

UW Oshkosh Credit for Prior Learning Policy

**The following policy is based on guidelines for learning portfolio assessment developed by the Council on Adult and Experiential Learning.*

Credit for prior learning through portfolio assessment is an available option at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. A learning portfolio is a formal written document that identifies the knowledge and skill acquired through non-formal learning, and provides evidence to support a request for credit. Credit for prior learning is not granted for the experience itself, but for the verifiable learning outcomes which grew out of the experience. It should primarily be awarded to returning adult students (i.e., those students who have been out of school for a period of five years or more). This credit can be granted for demonstrated learning that results from life experiences (e.g., employment, volunteer work, community service, travel, military service). The student's learning should relate to a particular discipline, academic program or field of study at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, and reflect a balance of theoretical and practical learning appropriate to the subject matter. The learning which occurred as a result of these experiences must be validated in accordance with this policy to ensure it is equivalent to that acquired at the college level in terms of quality and outcomes.

Evaluation of credit for prior learning through portfolio assessment follows college guidelines which must be consistent with this University Policy. These guidelines outline the assessment process for the college program areas, establish criteria for the number of credits to be awarded, and set standards for assessment. College guidelines must outline a process for validation at both the departmental/program and college levels and establish a process for student appeal of the final decision.

- (1) The portfolio is a formal written document that identifies the knowledge and skills acquired as a result of non-university experiences and that provides evidence to support these claims. Students wishing to apply for credit using the portfolio option must, with consent of instructor, enroll in one of two courses: Options and Strategies for Adult Learners (Liberal Studies 109) or Assessment of Prior Learning (Interdisciplinary Studies 145). These courses will establish guidelines for portfolio construction.
- (2) After successfully completing one of these courses, students who wish to apply for credit for prior learning must submit their portfolios for assessment to the relevant departments or programs where they are seeking credit. The portfolios must be prepared according to guidelines established in Liberal Studies 109 and Interdisciplinary Studies 145 and meet the guidelines of the relevant departments or programs. Additional portfolios may be submitted in subsequent semesters without re-enrollment in the course. Portfolios must be submitted prior to the student's senior year.
- (3) Upon receiving a portfolio for review, faculty in the relevant discipline must assess prior learning in accordance with college guidelines to determine if the learning which occurred as a result of the identified life experiences is equal to university-level learning, and sufficient to meet expectations in a particular course presently offered by the University. The faculty conducting the review will determine the number of credits to be awarded and/or indicate the specific course(s) for which the credit is to be awarded.
- (4) Upon assessment of learning and determination of credits to be awarded, the department will submit the credits to the appropriate college for validation.
- (5) Once the college validates credits earned, it will forward the number of credits to be awarded to the Registrar's office. If the college does not validate the award of credits for prior learning, it will notify both the department and the student in writing.
- (6) Upon receipt of written notification from the college denying validation of credits for prior learning, the student may invoke the college's appeal process.

The University will grant a *maximum* of 24 credits for prior learning through portfolio assessment. Credit for prior learning may not be applied to courses in which a student has already earned a grade. No grade will be attached to the credit received for prior learning.

Portfolio reviewers will receive a stipend for each portfolio examination. A fee to defray the costs incurred for the preparation and examination of the portfolio will be borne by the student.

To qualify for credit for prior learning, the student:

- must be enrolled as a student at UW Oshkosh
- must be an undergraduate student in good standing