background/learning experiences have adequately prepared them in certain subject areas may challenge instructor-prepared examinations. The credit by

examination must be approved by appropriate faculty and/or Division Chairperson.

- C. Equivalency Examination - Standardized national exams may be equated to equivalent courses. The equivalency examination must be approved by appropriate faculty and/or Division Chairperson. Examples of such examinations include the following:
1. AP – Advanced Placement Examination
 2. CLEP – College-Level Examination Program
 3. DSST – DANTES Subject Standardized Tests
 4. IB – International Baccalaureate
- D. Portfolio-based Assessment - Prior learning must be documented in writing with evidence of the concepts learned and the achievement level attained. The documenter must also provide a background of his/her credentials and why he/she has the expertise to be a documenter in the field. The prior learning must be verified by content experts, i.e., supervisor, co-workers, personnel staff. Credit for such prior learning must be approved by appropriate faculty and/or Division Chairperson.
- E. Non-Collegiate-Sponsored Education Credit - This evaluates learning from courses completed in non-collegiate settings (e.g., professional licenses, labor union courses, agency training programs, professional workshops, and military courses) whose course content is equivalent to offerings from a college. The non-collegiate-sponsored education credit must be approved by appropriate faculty and/or Division Chairperson. Examples of such education credit include the following:
1. Military (e.g., **Army ACE Registry Transcript System (AARTS)**, **Sailor Marine ACE Registry Transcript (SMART)**)
 2. American Council on Education (ACE) College Credit Recommendation Service
 3. Professional Licenses or Industry Certifications (nationally- or state-certified professionals)

IV. **Responsibilities**

The Chancellor shall be responsible to:

- A. Ensure that the components of the PLA Program are carefully monitored and documented.

- B. Assure that the institution, relying on the expertise of its faculty and institution's chief academic officer, determines the appropriateness of granting credit for prior learning.
- C. Create a mechanism to evaluate/assess effectiveness of the program.

V. Procedures

Participating UH campuses will establish procedures for granting PLA credit in each of the common options listed in Part III. In determining its procedures, each campus at a minimum shall ensure that:

- A. Courses for which credit are granted based on PLA will be recorded as Credit by Examination (CE) or Credit (CR) as appropriate (Attachment B).
- B. Courses for which credit are granted based on PLA will be accepted to fulfill applicable certificate/degree requirements.
- C. Limitations to the number of CE credits allowed will be based on current Western Association of Schools and Colleges recommendations.
- D. Criteria for awarding credit should be demonstrated mastery of student learning outcomes at a "C" level or higher.

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Program
List of Participating UH Campuses

- Hawai'i Community College
- Honolulu Community College
- Kapi'olani Community College
- Kaua'i Community College
- Leeward Community College
- University of Hawai'i at Hilo
- University of Hawai'i – Maui College
- University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu
- Windward Community College

Attachment B

**Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Program
Examples of PLA at Participating UH Campuses**

Option	Credit-by-Examination (CE) Reference Part III.B.	Equivalency Examinations Reference Part III.C.	Portfolio-Based Assessment Reference Part III.D.	Non-Collegiate-Sponsored Education Credits Reference Part III.E.
How does it work?	With instructor approval, enrolled students may take instructor-prepared examinations covering the material in a specific course.	Equivalency examinations such as CLEP, DSST, IB, and AP exams give students the opportunity to earn college credit.	Students usually enroll in a portfolio-based assessment course (credit or non-credit). Students prepare a portfolio in which they document college-level learning.	Students who have successfully completed military training, licensure or professional certifications, and/or ACE equivalency may be awarded college credit.
How is student learning assessed for earning credit?	Students must pass the examination with a "C" or higher.	Credit is awarded if the student meets the qualifying score set by the campus.	Student portfolios are evaluated by content expert faculty assessor(s) for evidence of meeting course-level student learning outcomes (SLOs) with a "C" or higher.	Individual campuses determine the equivalencies.
Which students should choose this option?	Students in degree programs that include specific courses for which a student believes he or she has current knowledge meeting the student learning outcomes (SLOs) of the course. Students who have completed courses at non-regionally-accredited postsecondary institutions should consider credit-by-examination.	Students with specific knowledge in an area where tests are offered.	Students who have substantial professional or community experience and college-level writing skills (i.e. qualify for ENG 100)	Military experience that is documented through ACE or other official training records. Employees/professionals who obtained industry certification or licensure and can provide original proofs of satisfactory completion.

