



PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT  
(PLA)

FACULTY AND STAFF  
HANDBOOK

August 2016

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## GENERAL INFORMATION

1. What Is Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) .....	3
2. PLA Improves Student Retention and Completion .....	4
3. Where Do students Obtain College-Level Learning?.....	4
4. Who Evaluates College-Level Learning? .....	5
5. How Long Does It Take to Get Credit? .....	5
6. How Many Credits May Student Obtain Through PLA? .....	5
7. Can PLA Help the Student's GPA? .....	6
8. Will PLA Credits Transfer to Another College? .....	6
9. What Are Other PLA Credit Award Facts? .....	6
10. What Is the Process and Fees?.....	6
11. What Are The Methods of PLA? .....	6
12. What Are the PLA Definitions: .....	8

## PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT PARTICULARS

1. What Does the PLA Coordinator Do? .....	9
2. What Does the Faculty Evaluator Do?.....	9
3. What Does the Department Do? .....	9
4. What Does the Registrar Do? .....	9
5. What Does the Cashier Do?.....	9

## APPENDICES

1. Appendix A: Learning History Worksheet.....	10
2. Appendix B: Application for Prior Learning Assessment & Who Do I Contact? .....	12
3. Appendix D: Approved Challenge List & .....	14
Course Challenge Procedures for Students.....	15
4. Appendix D: Prior Learning Assessment Flowchart .....	16
5. Appendix E: PLA Faculty and Staff Workflow.....	17

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### 1. What Is Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)?

In 2011, the House Bill 1795, the Washington State Legislature defined prior learning as: "...the knowledge and skills gained through work and life experience; through military training and experience; and through formal and informal education and training from in-state and out-of-state institutions including foreign institutions." Current changes in higher education, the economy and society in general, provide the impetus and context for the development of consistent and transparent policy and guidelines on assessing prior learning, and the implementation of practices that support increased assessment and award of credit for prior learning.

Wenatchee Valley College (WVC) values the college-level knowledge students may have acquired outside the traditional college classroom. Students may have acquired this knowledge through past work, independent reading and study, training programs or in-service courses, volunteer service, cultural or artistic pursuits, hobbies and recreational pastimes, community or religious activities, organizational memberships, adult education, non-credit courses, study abroad, military training not evaluated for credit by the American Council on Education (ACE), or other experiences.

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) enables the student to articulate this knowledge and potentially earn credit for it. Methods of evaluating prior learning include Advanced Placement (AP) examination; College Level Examination Program (CLEP); Course Challenge Examinations; DANTES Subject Standardized Test (DSST); Industry Training; Certifications and Licensures evaluation; International Baccalaureate examination (IB); and Military Education and Experience evaluation. (see definitions on page 6)

For Course Challenges or (non-crosswalked) Industry Certifications and Licensures, students who are presently attending WVC and have 15 transcribed credits with a 2.0 or better GPA are eligible for prior learning assessment consideration. For AP, CLEP, DSST, IB, (crosswalked) Industry Certifications and Licensures or military credit there are no credit or GPA requirements. No assurances of the number of credits awarded can be made prior to WVC review. Depending on the amount of other PLA credit earned, a maximum of 30 credits can be used towards a WVC degree, except for Workforce programs which are limited to 25% of total credits for degree/certificate.

Credentials for degree students who are currently enrolled are reviewed by faculty from participating departments who determine if this process is appropriate and make recommendations for awarding prior learning credit. Review is based on equivalency to courses listed in the WVC catalog.

## 2. **PLA Improves Student Retention and Completion**

The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), with support from the Lumina Foundation for Education, conducted a multi-institutional study on PLA and adult support outcomes, using the records of 62,475 students at 48 colleges and universities. The data from CAEL's student show that PLA student had better academic outcomes, particularly in terms of graduation rates and persistence, than other adult students. Many PLA students also shortened the time required to earn a degree, depending on the number of PLA credits earned. PLA students in this study also had much higher degree-earning rates than non-PLA students. More than half (56%) of PLA students earned a postsecondary degree within seven years, while only 21% of non-PLA students did so.

## 3. **Where Do Students Obtain College-Level Learning?**

College-level learning may be obtained through a variety of experiences. Staff is encouraged to use the **Learning History Worksheet** (Appendix A) and the following list of ideas to get students started:

- Employment: Any paid activity.
- Education: Non-credit courses, non-accredited training and seminars resulting in college-level learning. Among these would be workshops, clinics, conferences, discussion groups, evening courses, lecture series, television or radio courses, correspondence courses, or newspaper courses.
- Volunteer Experiences: Organizations including community service projects of any type, religious activities and political activities.
- Recreational activities and hobbies: Any leisure time activity for the purpose of personal satisfaction and enjoyment. Examples include creative writing, theater, sports, artistic activities, gardening, camping, outdoor activities, concert or theater-going. Such activities would require extensive documentation and substantiation.
- Military Experience: Branch or service, rank, length of service, service school attended, and credit for military specialty.
- Licenses, industry certifications, awards, and publications: Any professional licenses held, awards receiving, or publications authored.
- Travel: Study tours, vacations, business trips, living for extended time in various parts of the country.
- Other Significant Life Experience

#### **4. Who Evaluates College-Level Learning?**

Once students have their educational and career goals at least roughly defined, the student meets with the PLA Coordinator to discuss the possibilities for exploring alternate ways to earn credit such as: AP, CLEP, DSST, IB, Course Challenge, Industry Certifications and Licensures or Military credit.

College-level learning may come from a variety of sources, including non-accredited training, in-service workshops, independent research, volunteer activities, employment, hobbies, travel, etc. Included in this handbook is a Learning History Worksheet (Appendix A) to get students started on documenting possible sources of College-level learning and tying their learning to regularly-offered college courses.

