Session 3: The Student Experience

Strategy #2: Industry Recognized Credentials

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### Strategy #2: Industry Recognized Credentials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 1: Institutional Policies</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Welcome and Introductions
Introduce and Review Pre-work Exercise
Mapping the Student Experience
  Break out activity to dive into the scenarios
  Group debrief
Key Considerations
  Sequencing of onboarding and registration
  Transferability
  Data collection and tracking
  Evaluation and ongoing assessment
  Addressing other barriers
Additional Resources
Wrap Up and Closing
Learning goals of homework:

- Begin to map the CPL process along the student journey
- Identify opportunities to revise the process and how it is communicated to students and/or externally
- Identify early professional development needs to enable and facilitate this process
How is the credit documented on the student record? Are implications for transfer clearly communicated to students?
Application Process

Essential Departments: Advising, Faculty and Deans, Provost. CIO if tech-enabled process.

What is the application process like for students? Is it easy to find? Is it simple to navigate or are there many steps to take?

Application should include clear information about how to supply documentation of a credential.

Students can be overwhelmed with many CPL options.

Currently, this is happening on an ad hoc basis. We are creating more systematic application processes, which will ideally consider multiple forms of CPL and become web-based over time.

Application is found on our website and is simple to navigate.

I think it is hidden and not clear how students would ever find info about industry cert credit.

Admissions rep or academic advisor send the CPL form/application to the student. This includes specific information as to what is reviewed to determine if credit can be awarded. If awarded students are

Holistic Advisor (first point of contact for each student) prompt this discussion and connect student with appropriate representative to evaluate credentials.

Application for admission is easily found on the website and the admission process is easy. Approved extra-institutional credit is not part of the application process but is reviewed on.

The credentials are evaluated by the appropriate department faculty chairperson. Credit is awarded through the extra-institutional credit policy. Credit is applied by the Registrar’s department. Most

Students work with their admissions advisor or academic advisor with the appropriate faculty/chairpersons for review for credit.

Seems like an important role for the entity awarding the credential to also point students to the potential for college credit, and if possible some general direction.

Process laid out in multiple easy steps to follow.

Depending on the credential, if it is a known/current credential that we've worked with before, student provides it to Registrar’s office. Advisor’s assist.

Easy to navigate with focused attention and follow up.

Whatever the process downstream, it needs to start early on, as credit awarding (a) may be variable across institutions, and (b) may have an impact in enrollment decisions.

Is there a timeline?

There is so much info that they get at the beginning of their journey. There is almost no time during onboarding process to drill in to some of these questions/options.

Multiple steps and signatures.

We should create an internal process that doesn’t require students to go to multiple offices.

Multiple steps, plus program criteria must be understood by the student.

It isn’t part of are application process. GASP.
Credential Evaluation

Essential Departments: Academic Affairs, Faculty and Deans, and Registrar.

How are credentials evaluated? Is the process clear, fair, and equitable to all students?

Group 1

Requests are funneled to discipline SMEs for evaluation.

Establishing institutional policies that are equitable across departments.

Similar to evaluating credit based on learning outcomes, we should evaluate based on objective measures.

Group 2

Process is clear but unless student identifies and depending on the conversations if it is not started with the navigator the equitable aspect is not serving all students.

Discipline faculty/Chair evaluate new credentials to determine credit to be awarded, signed off by Dean.

Group 3

I don’t know. It appears in the process that it would appear on the transcript, however, I have never seen this.

It would help to align industry certs in the college’s SIS to courses for awarding CPL.

Faculty evaluate CPL portfolios, credit by exam, etc. The process could be improved with better documentation.

Advisors are a key starting point

The credentials are evaluated by the appropriate department faculty chairperson. Credit is awarded through the extra-institutional credit policy. Credit is applied by the Registrar’s department. Most

PLA process very extensive/lot of steps ...consistent but too much

Faculty members evaluate the prior learning based on a specific course’s learning objectives. Student must be able to demonstrate all LO’s to get credit.

Credentials are sent to the Prior Learning Assessor. They make a determination. I believe the PLA acts in conjunction with the Registrar’s Office.
The Student Record
Essential Departments: Advising, Transfer, Registrar

How is the credit documented on the student record? Are implications for transfer clearly communicated to students?

Can industry credentials be documented like AP, CLEP, IB?
I don't know. However, the concern about transfer are so great that that is the primary reason why we haven't pushed PLC.

Credits awarded for industry credentials appear as transfer credit on the student's transcript.

The credit is documented on the record by the Registrar's office and is typically evaluated for credit for a specific course and applicable credit to the course applies.

Credit by Exam listed on student transcript.

Transferability is a concern, and typically students are advised to consult with the transfer institution.

CBE
Grievance Process
Essential Departments: Academic Affairs

What is the student experience when credit is not award for credential? Do they have the option to appeal the decision?

- Students can appeal but it is not explained how
- Establishing fair and equitable policies to evaluate should reduce the need for appeals.
- Students can appeal through the Registrar’s Office
- Align with other policies that apply to credit from institutions of higher education.