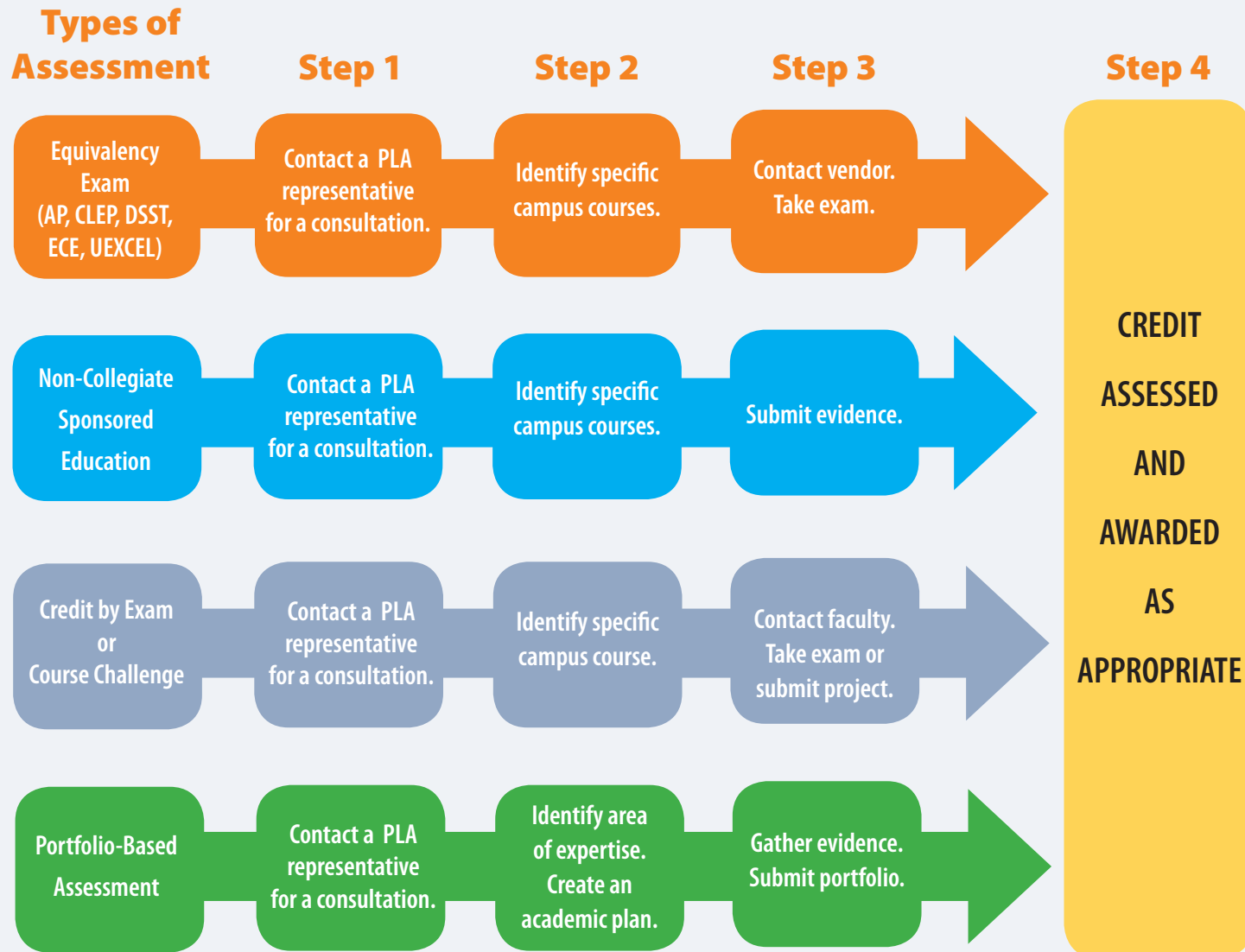
Option	Credit-by-Examination (CE) Reference Part III.B.	Equivalency Examinations Reference Part III.C.	Portfolio-Based Assessment Reference Part III.D.	Non-Collegiate-Sponsored Education Credits Reference Part III.E.
How are these credits awarded?	Criteria for awarding credit should be demonstrated mastery of student learning outcomes at a "C" level or higher.	Transcripts from CLEP, DSST, IB, and/or AP examinations are sent to college specified by the student.	Credit must be approved by appropriate faculty member(s) and/or Division Chairperson.	Transfer credit awarded based on ACE transcripts. Professional certifications or licensures are awarded on an individual basis.
How are these credits recorded?	Institutional credit recorded by the college as a grade of CE on the transcript.	Institutional credit recorded by the college as a grade of CE on the transcript.	Institutional credit recorded by the college as a grade of CE on the transcript.	On other documentation, institutional credit is recorded by the college as a grade of CE or CR on the transcript as appropriate.
What are the costs?	Tuition and fees for the challenged course, but no books or supplies are required.	Test and administration fees.	Students pay portfolio class fee/tuition and textbook costs (if applicable), and portfolio assessment fees.	None, since assessments were administered and paid for previously.
Are there special considerations?	Students should talk with their advisors regarding campus-specific policies.	Students should talk with their advisors regarding campus-specific policies. CLEP or DSST tests must be arranged at authorized test centers.	Students should talk with their advisors regarding campus-specific policies. Students must be able to provide documentation as evidence for prior learning.	Students should talk with their advisors.

