

Dear Student:

Thank you for your interest in the Office of External Programs (OEP) and our Assessment of Prior Learning options. Below, please find some more information about our programs.

OEP offers four options for students to have their prior learning assessed for college credit. We know that college-level learning can occur outside of the formal classroom. Our programs are designed to help you receive credit for your learning gained through employment, in the community, in the military, or independent study.

- **Assessment of Prior Learning (APL): Requesting Credit via a Portfolio.**

The first step in APL is to enroll in a three-credit course called "Assessment of Prior Learning." The course is offered at many Community College of Vermont (CCV) academic centers during the spring and fall semesters, both as on-the-ground classes or as hybrid/online classes with four or five face-to-face meetings. During the 15-week course, you learn to create a written portfolio in which you identify, articulate, and document the learning you acquired through experience. You will ask for specific college credits in these areas. You are guided through every step of the process and can turn to both the instructor and our office for support. Good writing and computer skills are required to enroll in the class as the process involves many written assignments.

Once completed, the portfolio is submitted to OEP for evaluation by teams of faculty and practitioners with expertise in the areas of your credit requests. The evaluation happens during the following semester and, once completed, you will be issued a transcript based on the committee's credit awards.

The third and final step is to transfer these credits to a school of your choice that will accept experiential learning credits. (Since OEP itself does not award degrees, OEP credit is transfer credit.) Most colleges in Vermont accept OEP credit, as do many colleges and universities outside Vermont.

There is no limit to the amount of credit you can request or receive through APL. Many students have received the equivalent of one, two or even three semesters' worth of college credit through this process. APL is also very cost effective: you pay tuition for the 3-credit APL course and a one-time assessment fee of \$ 300, but there is no charge, ever, for any credits you receive through the process.

- **Focused Portfolio Development (FPD): Requesting Credit via a Limited Portfolio**

The FPD process is similar to the APL process above, but shorter. You enroll at CCV in a one-credit, six-week class and will create a brief, concise portfolio that requests credits in only one area of the college curriculum, such as Business, Education, or Human Services. You may ask for up to sixteen credits, including a practicum. Your completed portfolio will be evaluated within 30 - 40 days, generally before you register for the next semester. The one-time assessment fee is \$ 200, and awarded credits are also free of charge.

Both the APL and the FPD course are a stimulating and worthwhile way to enter or re-enter college in addition to saving you a great deal of time and money in achieving your educational goals.

- **Course Challenge of a Specific CCV Course**

If you believe that you could meet the requirements for a course offered by CCV, you can demonstrate your mastery of the course objectives through a Course Challenge. You can request such a challenge after a consultation with a CCV advisor. The OEP office will then set you up with a faculty member who teaches this course, who will evaluate your learning. The process will be completed within 60 days, and you may challenge up to four CCV courses. The fee for a challenge is equal to one credit of tuition at CCV, and awarded credits will appear on a CCV transcript.

- **Credit by Examination**

OEP administers national tests through the College Level Equivalency Program (CLEP) and Department of Defense tests (DSST) for active duty or retired military. CLEP offers about 40 subject areas for testing (check clep.org for subjects). Tests are administered at the OEP office in Montpelier and can be set up by getting in touch with OEP. Please note that CLEP testing is only available to students from the five Vermont State Colleges (Johnson, Lyndon, Castleton State Colleges, Vermont Technical College, Community College of Vermont) and members of the military. There is a fee for testing, and results are generally available immediately. Please contact OEP for more information and to set up a testing appointment.

You can make use of your assessed credits in a variety of ways: transfer the awarded credits to a college and use them towards your degree goal or professional credentials, personal satisfaction or promotions. Or, you could simply use the process to find out how your prior learning compares to classroom learning.

We hope the information included here will answer most of your questions regarding prior learning assessment at the Vermont State Colleges. You might also find the "Which Option is Right for You?" flyer helpful. We have enclosed the APL/FPD class schedule for the upcoming semester at CCV. Schedules with locations are updated regularly at www.ccv.edu/priorlearning. (The APL course number is EDU-1240 and the FPD course number is EDU-1225).

We highly recommend that you attend one of our free Information Sessions. These sessions are offered by staff from the Office of External Programs and they do not require prior registration. The sessions might be very useful for both your future planning and even if you are already registered for a class. The information session schedule is available and up-to-date at www.ccv.edu/priorlearning. Sessions are held at local CCV centers or via webcam.

