



michigan community college association

LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

# Credit for Prior Learning

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MCCA Student Success Summit

# Student Success Project Team & Advisor

## Team Members:

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# Agenda Overview

- Takeaways
- Value of Credit for Prior Learning
- Problem Statement
- Benefits to Stakeholder Groups
  - Students
  - Community
  - College
- Challenges
- Measures of Success
- Recommendations
- Timeframe for Improvement



# Takeaways

- The impact of Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) on completion rates for all students.
- Benefits of an easily accessible process for students to apply for CPL.
- The use of CPL for industry-recognized credentials to aid in recruitment and enrollment of adult learners (ages 25+).



# Value of Credit for Prior Learning

AP

IB

CLEP

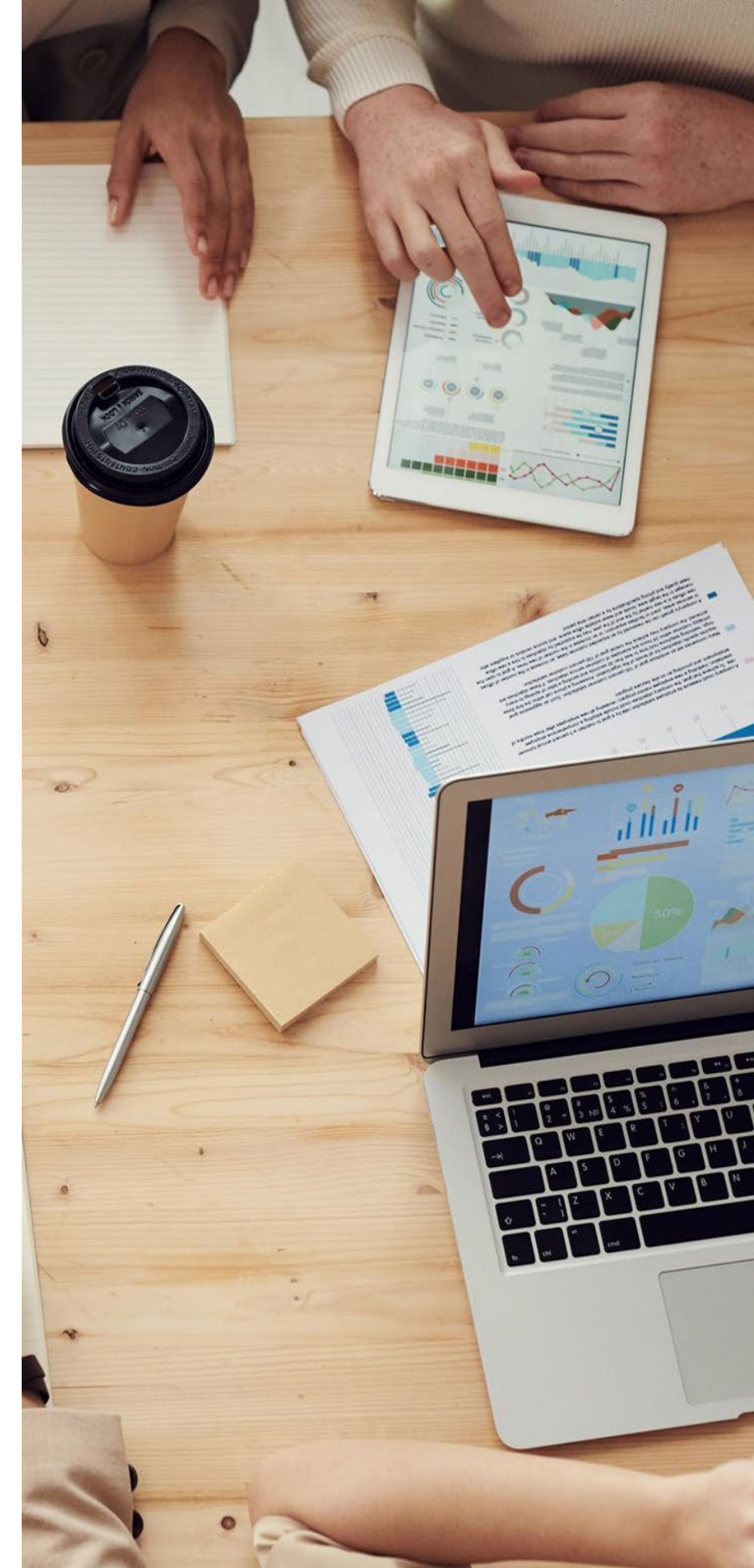
DSST

Credit  
By  
Examination

Military  
Credit

Portfolio  
Assessment

Industry  
Credentials



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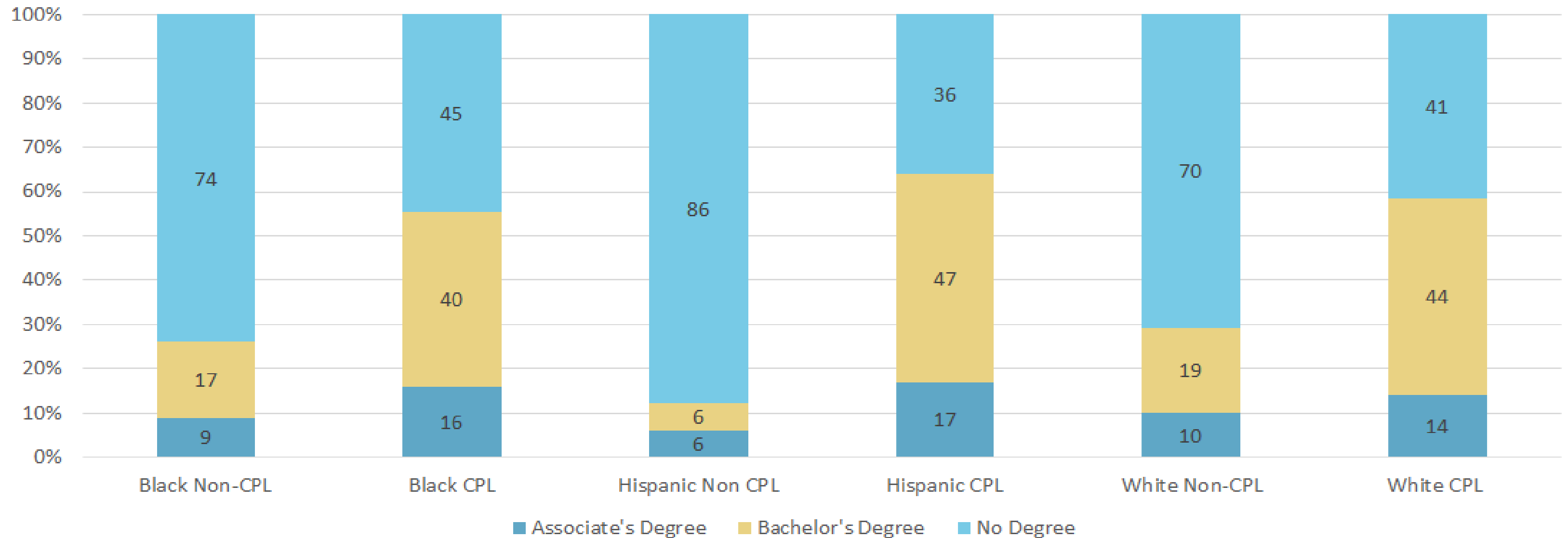


**My college has a strategy that addresses awarding Credit for Prior Learning, and promotes the student-driven process effectively.**

# Increased Credential Completion

From 2001-2009, CPL increased completion rates for key adult student groups in 48 institutions – 62,475 adult learners-ages 25+.