How do I get started?

Currently enrolled students at the community colleges should contact your campus representative for an appointment for consultation that may be done in person, by phone, or through Google™ video or Skype™.

If you are not an enrolled University of Hawai'i student and wish to learn more about which program options work best for you, contact Barbara Belle, PLA coordinator at (808) 956-8490 or bbelle@hawaii.edu.

- Email the PLA coordinator with your name, email address and phone number.
- Type in "PLA consultation request" in the subject line. You will be contacted for a consultation.



Prior Learning Assessment



Your prior learning experiences may qualify for college credits!

Shorten the road to attaining your college degree by applying for a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) of your personal experiences, professional training, job experiences and any prior learning you have obtained.



UNIVERSITY
of HAWAII[®]
COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Phone: (808) 956-8490
Email: bbelle@hawaii.edu
uhcc.hawaii.edu/priorlearning

Learning happens in many ways, such as in the workplace, military service, professional certificate training, independent study, civic activities and hobbies. Now you can obtain college credits for your prior learning experiences. The seven campuses of the University of Hawai'i community college system are working with UH Hilo and UH West O'ahu to grant credits for your accomplishments through the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) program.

What is PLA?

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) is a process through which students can earn college credit by identifying and documenting college-level learning that has been acquired through life experiences.

Who qualifies?

Anyone who possesses significant work or life experiences equal to academic course learning outcomes.

Military - PLA can provide you a connection between our academic programs and your career paths.

Adults returning for updated training - PLA can help you gain higher level skills that lead to higher earnings.

Adults interested in pursuing a second career -

PLA can give you a jumpstart in an academic field where you have always had a passion.

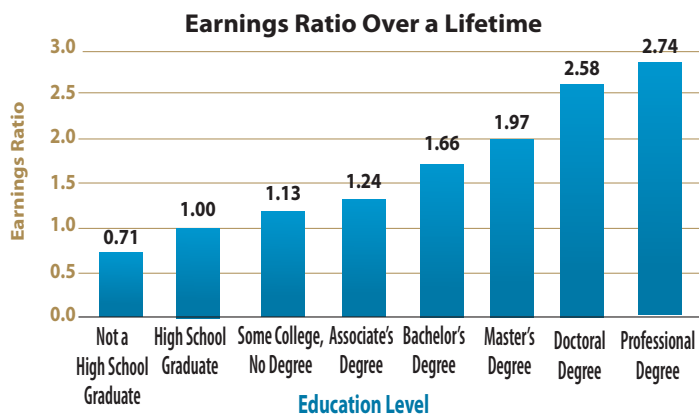
Why should I apply for PLA?