No appeal option.

We do not have a formal process to appeal.
Where else do students go for information about credit for credentials?

What remaining questions do you need to explore?
The PLA/CPL webpage must focus more on the promotion of PLA/CPL opportunities (student-facing) than the policy itself (internal, technical). The policy should still be posted.

The enrollment managers shall be trained on any PLA/CPL information systems (e.g., CAEL’s Credit Predictor Plus system).

Determine the whether to use any available technology tools (such as CAEL’s Credit Predictor Plus) or to build similar tools in-house.
KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

- The student’s interactions with key departments and decisions must be aligned to ensure that students will...
  - learn about PLA opportunities during recruitment and/or during enrollment
  - be informed of credit awards prior to registration for classes
  - understand how credits earned can take the place of courses
  - encounter informed staff and advisors to guide them through each step of the process and answer questions

- Students should be warned if plans for earning credit for credentials may impact transfer plans and any potential FA implications

It’s essential to work across departments to design the process effectively and to make revisions if the sequence of activities are out of order.
Provide student outcomes up front to communicate the value of seeking credit for credentials - saves time and money. Honors prior knowledge.

Invest in student outreach and recruitment efforts (marketing) and focus on closing gaps across student demographics.

Partner with CBOs and K-12 to provide customized holistic supports for unique student populations.

Partner with CTE training partners and employers to design upskilling opportunities to low-wage or entry-level employees.

Track student outcomes from up-take rates, credits awarded, retention and persistence outcomes, employment and disaggregated results for race/ethnicity.

**PLA SAVES MONEY**

$1,500 to $10,200

*Estimated adult student savings through PLA, depending on sector*

**PLA SAVES TIME**

9 to 14 Months

*Estimated adult student time savings in earning degrees, with 12 or more PLA credits*

PLA BOOST (CAEL, 2020)
COLLEGE-LEVEL POLICY COMPONENTS

1. Standards and Values - for quality and transparency
2. Shared Definitions - clear policy relies on agreed upon definitions
3. Marketing and Recruitment - ensuring the information is accessible and clearly communicated
4. Application Process - design with scaling in mind with key metrics collected
5. Credential Evaluation - important for faculty and registrar purposes
6. The Student Record - transcripting, transfer, and articulation
7. An Established Grievance Process - a clear policy for students to follow if needed
8. A Policy Evaluation Plan - an established timeline for policy and credential review
Closing Thoughts and Reflections

As a result of this session, what remaining questions do you need to explore?

- Ask about reporting and capabilities of SIS.
- Need to identify professional development and how to connect with related departments.
Closing Thoughts and Reflections

Where else do students go for information about credit for credentials?

- Other training providers and employers.
- Teachers and counselors.
- Faculty they confide in.
- The Veterans Office.
- The International Student's Office on Campus.
- Google
- Student Records Office
- Registrar's Office
- OCTE website has industry credentials aligned with pathways.

Who should be the steward of this process at the institution? This involves so many departments but we need someone to oversee the streamlining of it.

- Creating a comprehensive list for students. We do have an internal list of previous approved credentials for credit.
- Need to identify professional development activities in each related department.
- Specifically addressing PLC on website, not just 'Transfer' credit.

An available list of postsecondary partners interested in discussions for postsecondary credit based on credentials and the contact person's contact information. This would help us to get conversations started.

- Need to build a better CPL website that explains to interested students all that CPL could be, without being too lengthy that they won't read it.

The current process at my institution is very long and not well used. If there is a chance during today's session for folks to share either a link or document related to their process, that would be super helpful!

- How is CPL communicated to students?
- How can we increase PLA interest?

As a result of this session, what remaining questions do you need to explore?

- Have we asked students about their experiences?
- Ask about reporting and capabilities of SIS.
- Is the process a burden, or affordable and easy to navigate.
- What local industries can we partner with to award credit?
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

PLA/CPL Process Map from CAEL for a Sample College
From CAEL Job Aid: A Resource for Getting Things Done  (2021)

How to Use CPL to Attract and Retain Students - A Student Outreach Communications Toolkit for CPL Champions

PLA DATA TRACKING Proposing a Model for Institutional Tracking and Reporting of Credit Earned through Prior Learning Assessment  (2020)

The PLA BOOST: Results from a 72-Institution Targeted Study of Prior Learning Assessment and Adult Student Outcomes  (2021)

MCCA will convene Ellucian and Jenzabar colleges this fall to work together on SIS solutions.
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Comments: The CDL should be current when submitted to the Registrar's Office. Students can visit the Secretary of State to renew an expired license.

Receiving Institution: Alpena Community College

Subject: UTT
Course: 206 - Equipment Vehicle Operations
Credits/G/W: 2.00 / - / -

Sending Provider: State of Michigan

Credential: Commercial Drivers License-A
Abbreviation: CDL-A
Suggested Documentation: Submit CDL card to the Registrar's Office.
Website URL: https://www.michigan.gov/sos/all-services/commercial-drivers-license