Race/Ethnicity, CPL and Graduation Rates: Black, Hispanic and White



Klein-Collins, R. (2010). *Fueling the race to postsecondary success: A 48-institution study of prior learning assessment and adult student outcomes*. Chicago, IL: Council for Adult and Experiential Learning. <http://www.cael.org/pla/publication/fueling-the-race-to-postsecondary-success>



# Increased Credential Completion

From 2011-2018, CPL increased completion for key adult student groups in 72 institutions—465,000 students (over 230,000 adult learners-ages 25+):

Hispanic adults	Pell Grant recipients	Black adults	Adults at community colleges
24%	19%	14%	25%

There were significantly higher rates of completing any credential for adult CPL students compared with adult non-CPL students for all subgroups including gender, age, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, academic performance, and types of institutions.

**CPL was used by only 1 in 10 adult learners or 11% as compared to 1 in 4 or 25% in the first study.**

Klein-Collins, R., Bransberger, P., & Lane, P. (2021). *Equity Paradoxes in the PLA Boost: Opportunity Unrealized for Some Students Despite the Potential for Improved Credit Completion*. <https://www.wiche.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/PLA-Equity-Brief-Snapshot-CAEL-WICHE-October-2021.pdf>



# Strengthening MIWORKFORCE Pathways

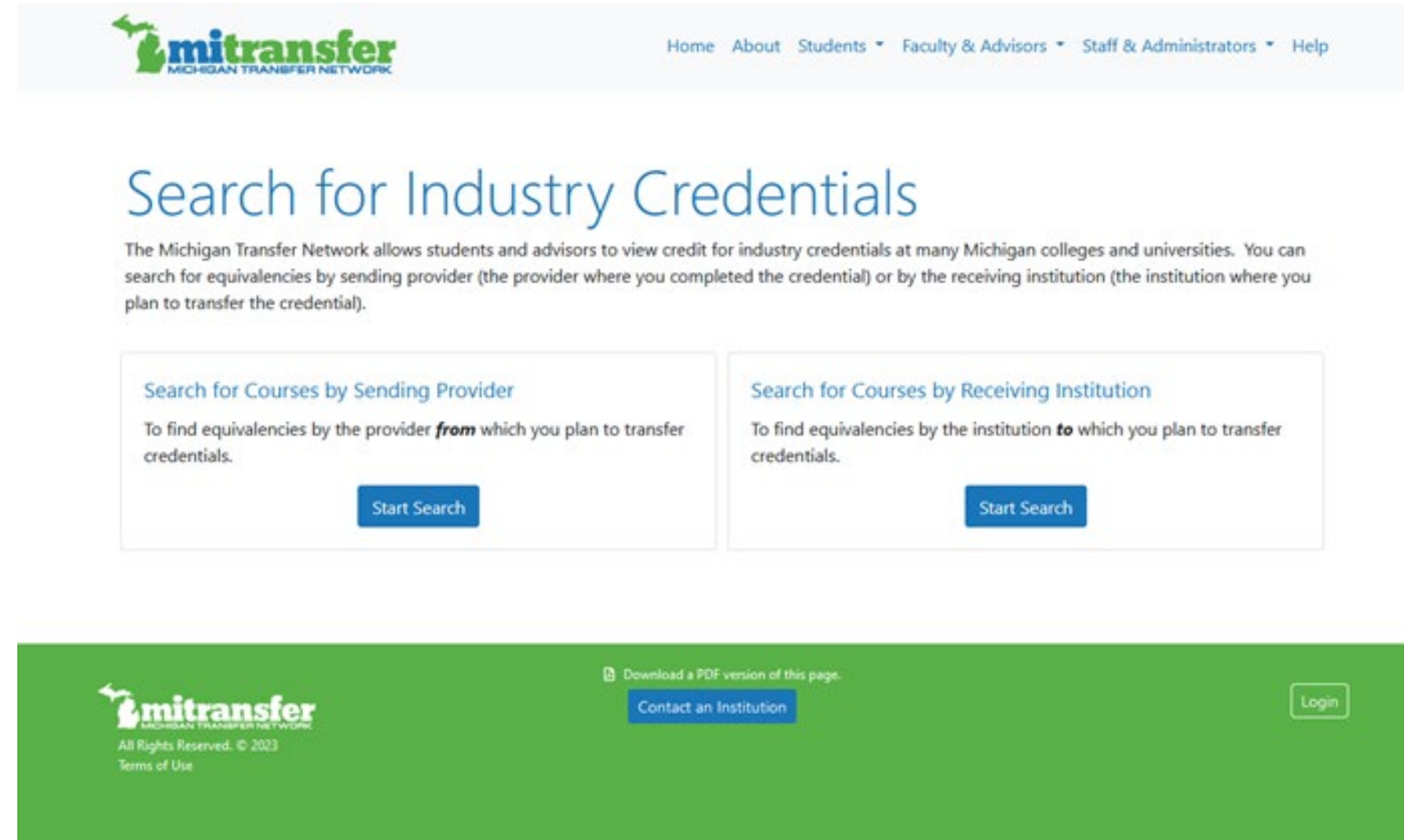
Strengthening equitable access to and through workforce programs with a strategic focus on:

1. Program design – alignment with local labor market needs,
2. Incorporation of industry-recognized credentials,
3. Progress into bachelor's degree programs,
4. Deployment of timely advising interventions to maintain student momentum.



# Communication

Statewide Transfer Network launched a new credentials database in April 2023. It has grown to include over 100 unique credential providers, more than 500 credentials, and over 600 course equivalencies across Michigan's community colleges.



The screenshot shows the Michigan Transfer Network website. At the top left is the logo for "mitransfer MICHIGAN TRANSFER NETWORK". To the right is a navigation menu with links for Home, About, Students, Faculty & Advisors, Staff & Administrators, and Help. The main heading is "Search for Industry Credentials". Below this is a paragraph explaining that the network allows students and advisors to view credit for industry credentials at many Michigan colleges and universities, and that users can search for equivalencies by sending provider or by the receiving institution. There are two search boxes: "Search for Courses by Sending Provider" and "Search for Courses by Receiving Institution". Each box contains a brief description and a "Start Search" button. At the bottom of the page, there is a green footer with the "mitransfer" logo, copyright information, and links for "Download a PDF version of this page", "Contact an Institution", and "Login".

<https://www.mitransfer.org/Earn-Credits-for-Industry-Credentials>

# Policy Incentive

Legislation passed in December 2022 created a process to reimburse community colleges at a rate of \$80 per credit hour for credits awarded through a range of CPL types, including credit awarded for industry credentials.

For example, if Macomb Community College awarded three credits for CompTIA Linux+, the college can receive \$240 (\$80 each for three credits) for awarding the credit.

This policy incentive recognizes the costs associated with awarding credit for prior learning and showcases an important policy lever that incentivizes greater adoption of credit for prior learning programs among community colleges.



# CPL Reimbursement Process

The Office of Sixty by 30 created a reporting template, called the “Reconnect CPL Report and Reimbursement Request” in Qualtrics.

The reimbursement request is available concurrently with the annual Reconnect Compliance Report and must be submitted by June 30 each year.

Institutions seeking reimbursement per the policy, must complete both the “Reconnect CPL Report and Reimbursement Request” and the CPL questions on the Compliance Report.

UIC of Reconnect Student	Credit for PL Received
3859482713	2
4837702145	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>

# Problem Statement

In spite of the available resources, full implementation of CPL opportunities for students remains a challenge for some Michigan community colleges.