By earning prior learning credits, you'll be able to shorten the time required to earn a degree. Studies have shown that PLA students had better academic outcomes.

- 43% of PLA students earned a bachelor's degree, compared to only 15% of non-PLA students.
- 13% of PLA students earned an associate's degree, compared to 6% of non-PLA students.

Also, COLLEGE PAYS! Expected earnings over a lifetime increases when you have a college degree.

Source: http://www.cael.org/pdfs/PLA_Executive-Summary.pdf



Source: <http://trends.collegeboard.org/education-pays/figures-tables/lifetime-earnings-education-level>

How is my experience assessed?

There are many forms of Prior Learning Assessments (PLA). Please check with your PLA representative about what forms of PLA are offered at your campus.

The simplest form is **Credit by Exam (CE)**. If you feel competent in certain subject areas, you may take an approved CE. Students must pass the examination with an assessment equivalent to "C" or higher.

Other forms of assessment include:

Equivalency Examination - You may have taken a standardized national exam, which may be equated to equivalent college courses. Examples of equivalency examinations include the Advanced Placement Examinations (AP), College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), Excelsior College UExcel Exams, DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST), and International Baccalaureate (IB). Credit is awarded if the student meets the qualifying score set by the campus.

Portfolio-based Assessment - If you have extensive experience, you can create a portfolio that documents your learning acquired through previous work experience or training. Once you match your achievements and accomplishments to the college's course learning outcomes, you can submit your portfolio for review and assessment. Student portfolios are evaluated by content expert faculty assessor(s) for evidence of meeting course-level student learning outcomes (SLOs) with a "C" or higher grade.

Non-Collegiate-Sponsored Education Credit -

This evaluates learning from courses completed in non-collegiate settings (e.g. professional licenses, labor union courses, agency training programs, professional workshops, and military courses). Examples of such education credit include Army ACE Registry Transcript System (AARTS), Sailor Marine ACE Registry Transcript (SMART), American Council on Education (ACE) College Credit Recommendation Service, and Professional Licenses or Industry Certifications (nationally- or state-certified professionals)

What are costs?

- **Credit by Exam** — Tuition and fees for the challenged course, but no books or supplies are required.
- **Equivalency Exam** — Test and administration fees; no cost if transferred to UHCC.
- **Portfolio-based Assessment** — Students pay portfolio class fee/tuition and textbook costs (if applicable), and portfolio assessment fees.
- **Non-Collegiate Sponsored Education** — No cost, since assessments were administered and paid for previously.
- Fees are non-refundable.

PLA Representative Contact Information



Website: www.hawaii.hawaii.edu
Joel E. Paula, hawccpla@hawaii.edu



Website: www.honolulu.hawaii.edu
Scott Parry, sparry@hawaii.edu



Website: www.kapiolani.hawaii.edu
Trude Pang, trude@hawaii.edu



Website: www.kauai.hawaii.edu
Pat McGrath, pmcgrath@hawaii.edu



Website: www.leeward.hawaii.edu
Kay Ono, kayono@lcc.hawaii.edu



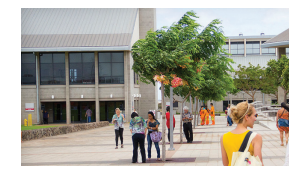
Website: www.maui.hawaii.edu
Precious Mai Depasupil, pmalejo@hawaii.edu



Website: www.windward.hawaii.edu
Carla Rogers, crogers@hawaii.edu



Website: www.hilo.hawaii.edu
uhhadm@hawaii.edu



Website: www.uhwo.hawaii.edu
Katie Landgraf, katieb@hawaii.edu