Once a list of PLA possibilities has been compiled, the ideal would be for the student to contact the PLA Coordinator to discuss the student's Learning History Worksheet and how to apply. However, if a student wants to obtain credit for AP, CLEP, DSST, or IB they can meet with the WVC Registrar in the Admissions/Registration Office to obtain credit through this process. If the student wants to obtain credit from Course Challenge or Industry Certifications and Licensures they need to meet with the PLA Coordinator to determine their specific PLA path. The PLA Coordinator will guide the student through the PLA path mutually agreed upon.

#### **5. How Long Does It Take to Get Credit?**

For Course Challenge or non-crosswalked Industry Certifications and Licensures credit will be granted only if student is presently attending WVC and has 15 transcribed credits with a 2.0 or better GPA. For AP, CLEP, DSST, IB or crosswalked Industry Certifications and Licensures or Military credit, there is no credit or GPA requirements before credit can be awarded. The student and the Registrar will mutually agree upon the academic quarter to post the credit.

#### **6. How Many Credits May Students Obtain Through PLA?**

WVC's regional accreditation commission limits awarding of Experiential Learning (portfolio) and any Workforce program credit to a maximum of 25% of total credits required for WVC degrees or certificates. (NWCCU standard 2.C.7). Depending on the amount of other PLA credit earned, a maximum of 30 credits can be used towards a WVC degree.

The granting of credit is:

- a) Guided by generally accepted norms;
- b) Based on institutional mission and policy;
- c) Consistent across the institution, wherever offered and however delivered;
- d) Appropriate to the objectives of the course; and
- e) Determined by student achievement of identified learning outcomes (NWCCU standard 2.C.18).

A minimum of 33% of the credits required for a degree or certificate must be taken in residence at WVC. Courses may be taken at either campus locations or online.

## 7. Can PLA Help the Student's GPA?

All PLA methods receive a "P" grade and are not calculated in the student's GPA.

## 8. Will PLA Credits Transfer to Another College?

It is at the discretion of the receiving institution to determine transferability of credit for prior learning.

## 9. What Are Other PLA Credit Award Facts?

- Do not count toward the residency requirement (33% of credits required for degree or certificate).
- May not satisfy credit load requirements for the purposes of veterans benefit program funding or any other student financial assistance program.
- Must be obtained using methods approved by the appropriate department or designated department faculty member in the discipline for which credit is sought.
- Will be identified as credit for prior learning on student transcript without guarantee of any subsequent transfer and will be posted to transcript after quarterly grades have been released.
- WVC's regional accreditation commission limits awarding of Experiential Learning (portfolio) and all Workforce program credit to a maximum of 25% of total credits required for WVC degrees or certificates. Depending on the amount of other PLA exam credit earned, a maximum of 30 credits can be used towards a WVC degree.

## 10. What Is the Process and Fees?

The **Prior Learning Assessment Flowchart** (Appendix C) and **PLA Faculty and Staff Workflow** (Appendix D) provide a detailed process for the various types of PLA as well as instructions for faculty and staff involved in the process. Students complete the **Application for Prior Learning Assessment** (Appendix B) with the PLA Coordinator, Registrar or Faculty Evaluator.

Course Challenge and non-crosswalked Industry Certifications and Licensures have a nonrefundable application fee of \$25 plus \$10 per credit attempted which is payable **in advance** at the Cashier's office. No fee is required for credit awarded through AP, CLEP, DSST, IB, crosswalked Industry Certifications or Licensures or Military Education and Experience evaluation. Fees posted on the application are subject to change.

## 11. What Are the Methods of PLA?

Currently, there are seven identified methods that WVC uses for evaluating PLA. These methods are summarized below:

- Advanced Placement (AP): Credit for minimum scores on AP examinations given by the College Board is awarded as indicated on the current posted crosswalk [www.wvc.edu/ap](http://www.wvc.edu/ap) and upon receipt of official score reports. Official score reports must be submitted to the Registrar in the Admissions/Registration Office. AP credit awards will not be granted if the student is currently enrolled in or has successfully completed or earned credit for the course.

- College Level Examination Program (CLEP): WVC will award credit for CLEP examinations as indicated on the current posted crosswalk [www.wvc.edu/clep](http://www.wvc.edu/clep). When no specific course number is listed, the most appropriate course equivalent is determined case by case-by-the appropriate department.
- Course Challenge: Students who wish to apply for a course challenge must be interviewed by the PLA Coordinator and approved through the appropriate department. A course may not be challenged if the student is currently enrolled in, has previously earned credit in, or has previously audited the WVC course. Not all courses are available for challenge. Not all departments offer challenge exams [www.wvc.edu/coursechallenge](http://www.wvc.edu/coursechallenge).
- DANTES Subject Test (DSST): Credits from Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support Subjects Standardized Test (DSST) as indicated on the current posted crosswalk [www.wvc.edu/dantes](http://www.wvc.edu/dantes). Official score reports must be submitted to the Registrar in the Admissions/Registration Office.
- Industry Certifications and Licensures: Individuals who have completed training through non-degree awarding agencies or institutions may apply for evaluation of credit as indicated on the current posted crosswalk [www.wvc.edu/industrycert](http://www.wvc.edu/industrycert). Examples include recognized nursing, fire service training, law enforcement/corrections or fire science academies, and other certifications or licenses. Official documentation of training or licensure is required. All certifications or licenses must be current and valid and training must be documented with ACE National Guide to College Credit for Workforce Training. (If training is not documented with ACE, student should apply for credit using the PLA Course Challenge method.)
- International Baccalaureate (IB): WVC will award credit for IB exam results as indicated on the current posted crosswalk [www.wvc.edu/ib](http://www.wvc.edu/ib). When no specific course number is listed, the most appropriate course equivalent is determined case by case by the appropriate department faculty.
- Military Education and Experience: WVC will award academic credit for military training. The academic credit awarded for prior military training must be granted only for training that is applicable to the student's certificate or degree requirements [www.wvc.edu/militaryed](http://www.wvc.edu/militaryed). You must be enrolled at WVC and have successfully completed any military training course or program as part of the military service that is:
  - Recommended for credit by a national higher education association that provides credit recommendations for military training programs;
  - Included in the individual's military transcript issued by any branch of the armed services;
  - Documented military training or experience that is substantially equivalent to any course or program offered by the institution of higher education.