# Benefits To Stakeholder Groups

## Students

- Accelerated time to completion (9-14 months)
- Adult students save between \$1,500-\$10,200 using CPL
- Empowers students by validating them as learners
- Reduces duplication of learning

# Benefits To Stakeholder Groups

## The Community

- Help to build a responsive and locally tailored labor market
- Talent Attraction
- Community Prosperity
- Economic Mobility

# Benefits To Community Colleges

## The College

- Makes CCs a competitive choice
- Attracts new student populations Increased enrollment
- Outreach and Marketing Increase
- Strengthens employer partnerships
- Increase in key performance indicators

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**My CPL approval process for IRC is transparent and accessible for all students.**

# Challenges

## Transferability of Credit for Prior Learning

August of 2022: the MiWorkforce Pathways Agreement

- Signed by Ferris State University, Grand Valley State University, Oakland University, Saginaw Valley State University, and a handful of independent four year institutions
  - Community colleges ... agree to enforce institutional policies to review and award credit for prior learning (CPL) such that student's meet the learning outcomes of the course for which they are receiving credit and the policy meets institutional and programmatic accreditation requirements.
  - Universities ... agree to accept credit for prior learning previously applied to meet associate degree and MTA requirements at the participating community colleges.



# Challenges

## Section 227 of Public Act 144

Requires community colleges to comply with a number of new requirements to receive appropriations from the state.

MCCA has worked with members of the Legislature to provide guidance.

[Guidance for Michigan Community Colleges on Section 227 of PA 144](#)

It is currently up to the Legislature or state budget to monitor compliance and make the ultimate decision about the consequences of not complying with the CPL language.

# Challenges

A 2023 study by Jobs for the Future (JFF), indicates that advising conversations about CPL, Training, and Work Experience are limited.

## Improving Economic Mobility for Adult Learners

Separate focus groups were conducted with learners from each of the three community colleges in this initiative (Delta, Macomb, Grand Rapids).

When first meeting with an advisor, 64% of respondents reported that there were **no conversations** about receiving academic credit for prior learning, training, and/or work experience (N=459).



# Challenges

Even though agreements and legislation are in place, with supporting research, implementation issues persist.

- Lack of resources (especially staff) to work on this
- Lack of staff awareness and understanding
- Faculty buy-in since it can take away from enrollment in their classes
- Faculty time to evaluate the class(es) that may be awarded for previous experience, certifications and/or licensure



# Challenges

- Competing priorities (e.g., enrollment challenges, student success, etc.) – this is especially true for institutions with leadership changes
- Confusing reimbursement process, particularly in the Reconnect/Guarantee environment
- Lack of promotion/awareness of students



# Measures of Success

- Increase the number of students who apply for Credit for Prior Learning by submitting the industry-recognized credentials accepted for credit at their community college.
- Increase enrollment among non-traditional aged students (25+ years old) by 2% annually.
- Increase the number of students participating in the Michigan Reconnect program.



# Best Practices

- Focus on students – ensure application for CPL is easily accessible and transparent.
- Ensure there is a cross-functional workgroup, led by a champion who will provide resources and support the group through ongoing actions and communication.
- Charge the workgroup with identification of the college's barrier/roadblocks to implementation and developing solutions.
- Use data to drive decisions and actions.
- Set measurable goals to increase the numbers of students who apply for CPL credit.



# Contact

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# References

Sample processes gathered from Schoolcraft, Alpena, Bay, Kirtland, and Mott.

American Council on Education Institutional CPL Best Practices

<https://www.acenet.edu/Programs-Services/Pages/Credit-Transcripts/Institutional-CPL-Best-Practices.aspx>

American Council on Education Student Guide to Credit for Prior Learning <https://www.acenet.edu/Programs-Services/Pages/Credit-Transcripts/Student-Guide-to-Credit-for-Prior-Learning.aspx>

Higher Learning Advocates Backgrounder How Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) Can Benefit Today's Students

<https://higherlearningadvocates.org/wp-content/uploads/credit-for-prior-learning-backgrounder-2023.pdf>

Michigan Transfer Network <https://www.mitransfer.org/>

New America Credit Where It's Due: Prior Learning Assessment

<https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/reports/lessons-adapting-future-work-prior-learning-assessment/credit-where-its-due-prior-learning-assessment/>

Council for Adult and Experiential Learning <https://www.cael.org/lp/cpl-pla>

Higher Learning Commission Requirements

- Assumed Practices A5d and Bg
- Criteria for Accreditations 4A2
- Changes to Existing Academic Programs