



Jamestown Community College
Policies and Procedures

Policy Title	Credit for Prior Learning	Policy Number	621
Section	Academics	Approval Date	12/17/2024
Subsection	Instruction and Curriculum	Effective Date	8/1/2025
Responsible Office	Academic Affairs	Review Date	12/2030

1.1 Purpose

1.1 The following policy defines SUNY Jamestown Community College’s intentions regarding credit for prior learning (CPL), also known as prior learning assessment (PLA). This local policy has been developed within the context of the State University of New York’s updated system-wide policy regarding the award of academic credit as initially issued in 1976 and updated through the Memorandum to Presidents dated March 11, 2024. It is intended to align with all applicable SUNY and NYSED policies, Middle States Commission on Higher Education standards and requirements, and other accrediting body requirements.

2.0 Policy

2.1 Credit for Prior Learning: Vision and Definition

JCC’s vision is to support our students’ journey to success in the local and global workplace with quality, in-demand learning experiences. In recognition of this and of the learning completed both through and beyond formal academic settings, JCC shall rely on the following policy to ensure practices that are responsive to all learners and that reflect robust standards. Significant, college-level learning may take place through various life experiences, and so the use of the term “credit for prior learning” encompasses a variety of options and processes for evaluating and awarding academic credit. This policy is intended to help ensure equitable student access to credit for prior learning.

2.2 Evaluation of Credit for Prior Learning

While any prior learning experience may be evaluated for credit, credit will only be awarded for learning that aligns with existing coursework within the college’s curriculum. Issuance of prior learning – regardless of its form – shall require faculty evaluation at one or more stages of the overall evaluation process. As appropriate, the college may impose time limits on the validity of prior learning experiences. Faculty completing evaluation of prior learning experiences and staff supporting the work of CPL shall have access to ongoing relevant professional development.

2.3 Credit Types

There are no restrictions on the discipline, type, or purpose of college-level course credits that may be earned through evaluation of prior learning. Credits earned through evaluation of credit for prior learning may be used – as applicable – to satisfy any category of curricular requirement (e.g., SUNY General Education requirement, core electives in the program). Non-

college-level (i.e., developmental) credits may not be earned through the process of prior learning evaluation.

2.4 Forms for Credit for Prior Learning

While transferring in appropriate transcribed coursework is a foundational function of all colleges, this policy extends what JCC entertains as evidence for prior learning to include:

- Industry certifications and other standardized credentials
- Specific and defined work-based experiences including apprenticeships
- Standardized examinations of learning (e.g., AP exams, CLEP)
- Established Workforce Development course/program equivalencies
- Military experience and training (e.g., ACE, DD214)
- Learning experiences evaluated via formal mechanisms such as challenge exam, portfolio review, etc.

Because CPL is an effort at translating prior knowledge into academic credit, Academic Affairs – in conjunction with appropriate partners – shall be responsible for coordinating the development, maintenance, and sharing of evaluation processes for each form of credit for prior learning.

2.5 Student Process

JCC shall communicate clearly and broadly (e.g., via FAQs) with potential and current students via at least the official college website and college catalog regarding opportunities and processes for having prior learning experiences evaluated for academic credit. Students shall be encouraged through the admissions and early advising processes to explore options for having such learning experiences evaluated at the earliest opportunity in their application to the college, and every effort shall be made by the college to equip prospective learners with accurate information about process, cost, and implications of such evaluation at or prior to the time of application.

Although processes for prior learning evaluation for credit will vary depending on the type of prior learning experience, student points-of-contact should be as consistent as feasible. In some cases, the process will involve submitting official transcripts (e.g., military training transcripts) to the college. In other cases, students will need to share artifacts and narrate connections between prior experiences and specified learning outcomes (e.g., portfolio review). In other cases, students may request to sit for an examination (e.g., challenge exam). Though the specific processes for learning evaluation will vary, the college should make every effort to ensure a process that is equitable and clear, and that incorporates existing artifacts and other evidence of student learning so as to reduce the burden of students seeking to have their learning evaluated.

No student who undertakes the process of having prior learning evaluated for credit shall be required to accept that credit, and the college shall provide sufficient academic and financial advising to support student decision making.

2.6 Transcription and Tracking of Credit for Prior Learning

Credit earned through a process of prior learning evaluation may be indicated on a student's transcript. Transcripts will indicate the credit earned. No letter grade will be given; thus, CPL will not impact a student's grade point average. Credits earned through evaluation of prior learning will be transcribed no sooner than upon creation of the student's official academic record. Credits earned through prior learning evaluation will be tracked and reported as required by SUNY.

2.7 Residency Requirement, Appeal of Determination, and Other Limitations

Restrictions regarding the number of semester hours of credit that a student may apply to a credential shall be consistent with JCC’s “Transferring Credits” policy detailed in the college’s official catalog. Likewise, the appeal process for evaluation of credit for prior learning shall be consistent with JCC’s “Appeal Process for Transfer Evaluations” policy detailed in the college’s official catalog. Any restrictions or limitations on the issuance or use of credit awarded through evaluation of prior learning shall be clearly and transparently communicated to prospective and current students. Such restrictions must be consistent with the spirit of SUNY’s policy and must not limit student access to options for earning and using credit for prior learning. The college cannot guarantee that credits earned through evaluation of prior learning will be accepted for transfer at other colleges and universities.

2.8 Student Costs

Fees and other charges shall not exceed the actual financial burden incurred by the college in the course of evaluating prior learning and awarding credit. Fees shall be established by the college’s Financial Services area in consultation with Academic Affairs, and fees shall be published alongside other student fees and tuition information. Fees shall be reviewed annually. The college is not responsible for determining the costs of externally-administered standardized examinations (e.g., AP exams).

3.0 Procedures

3.1 This policy shall be reviewed for potential revision in no fewer than five (5) years and may be reviewed and revised at any point.

4.0 Definitions

5.0 References