## 12. What Are the PLA Definitions?

Faculty Evaluator: Faculty member who is the subject matter expert (SME) for evaluating credit earned within their departments for students applying for PLA credit. They represent the academic department in determining the equivalency of the PLA certifications, licenses, articulations, exams and military documentation for PLA credit and are the final approval authority for PLA credit earned.

PLA Coordinator: Specially trained staff member that meets with and assists the student in the PLA process.

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA): Assessment of credit potentially earned for experiential learning outside of the classroom. This assessment is documented in the form of test scores, certificates, licenses, or other documentation that is evaluated by the designated WVC faculty and staff to assess and transcribe the credit.

Registrar: Staff member who evaluates student credentials for AP, CLEP, DSST, or IB for credit award. They also are responsible for posting all PLA credits earned to the student's transcript.



## PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT PARTICULARS

### 1. What Does the PLA Coordinator Do?

The PLA Coordinator guides the student to the most appropriate PLA method in regards to the student's academic endeavors. The PLA Coordinator refers the student to the Registrar if they are seeking PLA credit award for AP, CLEP, DSST, or IB.

- Explores the simplest, most relevant, and cost-effective path for the student to receive credit and reviews student's eligibility for obtaining PLA credit.
- Ensures the student doesn't already have credit for identified WVC course and notes the maximum number of credits student may obtain through PLA.
- Works with faculty to identify appropriate WVC course based on ACE credit recommendations.
- Fills out PLA Application Form with student for appropriate PLA method.

### 2. What Does the Faculty Evaluator Do?

The Faculty Evaluator represents the academic department in determining the equivalency of the PLA credit to the identified department's course.

- Acknowledges if department allows PLA evaluation of its courses.
- Fills out PLA Application form with student for appropriate PLA method.
- Discusses with student appropriate course for challenge, administers and awards credit for challenge exam. Evaluates non-crosswalked Industry Certifications or Licensures and awards appropriate credit.

### 3. What Does the Department Do?

The department is the focal point for the student to receive PLA credit. The department identifies the appropriate Faculty Evaluator which will handle the PLA process for awarding PLA credit for Course Challenge, non-crosswalked Industry Certification or Licensure, or Military Education or Experience.

### 4. What Does the Registrar Do?

The Registrar evaluates student's credentials for AP, CLEP, DSST, or IB for credit award. They are also responsible for posting all PLA credits earned on the student's transcripts.

- Evaluates the PLA method/scores for AP, CLEP, DSST, IB, and military credit.
- Consults faculty approved crosswalks for awarding credits.
- Completes PLA Application Form with student for appropriate PLA method.
- Posts the PLA credits awarded to the student's transcripts after quarterly grades are released.

### 5. What Does the Cashier Do?

The Cashier must document payment for the PLA application and fees by initialing and attaching a copy of the receipt to the **Application for Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Form** that student provided. This provides evidence that the student has paid all fees for the PLA.

## APPENDIX A: LEARNING HISTORY WORKSHEET

(to assist students in determining PLA experiences)

<b>MAJOR TOPIC AREAS (Experience)</b>	<b>WHAT DID I LEARN?</b>	<b>DEPARTMENT (Course Equivalents)</b>
EMPLOYMENT		
EDUCATION		
VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE		
RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES/HOBBIES		

<b>MAJOR TOPIC AREAS (Experience)</b>	<b>WHAT DID I LEARN?</b>	<b>DEPARTMENT (Course Equivalents)</b>
MILITARY EXPERIENCES		
LICENSES, AWARDS, PUBLICATIONS		
TRAVEL		
OTHER SIGNIFICANT LIFE EXPERIENCE		

## APPENDIX B



### APPLICATION FOR PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT (PLA)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ SID# \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR CURRENTLY ENROLLED STUDENTS: READ THE FOLLOWING POLICY CAREFULLY**

- For Course Challenge or (non-cross-walked) Industry Certifications and Licensures credit will be granted only if student is presently attending WVC and has 15 transcribed credits with a 2.0 or better GPA.
- For AP, CLEP, DSST, IB, (cross-walked) Industry Certifications and Licensures or Military credit, there is no credit or GPA requirements.
- No assurances of the number of credits awarded can be made prior to review.
- Credit may not satisfy credit load requirements for the purposes of veterans benefit program funding, any other student financial assistance program, or WVC residency requirements.
- All fees **must** be paid in advance and payment of fees does not guarantee the award of credits.
- A WVC course may not be challenged if the student is currently enrolled in, has previously earned credit in, or has previously audited the course.
- Credit may be used to meet appropriate graduation requirements.
- PLA credit is limited to a maximum of 30 credits (crosswalks/challenge exams) required for WVC degrees or certificates. For all workforce programs it is limited to 25% of total credits for degree or certificate.
- Transferability of credit will be subject to the policies of the receiving institution.

*I request assessment for prior learning as indicated below. I have read and understand the general policy as outlined, and understand that **payment of fees is nonrefundable and does not guarantee award of credits**. I further understand that credit awarded will be posted to my transcript at the end of the grading period in which approval is granted.*

(This application is valid for one year from date received.)