If you are interested in taking one of the portfolio classes or use one of the other assessment options, come to an information session or meet with an advisor at CCV who can help you to register for the classes. Of course, if you have any additional questions, please call us at 802-828-4064 or email us at priorlearning@ccv.edu.

Sincerely,

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IF TIME IS MONEY...

WHY NOT SAVE
A LITTLE
OF BOTH?



SAVE TIME AND MONEY
GRADUATE EARLY

You've been working, studying,
volunteering, serving; you've learned
things along the way.

Now you need to get
CREDIT FOR WHAT
YOU KNOW

www.ccv.edu/priorlearning

CREDIT FOR WHAT YOU KNOW

CREDIT BY EXAM • COURSE CHALLENGE
FOCUSED PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT • ASSESSMENT OF PRIOR LEARNING

The Vermont State Colleges' prior learning assessment options help you get credit for any college-level learning you may have gained through work and training, military or community service, online or self-study. No matter which option is right for you, you can save money and graduate sooner.

Your options are:

Credit by Exam

As a student at one of the Vermont State Colleges, or a member of the military, you can take C.L.E.P. or D.S.S.T. tests to get credit for a specific subject.

Course Challenges

Meet with a Community College of Vermont (CCV) faculty member to demonstrate your mastery of the course objectives of specific courses offered at CCV.

Focused Portfolio Development Course

Take this one-credit course (six class meetings) to prepare a portfolio that describes and documents your prior learning in one specific academic subject area. You may request up to 16 credits.

Assessment of Prior Learning (APL)

Take this three-credit, semester-long course to create a portfolio that describes and documents your prior learning in a variety of academic subject areas. You may request an unlimited number of credits.

Contact us to find out which option is right for you.

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT
802-828-4064 / priorlearning@ccv.edu
OFFICE OF EXTERNAL PROGRAMS
Vermont State Colleges
P.O. Box 489, Montpelier, VT 05601

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FOCUSED PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT • ASSESSMENT OF PRIOR LEARNING

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ASSESSMENT OF PRIOR LEARNING (APL) *EDU 1240*

Take this three-credit, semester-long course to create a portfolio that describes and documents your prior learning in a variety of academic subject areas. You may request an unlimited number of credits, which can be used at all five Vermont State Colleges and many other colleges in and out of Vermont. Course participants have received credits in a wide variety of fields such as Business, Accounting, Management, Hospitality, Education, Social Services, Criminal Justice, and Computer Science.

APL IS A GREAT VALUE

You only pay the 3 credit tuition for the course and a one-time assessment fee. There is no additional cost for the credits received through APL. Many students earn the credit equivalent of a year of college study.

THE APL COURSE IS A GOOD OPTION FOR YOU IF YOU...

- Have years of professional experience in one or more fields
- Attended many trainings and in-service education
- Learned on your own through online courses or self-study
- Have college-level writing skills

APL classes are offered during the spring and fall semesters, meeting either once a week in the evening, Saturday mornings, or as a hybrid class with four class meetings. Information sessions about the course are offered frequently. Check ccv.edu/priorlearning for a schedule of upcoming information sessions and classes.



VERMONT STATE COLLEGES

OFFICE OF EXTERNAL PROGRAMS

QUESTIONS?

Ask a CCV Advisor or contact
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FOCUSED PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT • ASSESSMENT OF PRIOR LEARNING

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FOCUSED PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT (FPD) *EDU 1225*

Take this one-credit course to create a portfolio that provides details and evidence of your prior learning in a specific academic subject area such as Business, Criminal Justice, Computer Science, Early Childhood Education, and many other fields. You may request up to 12 credits and 4 practicum credits in that area. Portfolios are evaluated by faculty within 30 days so you'll have your results before the next registration! Awarded credits can be used at all five Vermont State Colleges and many other colleges in and out of Vermont.

FPD classes are offered during the spring, summer and fall semesters, meeting six times during an eight-week period, either in the evening, on Saturday mornings, or online. Information sessions about the course are offered frequently. Check ccv.edu/priorlearning for a schedule of upcoming information sessions and classes.

FPD LETS YOU GET AHEAD FAST AND ECONOMICALLY

You'll pay only the one credit tuition for the course and a one-time assessment fee. There is no cost for the credits you receive through FPD. You may even submit a second portfolio in another academic area later and pay only the assessment fee.

THE FPD COURSE IS A GOOD OPTION FOR YOU IF YOU...

