

# Program and Service Design

## Awarding Credit

- The Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE) adopts the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) policies relating to the establishment of college and university policies regarding the award of credits for prior learning<sup>2</sup>.
  - "The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of credit for prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties."
- Each institution shall adopt a clear policy statement regarding the maximum number of credits that will be awarded for CPL.
  - Transfer and CPL credit cannot exceed 75% of an individual's degree completion.<sup>3</sup>
  - CPL must be documented, evaluated, and appropriate for the level of degree awarded.<sup>4</sup>
- CPL may be awarded by an institution at any time after matriculation to that institution, but estimates may be provided prior to matriculation. The Indiana CPL program is available for all students at any time during their academic journey after matriculation.

## Research and Goal Setting

- Each institution shall set goals for increasing the number of certifications and other non-collegiate credentials which may be automatically applied for credit through pre-evaluated crosswalks.
- The intent of CHE is for all academic programs to include CPL opportunities. For those institutions that do not offer CPL for every academic field, they need to begin the process of evaluating how they will recognize CPL within all their fields of study. Each campus may prioritize degree programs that would be most likely to attract students with college-level prior learning.
- Each campus shall develop a plan to increase its CPL offerings as appropriate in the above noted, prioritized high CPL usage programs.

## Tuition & Fee Structure

- Each institution shall develop and consistently apply a fee structure for CPL that is transparent and accessible to all students, faculty, staff, and stakeholders.

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<sup>2</sup> Higher Learning Commission. 2023. "Section 1: Criteria and Requirements: Chapter B: Criteria for Accreditation, Criterion 4. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement, Core Component 4.A." In *Policy Book*, June 2023, 14–15. [https://download.hlcommission.org/policy/HLCPolicyBook\\_POL.pdf](https://download.hlcommission.org/policy/HLCPolicyBook_POL.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Higher Learning Commission. (n.d.). Assumed practices (crrt.c.10.010, B(b)): Policies. <https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/assumed-practices.html>

<sup>4</sup> Higher Learning Commission. (n.d.). Assumed practices (crrt.c.10.010, B(g)): Policies. <https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/assumed-practices.html>

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- The fee structure shall be posted online to ensure transparency for students.
- The school must offer guidance on costs to the student for CPL versus the cost if the student took the matching course.
- Institutions shall endeavor to charge fees for CPL assessments that are based on the services performed in the assessment process rather than the credit awarded if charged at all.<sup>5</sup> Regardless, CPL fees should not be greater than 25% of in-state tuition costs for the course. Institutions may want to consider having differing fees depending on the amount of labor involved with each assessment method.
- When transferring CPL credit, the receiving institution cannot charge the student for transcription of CPL credit, including portfolio reviews, previously awarded by the sending institution.
- Institutions shall embrace the goal of having all students able to access CPL irrespective of financial need.<sup>6</sup>

### **Program Design**

- CPL shall be treated in the same manner of its application and use, including satisfying prerequisite requirements, as their course equivalencies do at that institution. Institutions shall make an effort on behalf of faculty and staff to determine how credit will apply to a given academic program.
- For any assessment method offered, the institution shall provide students with a reasonable explanation about why prior learning is or is not comparable with curricula and standards to meet degree requirements.
- Institutions shall strive to provide adequate and appropriate allocation of resources, including proper training and continuing professional development for the functions they perform.<sup>7</sup>
- CHE and institutions shall work together to develop roles and responsibilities for ongoing quality program administration and consistent professional development at the institutions.

### **Student Support Services**

- Appropriate academic advising shall be provided by well-informed faculty and academic advisors, as outlined below. Academic advisors shall proactively and directly share CPL information with students.
- As part of the advisement process, institutions shall commit to providing and connecting students with holistic support services as appropriate to ensure CPL candidates can be

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<sup>5</sup> Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). Standard 8. "Ten Standards for Assessing Learning." 2017. Accessed September 22, 2023. <https://www.cael.org/ten-standards-for-assessing-learning>.

<sup>6</sup> Indiana Commission on Higher Education. "State Financial Aid for Prior Learning Assessments." November 29, 2017. [https://www.in.gov/che/files/PLA\\_FinAid\\_Guidance\\_2017.pdf](https://www.in.gov/che/files/PLA_FinAid_Guidance_2017.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> CAEL. Standard 9.

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successful. This shall include referrals to those who can counsel on any impacts on financial aid eligibility.

- Academic advisors or relevant institutional faculty and staff shall ensure that students have realistic expectations about the process and the necessary skills to successfully complete the process, including establishing reasonable expectations and limitations of CPL.
- Institutions shall consider having a CPL coordinator on each campus or for each district. All counselors and advisors (e.g., veterans resource center, career center, adult re-entry center, student orientation, etc.) need to be versed in CPL policies and practices.
- Institutions shall provide necessary training and static resources to faculty and staff to ensure they are sufficiently informed to advise students as noted above.

### **Awareness & Transparency**

- Indiana's CPL Clearinghouse serves as a central repository for all institutional policies and practices. The Clearinghouse also serves as a resource and outreach of program tools to aid stakeholders and potential and current students in their academic endeavors.
- Institutional CPL policies, expectations, and related materials shall be clearly published and communicated to current and prospective students, faculty, staff, and industry and community stakeholders in a variety of places, such as the course catalog and the institution's website, and this information must be regularly evaluated for accuracy. The following information shall be included:
  - Institutional CPL contacts
  - Available CPL opportunities and preparation requirements
  - Fee structure(s) and information about financial aid, including fee waivers
  - Risks to students and the financial consequences of assessment where credit may not be awarded
  - Information regarding the applicability of CPL towards certificate or degree programs including the number of CPL that can be used for a certificate or degree and the number of required residency credits
  - Passing scores
  - Transparency of how award or denial for CPL decisions are made
  - An appeal process