Student Signature _____	Date _____						
<b>FEES DUE (Office Use Only)</b>							
<b>Type of Assessment (no fees due)</b>	<b>Type of Assessment (nonrefundable fees)</b>						
<input type="checkbox"/> Advanced Placement (AP)	<input type="checkbox"/> Course Challenge # of credits x \$10 = \$ Application Fee \$25						
<input type="checkbox"/> College Level Exam Program (CLEP)	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry Certifications or Licensures # of credits x \$10 = \$ Application Fee (No established crosswalk) \$25						
<input type="checkbox"/> DANTES (DSST)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lab Fee Lab costs \$						
<input type="checkbox"/> Industry Certifications or Licensures (Has established crosswalk)							
<input type="checkbox"/> International Baccalaureate (IB)							
<input type="checkbox"/> Military Education & Experience	TOTAL DUE \$						
<b>FEE PAYMENT (to be completed by Cashier)</b>							
Cashier initials (attach copy of receipt)	Amount Received: \$						
<b>REPORT OF PRIOR LEARNING CREDIT AWARD</b>							
Faculty Evaluator Name (Please Print)							
Course #	Course Title	Credits	Grade	Faculty Signature	Date	Dept Chair Signature	Date

## WHO DO I CONTACT?

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Do you have questions, but not enough time to meet with a counselor, faculty advisor, educational planner or completion coach? Are you unsure who you should contact? For questions contact Pam Kelley, PLA Coordinator at [pkelley@wvc.edu](mailto:pkelley@wvc.edu) or 682-6632.

### ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP): Contact Admissions/Registration Office

Credit for minimum scores on AP exams given by the College Board is awarded upon receipt of official score reports. Official score reports should be submitted to the Admissions/Registration Office along with the PLA Application. AP credit awards will not be granted if the student is currently enrolled in or has successfully completed or earned credit for the course. [www.wvc.edu/ap](http://www.wvc.edu/ap)

### COLLEGE LEVEL EXAMINATION PROGRAM (CLEP): Contact Admissions/Registration Office

WVC will award credit for demonstrating competency in a broad subject area or a specific course through the College Board for College-Level Subject Exams (CLEP) crosswalk. The most appropriate course equivalent is determined case-by-case by the appropriate department. [www.wvc.edu/clep](http://www.wvc.edu/clep)

### COURSE CHALLENGE: Contact PLA Coordinator

Student who wishes to apply for a course challenge must be interviewed and approved through the instructional department. A course may not be challenged if the student is currently enrolled in, has previously earned credit in, or has previously audited the WVC course. Not all courses are available for challenge and not all departments offer challenge exams. [www.wvc.edu/coursechallenge](http://www.wvc.edu/coursechallenge)

### DANTES Subject Test (DSST): Contact Admissions/Registration Office

Credits from Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support Subjects Standardized Tests (DSST) examination program offered by Educational Testing Services are accepted. [www.wvc.edu/dantes](http://www.wvc.edu/dantes)

### INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURES: Contact PLA Coordinator

Individuals who have completed training through non-degree awarding agencies or institutions may apply for evaluation of credit. Examples include recognized nursing and fire science training, etc. Official documentation of training or licensure is required. All certifications or licenses must be current and valid and training must be documented with ACE National Guide to College Credit for Workforce Training. [www.wvc.edu/industry-cert](http://www.wvc.edu/industry-cert)

### INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB): Contact Admissions/Registration Office

WVC will award credit for the Higher Level International Baccalaureate exam. When there is no specific course the most appropriate course equivalent is determined case-by-case by the appropriate department faculty.

[www.wvc.edu/ib](http://www.wvc.edu/ib)

### MILITARY EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE: Contact Veterans Office

The Armed Forces of the United States provide military personnel with a great variety of educational opportunities through formal service school training programs and off-duty educational activities. Credit may be granted for satisfactory completion when it is specific and applicable to the student's program or degree. [www.wvc.edu/military-ed](http://www.wvc.edu/military-ed)