- Have professional experience in one field
- Attended trainings and in-service education
- Learned on your own through online courses or self-study in one specific field
- Have college-level writing skills
- Need to have your portfolio evaluated quickly



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COURSE CHALLENGE AT CCV

You can challenge a CCV course by demonstrating your mastery of the course objectives of that course. You will be evaluated by a CCV faculty member who teaches the course. The process is completed within 60 days or less time. Awarded credits are CCV credits and can be transferred to other colleges that accept CCV credits.

COURSE CHALLENGE IS A GREAT VALUE

You pay a one-time course challenge fee which is equal to the cost of one credit hour. There is no additional cost for the credits received through course challenge. You can challenge up to four CCV courses.

COURSE CHALLENGE IS A GOOD OPTION FOR YOU IF YOU....

- Learned on your own through in-service workshops, online courses, trainings, or self-study
- Have gained learning that is equivalent to a course offered at CCV
- Are confident you have the knowledge necessary to cover the course material
- Have discussed this option and got approval from a CCV advisor



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CREDIT BY EXAMINATION

Students attending one of the five Vermont State Colleges, or members of the military, can sign up for one of two testing options which are offered through the Prior Learning Assessment office in Montpelier:

- The College Level Examination Program (CLEP) offers 35 tests in areas such as computer science, business, science and mathematics, history and social sciences, composition and literature, and foreign languages. Check clep.org for test subjects.
- DSST (formerly DANTES Subject Standardized Tests) are credit-by-examination tests originated by the U.S. Department of Defense and are available to active duty or retired military. DSST offers exams in 38 different college subject areas including science, technology, business, humanities and social sciences. Tests are available for both upper and lower level credit. Check www.getcollegecredit.com for more information.

TESTING IS STRAIGHTFORWARD AND REASONABLY PRICED

You pay only the testing fee of \$135 per test. Tests carry three to six credits. Check the list of available tests and make your testing appointment by calling 802-828-4064. Tests are computer-based and are administered at the Prior Learning Assessment office in Montpelier. Pre-testing practice materials are available to help you test successfully. Test outcomes are available instantly.

TESTING BY EXAMINATION IS A GOOD OPTION FOR YOU IF YOU...

- Studied on your own, through online courses, or trainings at work
- Are confident you can meet the subject requirements
- Are enthusiastic about preparing for the test
- Enjoy testing
- Want immediate results



VERMONT STATE COLLEGES

OFFICE OF EXTERNAL PROGRAMS

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PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT

GET CREDIT FOR WHAT YOU KNOW

WHICH PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT OPTION IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

Assessment of Prior Learning *3-credit course*

- I have worked as a professional in my field for at least three to five years.
- I have also worked in other professions for extended periods of time.
- I have attended work-related trainings such as computer workshops or interpersonal skills trainings.
- I have earned certifications that keep me up-to-date in my job and have helped me to get promotions.
- I have learned a lot of different things during my many years of working and involvement in the community.
- I have taught others what I know or coached colleagues.
- I perform as well as other people who have college degrees.
- I think I could ask for quite a few college credits.

*If you checked several of these, the **Assessment of Prior Learning** course would be a good option for you! You can earn unlimited credits in many different areas.*

Focused Portfolio *1-credit course*

- I have worked in my field for three or more years.
- I have learned some specific skills that help me every day at work.
- I want to learn more in my field but don't think I need to start at the beginning.
- I have knowledge in my field that is quite extensive in certain areas.

*If you checked several of these, the **Focused Portfolio** would be a good option for you. You can ask for up to 16 credits in one field.*

College Subject Tests *Testing @ OEP in Montpelier*

- I have studied a lot on my own by reading and practicing new skills in very specific areas.
- I have taken classes and workshops in subjects such as government, history, or computers.
- I have taken some open online courses on specialized subjects, and think that I learned a lot.
- I do well on tests if given proper preparation.
- I am already in college, but there are a few courses I don't think I need to take because I already know the material.

*If you checked several of these, taking some **college subject tests** (through CLEP or DSST) would be a good option for you. Many tests are offered here at CCV and it takes just a few hours to take them. The results are immediate!*

Course Challenge *Meet with a CCV faculty member*

- I am in a degree program and am taking classes, but I am required to take one or two CCV classes in my major that I could 'test out of' or challenge.
- I don't know which degree I am going to get, but there are some general education CCV classes offered that I definitely would not need to take.
- I am not going to CCV, but when I checked out their courses, I realized that I already know the subject matter of some classes.
- I have looked at the requirements for a CCV class and I know I could pass it with what I already know.

*If you have checked some of these, you may do very well in a **CCV Course Challenge**; you can meet with a faculty member and challenge any course offered at CCV for just the cost of one credit.*