## APPENDIX C

### WVC APPROVED CHALLENGE LIST

*Forward any interested students to Pam Kelley, PLA Coordinator*

*Office WTI 2144, 682-6632*

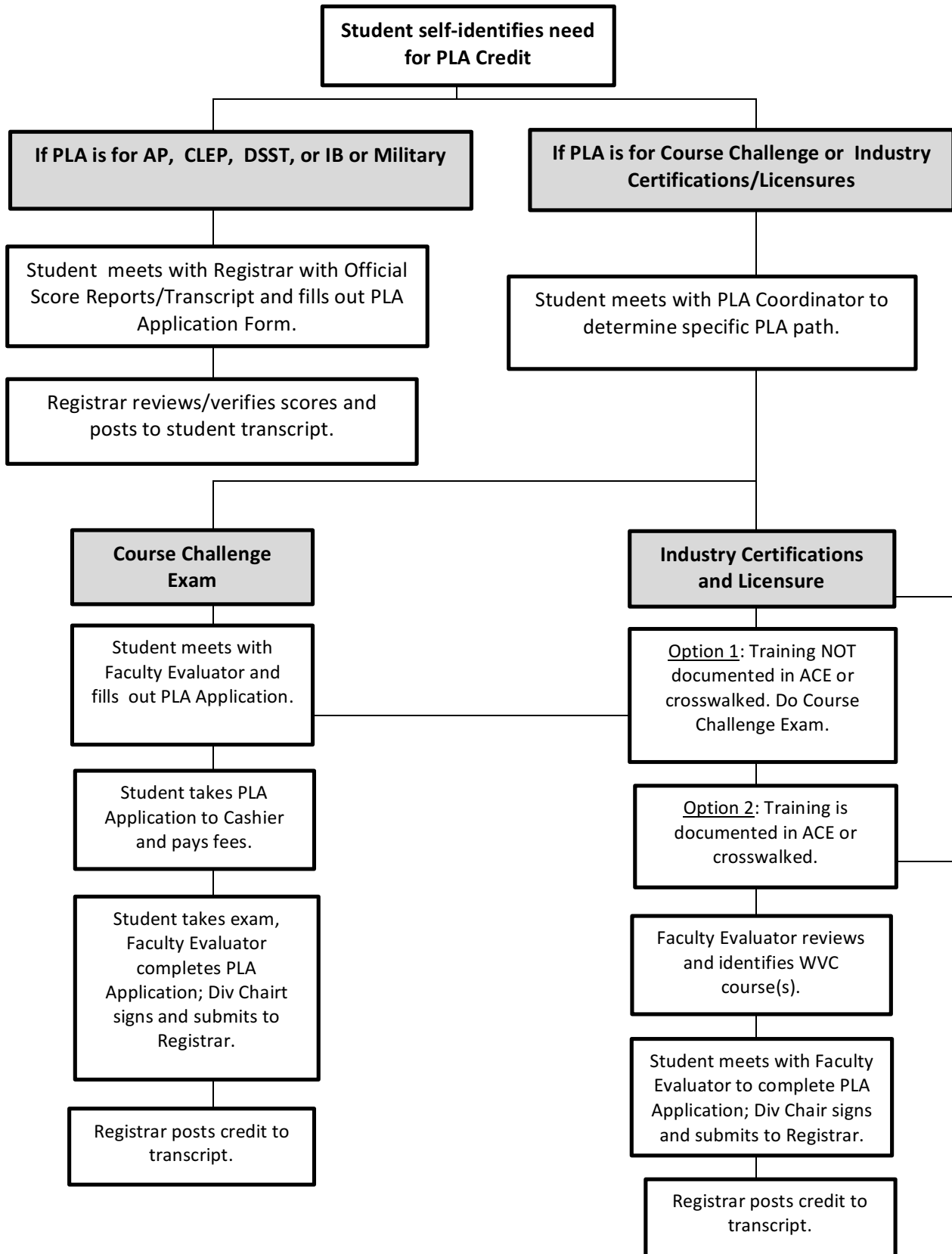
<b>Division</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Credits</b>	<b>Instructor</b>
<b>Allied Health</b>	HLTH 123	Medical Terminology	3	Testing Ctr
	CDS, MA, MLT, NURS, RADT - Contact Division Chair			
<b>Business &amp; Computer Technology</b>	BCT 100	Basic Computer Keyboarding	2	FT Faculty
	BCT 105	Computer Applications	5	FT Faculty
	BCT 125	Internet Use	2	FT Faculty
<b>Developmental Education</b>	SDS & LIBR - Contact Division Chair			
<b>Fine Arts &amp; Humanities</b>	ART, ASL, CMST, HUMN, JAPN, LATN, THTR - Contact Division Chair			
	MUS 100	Introduction to Music	5	Juel Iwaasa
	MUSC&131	Music Theory I	3	Juel Iwaasa
	MUSC&132	Music Theory II	3	Juel Iwaasa
	MUSC&133	Music Theory III	3	Juel Iwaasa
	PHIL&101	Introduction to Philosophy	5	Craig Vander Hart
	SPAN&121	Spanish I	5	Rene Baca
	SPAN&122	Spanish II	5	Rene Baca
	SPAN&123	Spanish III	5	Rene Baca
	SPAN 124	Spanish III for Native Speakers	5	Rene Baca
<b>Math</b>	MATH 098	Elementary Algebra	5	Div Chair
	MATH 099	Intermediate Algebra	5	Div Chair
	MATH&141	Precalculus I	5	Div Chair
	MATH&142	Precalculus II	5	Div Chair
<b>PE</b>	PE & PEHR - Contact Division Chair			
<b>Science</b>	ASTR, BIOL, CHEM, GEOL, METR, PHYS - Contact Division Chair			
	ENGR 102	Engineering Graphics & Design	4	Arius Elvikis
	ENGR 105	Computer Aided Drafting	5	Arius Elvikis
<b>Social Science</b>	ANTH, ECON, GEOG, HIST, POLS, PSYC, SOC - Contact Division Chair			
<b>Technology &amp; Industry</b>	AGRI, AUTO, CJ, ECE, ESRT, INDT, MACH, WELD - Contact Division Chair			
<b>Transfer English</b>	ENGL&101	Composition I	5	Div Chair

## WVC COURSE CHALLENGE PROCEDURES

### For Students

1. In order to qualify for Course Challenge by examination, I must complete the following checklist:
  - I have 15 or more transcribed credits with WVC.
  - My GPA is 2.0 or better.
  - I am currently in good academic standing and currently enrolled at WVC.
  - I understand that not all courses are available for Course Challenge and not all departments offer challenge exams.
  - I have not previously taken, have received credit, or audited the course to be challenged.
  - I understand that a course challenge exam and may not be repeated for additional credit.
  - I understand that course challenge credits will not fulfill the writing requirement for advanced English composition.
  - I can only challenge one course at a time.
  - I understand that credit is allowed only for examination in which I have received a grade of “C” or better. Successful course challenge receives a “P” grade and it will not affect the GPA.
  - PLA credit is limited to a maximum of 30 credits required for WVC degrees or certificates but for all workforce programs it is limited to 25% of total credits for degree or certificate.
  - I have read and understand the LIMITATIONS of PLA credit and how four-year institutions may evaluate it.
2. Make an appointment with the PLA Coordinator (Pam Kelley, WTI 2144, 682-6632) who will determine my eligibility by reviewing my transcript, the above information and to help determine which course I want to challenge.
3. The PLA Coordinator will contact the appropriate department to determine if course is challengeable and who the Faculty Evaluator will be.
4. I need to make an appointment with the designated Faculty Evaluator who finalizes the appropriate course to be challenged.
5. The Faculty Evaluator needs to complete the PLA Application and then I need to take it to the Cashier’s office and pay the non-refundable application fee of \$25 plus processing fees for credits to be attempted, which is \$10 per credit. **Fees MUST be paid prior to taking the challenge exam and payment of fees is non-refundable and does not guarantee award of credit.**
6. Make sure the Cashier attaches a copy of the payment receipt to the application.
7. I need to take the completed PLA application, with receipt attached, to the Faculty Evaluator to make appointment for exam. The Faculty Evaluator will prepare and administer the examination. After the examination has been graded, a copy of the completed PLA application (which shows course number, title, credits, grade and signature of faculty) will be given to me.
8. The Faculty Evaluator will deliver completed PLA application to appropriate department for approval signature and approval date.
9. Department then sends approved PLA application to the Registration/Admission’s office for processing. PLA credits will be posted to transcripts after quarterly grades have been released.

**APPENDIX D  
PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT (PLA) FLOWCHART**





**APPENDIX E:  
PLA FACULTY & STAFF WORKFLOW  
PROCEDURES FOR PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT (PLA)**

Prior learning is the knowledge and skill gained through work and life experience; military training and experience; and formal and informal education and training at in-and out-of-state institutions.

WVC acknowledges opportunities for mastering specific skills and competencies that can be gained outside of a formal classroom experience. Prior learning can be achieved through education, work, or life experiences.

Currently enrolled students may earn college credit when they demonstrate by examination or evaluation that their professional experience or substantial prior learning meets the specific outcomes of a WVC course. Not all courses at WVC are designated appropriate for credit by examination or evaluation and each department determines the evaluation method required for students to demonstrate mastery of the course content. Prior learning credits can be awarded through one of the following options:

- Advanced Placement (AP)
- College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
- Course Challenge
- DANTES Subject Test (DSST)
- Industry Certification or Licensures
- International Baccalaureate (IB)
- Military Education and Experience

The following restrictions apply to awarding prior learning credits:

- For Course Challenges or (non-crosswalked) Industry Certifications and Licensures, students must be currently enrolled at WVC and have 15 transcribed credits with a 2.0 or better GPA to be eligible for prior learning assessment (PLA) consideration. For AP, CLEP, DSST, IB, (crosswalked) Industry Certifications and Licensures or military credit there are no credit or GPA requirements.
- There is no assurance that any PLA credit will be granted.
- Prior learning credits cannot duplicate credits that have already been awarded.
- PLA credit is limited to a maximum of 30 credits (crosswalks/challenge exams) required for WVC degrees or certificates. Experiential Learning (portfolio) and all Workforce programs are limited to 25% of total credits for degree or certificate.
- Prior learning credits do not count towards the minimum residency requirement of 33% of degree or certificate credits must be taken at WVC.
- Credits for all prior learning receives a “P” grade and will not affect the GPA.
- A non-refundable fee application fee of \$25 plus \$10 per credit attempted must be prepaid for Course Challenge and (non-crosswalked) Industry Certification or Licensure assessment.

For further information about process or fees for prior learning credits, contact Pam Kelley, PLA Coordinator at 682-6632.

## ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP)

The College Entrance Examination Board Advanced Placement Program allows high school students to earn college credit for high school work. Students usually take a high school honors course to prepare for the national AP exams each May. Advanced placement exams are offered in a number of academic disciplines. Credit for these exams is granted under the following conditions:

- WVC is not a testing site for AP and official scores must be submitted for evaluation.
- Credits awarded are based on the type of test taken and the score received. For English Composition tests, WVC only accepts scores of a 4 or 5.
- Click on WVC AP Exam Scores ([www.wvc.edu/ap](http://www.wvc.edu/ap)) for a complete breakdown on how credit is awarded.
- There is no credit or GPA requirements before any credit can be awarded.
- A maximum of 10 AP credits can be earned in a distribution area (maximum of 5 credits in world languages). No more than 5 AP credits can be used to meet the writing skills requirement for a degree. AP credit will not fulfill the writing requirement for advanced English composition.
- For an AP test that does not appear on the AP Exam Score chart, WVC will grant a maximum of 5 elective credits for a score of 3 or higher.
- PLA credit is limited to a maximum of 30 credits required for WVC degrees or certificates.
- AP credit receives a “P” grade, will not affect the GPA and will not apply to WVC residency requirements.
- There is no fee for this evaluation.

### **PROCESS for documenting credit:**

- *Student meets with WVC Registrar to review official AP scores, or Registrar informs student that they must order official scores to be sent.*
- *Registrar reviews AP crosswalk with student to verify credit they are requesting, and the year-quarter credit will be posted.*
- *Registrar completes the PLA Application with student and obtains student signature.*
- *Copy of application is given to student.*
- *No fee is required.*
- *Registrar posts approved AP credits to transcript after quarterly grades have been released.*

## COLLEGE LEVEL EXAMINATION PROGRAM (CLEP)

Students may earn credit by demonstrating competency in a broad subject area or a specific course through the College Board for College-Level Subject Exams (CLEP). Credit is awarded according to the following guidelines: ([www.wvc.edu/clep](http://www.wvc.edu/clep))

- WVC is not a testing site for CLEP and official scores must be submitted for evaluation.
- There is no credit or GPA requirements before any credit can be awarded.
- Students must achieve a score in the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher to receive ‘P’ credit.
- A maximum award of 10 CLEP credits can be earned in a distribution area (maximum of 5 credits in world languages). No more than 5 CLEP credits can be used to meet the writing skills requirement for a degree. CLEP credit will not fulfill the writing requirement for advanced English composition.
- CLEP credit is not allowed if credit has been received for a more advanced class.
- CLEP credit receives a “P” grade, will not affect the GPA and will not apply to WVC residency requirements.
- PLA credit is limited to a maximum of 30 credits required for WVC degrees or certificates.
- Additional credit may be considered for the technical degrees.
- There is no fee for this evaluation.

### **PROCESS for documenting credit:**

- *Student meets with WVC Registrar to review official CLEP scores, or Registrar informs student that they must order official scores to be sent.*
- *Registrar reviews CLEP crosswalk with student to verify credit they are requesting, and the year-quarter credit will be posted.*
- *Registrar completes the PLA Application with student and obtains student signature.*
- *Copy of application is given to student.*
- *No fee is required.*
- *Registrar posts approved CLEP credits to transcript after quarterly grades have been released.*

## COURSE CHALLENGE

Challenge credit is earned by demonstrating achievement of course outcomes. The appropriate department determines the method of demonstrating proficiency, usually an instructor-designed comprehensive exam. A list of courses that may be challenged is available in the Admissions/Registration Office or you can download the Course Challenge List here ([www.wvc.edu/coursechallenge](http://www.wvc.edu/coursechallenge)). The following guidelines apply:

- Students must be currently enrolled at WVC and have transcribed 15 WVC credits with a 2.0 or better GPA before credits may be awarded and only if the learning experiences fall within the regular curriculum of the college. Students are not allowed to take an examination for a course they have previously enrolled in or audited at WVC. If they have already taken and failed an examination for credit, they may not repeat the examination. Challenge exams may not be repeated for additional credit.
- Not all courses are available for challenge and not all departments offer challenge exams.
- Credit is allowed only for examination in which the student has received a grade of “C” or better. Successful course challenge receives a “P” grade and it will not affect the GPA.
- Individual departments or programs may require that a student successfully complete the next highest sequential course before receiving credit. However, a student cannot receive credit by examination for any course if they have already completed a more advanced course in that subject area.
- A maximum of 10 challenge credits can be earned in a distribution area. No more than 5 challenge credits can be used to meet the writing skills requirement for a WVC degree. Challenge credits will not fulfill the writing requirement for advanced English composition.
- Course challenge credit from other institutions will be accepted by WVC in accordance with policy guidelines.
- PLA credit is limited to a maximum of 30 credits required for WVC degrees or certificates but for all Workforce programs it is limited to 25% of total credits for degree or certificate.
- There is a non-refundable application fee of \$25 plus a \$10 fee for each credit attempted and must be paid prior to challenge exam.

### PROCESS for documenting credit:

- *Student meets with PLA coordinator who confirms the student’s eligibility by reviewing student’s transcript, current enrollment and to help determine which course student wants to challenge.*
- *PLA coordinator contacts appropriate department to determine if course is challengeable and to get a Faculty Evaluator referral.*
- *Student meets with Faculty Evaluator who determines the appropriate course for challenge.*
- *Faculty Evaluator completes the PLA application with student by completing course number, title and credits. They also complete the fees section indicating the credits attempting along with the application fee, and obtains student signature.*
- *Student takes PLA application to cashier and pays appropriate fees (includes application fee of \$25 plus processing fees for credits attempted, which is \$10 per credit.) **Fees must be paid prior** to taking challenge exam and payment of fees is non-refundable and does not guarantee award of credit. Cashier will attach receipt to PLA application form.*
- *Student takes PLA application with payment receipt to Faculty Evaluator to set exam appointment.*
- *After exam the Faculty Evaluator completes the PLA application by entering course number, title, credits, grade, then signs, dates form, and gives a copy of completed application to student.*
- *Faculty Evaluator delivers original PLA application to department chair for approval and then sends PLA application to the Admission/Registration office for processing.*

## DANTES SUBJECT TEST (DSST)

Credits from Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support Subjects Standardized Test (DANTES SST) examination program offered by Educational Testing Services are accepted as crosswalked ([www.wvc.edu/dantes](http://www.wvc.edu/dantes)). There are 50 subject-standardized tests covering a wide range of college level academic, business and technical subjects.

- WVC is not a testing site for DSST and official scores must be submitted for evaluation.
- There are no credit or GPA requirements before any credit can be awarded.
- A maximum award of 10 DSST credits can be earned in a distribution area (maximum of five credits in world languages). A maximum of five DSST credits can be used to meet the writing skills requirement for a degree. Credit will not fulfill the writing requirement for advanced English composition.
- DSST credit is not allowed if credit has been received for a more advanced class.
- DSST credit receives a “P” grade, will not affect the GPA and will not apply to WVC residency requirements.
- PLA credit is limited to a maximum of 30 credits required for WVC degrees or certificates.
- There is no fee for this evaluation.

### **PROCESS for documenting credit:**

- *Student meets with WVC Registrar to review official DSST scores, or Registrar informs student that they must order official scores be sent.*
- *Registrar reviews DSST crosswalk with student to verify credit they are requesting, and the year-quarter credit will be posted.*
- *Registrar completes the PLA Application with student and obtains student signature.*
- *Copy of application is given to student.*
- *No fee is required.*
- *Registrar posts approved DSST credits to transcript after quarterly grades have been released.*

## INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURES

Individuals who have completed training comparable to college-level programs through non-degree awarding agencies or institutions may apply for evaluation of credit as crosswalked ([www.wvc.edu/industry-cert](http://www.wvc.edu/industry-cert)). Examples include recognized nursing, fire service, law enforcement/corrections or fire science academies, and other certifications or licenses.

- For non-crosswalked Industry Certifications and Licensures, at least 15 credits with a 2.0 or better GPA must be completed at WVC before any credit is awarded. For crosswalked Industry Certifications and Licensures there are no credit or GPA requirements.
- Submission of official records, as well as supporting documentation must be submitted that includes the following: content, level, time period, hours, location, method of instruction, instructors, method of evaluation and achievement.
- All certifications or licenses must be current and valid and training must be documented with ACE National Guide to College Credit for Workforce Training. (If training is not documented with ACE, students should apply for credit using the PLA Course Challenge method.)
- Training documentation will be evaluated by instructional faculty in the appropriate department to determine the comparability.
- Approved credits are identified on the student's transcript as credit for professional certification of training.
- Credits earned through documented college-level learning, must be related to the theories, practices and content of the relevant academic field and must fall within the regular curricular offerings of an appropriate course or program, but for transfer degrees they may be used only up to a maximum of 15 credits as restricted electives.
- PLA credit is limited to a maximum of 30 credits required for WVC degrees or certificates.
- Credit is posted with a "P" grade and will not affect the GPA.
- There is no fee for crosswalked Industry Certifications and Licensures. If not crosswalked, there is a non-refundable application fee of \$25 plus a \$10 fee for each credit (same as Course Challenge).

### **PROCESS for documenting credit:**

- *PLA coordinator meets with student who verifies educational experiences by providing official documentation of certifications, licensures, or transcripts (articulation agreements).*
- *If training is currently crosswalked or is documented with ACE, PLA coordinator emails crosswalk or ACE credit recommendation information to the appropriate department and/or faculty for review.*
- *Faculty Evaluator reviews ACE credit recommendation and identifies WVC course(s) for transcription, investigates certificate or license for possible WVC credit OR gives recommendation for Course Challenge. (go to Course Challenge page for further process information)*
- *Faculty Evaluator meets with student and completes the PLA application by entering course number, title, credits, grade, then signs, dates form, and gives a copy of completed application to student.*
- *Faculty Evaluator delivers original PLA application to department chair for approval and then sends approved PLA application to the Registration/Admission's office for processing.*

## INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB)

WVC will award credit for the Higher Level International Baccalaureate exam which consists of college-level courses and exams for high school students as crosswalked ([www.wvc.edu/ib](http://www.wvc.edu/ib)).

- WVC is not a testing site for IB and official scores must be submitted for evaluation.
- There are no credit or GPA requirements before any credit can be awarded.
- Students may receive credit for the International Baccalaureate higher-level subjects when a score of 4 or higher is earned in selected subjects.
- When no specific course number is listed, the most appropriate course equivalent is determined on a case-by-case by the appropriate department faculty.
- PLA credit is limited to a maximum of 30 credits required for WVC degrees or certificates.
- IB credit receives a “P” grade, will not affect the GPA and will not apply to WVC residency requirements.
- There is no fee for this evaluation.

### **PROCESS for documenting credit:**

- *Student meets with WVC Registrar to review official scores, or Registrar informs student that they must order official scores be sent.*
- *Registrar reviews IB crosswalk with student to verify credit they are requesting, and the year-quarter credit will be posted.*
- *Registrar completes PLA application with student and obtains student signature.*
- *A copy of application is given to student.*
- *No fee is required.*
- *Registrar will post approved IB credits to transcript after quarterly grades have been released..*

## MILITARY EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

As required by RCW 28B.10.057, Wenatchee Valley College will award academic credit for military training. The academic credit awarded for prior military training must be granted only for training that is applicable to the student's certificate or degree requirements. ([www.wvc.edu/militaryed](http://www.wvc.edu/militaryed))

The individual must be enrolled in a public institution of higher education and have successfully completed any military training course or program as part of the military service that is:

- Recommended for credit by a national higher education association that provides credit recommendations for military training programs;
- Included in the individual's military transcript issued by any branch of the armed services;
- Documented military training or experience that is substantially equivalent to any course or program offered by the institution of higher education.

- NOTE:**
1. Per the Veteran's Administration, all veteran student transfer credit must be evaluated within two quarters of program start. After the third quarter, if the student does not submit all transcripts, he/she must be decertified for the use of VA education benefits.
  2. Some military transfer credit will be subject to external evaluation criteria (e.g. Aviation Maintenance Technician and Professional Pilot.)
  3. Veteran student using education benefits are not permitted to opt out of prior credit evaluation.

### PROCESS for documenting credit:

- *Student verifies educational experiences by providing the Veteran's office with the official Joint Services Transcript (JST), or the Veterans office assists student with ordering transcript.*
- *Transcript evaluations will be based on the appropriate edition of "A Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services" (ACE Guide), published by the American Council on Education (ACE).*
- *Within two business days of transcript receipt, the Registrar will evaluate the transcript for reading, English and mathematics placement and any academic (general education) credits earned, posting to the student record as applicable.*
- *Technical classes will be forwarded to appropriate division chair along with the course description and the accompanying ACE (American Council on Education) course recommendation. (**Exception:** Military transfer credit for some programs must meet outside agency criteria prior to WVC acceptance.)*
- *Any military training or experience that is substantially equivalent to any course or program offered will be accepted as applicable toward the veteran's program of study.*
- *The division chair will have three weeks to work with the program faculty to evaluate the courses submitted for evaluation and return it to the Registrar.*
- *The Registrar will post the technical credit to the student records within five business days of receipt, and then will notify the student of credits accepted or denied and applicability to program of study. In the case of a change of program, transfer credit must be re-evaluated and applied to the student record as applicable.*
- *Per the Veteran's Administration, all veteran student transfer credit MUST be evaluated within two quarter of program start. After the third quarter, if the student does not submit all transcripts, he/she must be decertified for the use of VA education benefits.*