Policy Title: Credit for Prior Learning

Purpose:
The purpose of Credit for Prior Learning is to provide students an opportunity to earn college credit through alternative pathways by demonstrating how the student has met course specific outcomes for their program of study at college level equivalency. The student may demonstrate this through professional life experiences, non-credit training or courses, and/or experiential setting opportunities.

Definitions:

American Council on Education (ACE): The American Council on Education is a coordinating body for the nation’s higher education institutions. ACE provides recommendations for granting credit for college-level learning obtained in non-college settings.

Advance Placement (AP): is a credit-by-examination prior learning assessment. High school students may take an AP designated course in their high school at college level that offers college credit if successfully completed. Each AP course concludes with a college level exam developed and scored by college and university faculty members as well as experienced AP teachers.

College Level Examination Program (CLEP): is a credit-by-examination prior learning assessment. CLEP allows students to demonstrate their mastery of college-level material through an exam and earn college credit by meeting specified scores.

College-level learning: College-level is learning that meets college-level standards and results in credits which can be applied toward the requirements of a certificate, diploma, or degree.

Credit for prior learning (CPL): Credit for prior learning is the outcome of a prior learning assessment by which a student earns credit for college-level learning gained in non-credit or experiential settings.

Credit by examination: Credit by examination is a method of prior learning assessment that includes standardized examinations such as the Advanced Placement (AP) examinations; College Level Examination Program (CLEP), DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST), ACE endorsed examinations, and course-specific examinations designed by college or university faculty.

DSST is a credit by examination prior learning assessment. The DSST has acquired the formerly known military standardized assessment DANTES and administer that assessment to include all adult learners, homeschooled students, and military veterans as eligible to earn college credits by examination through DSST. (Active-duty military and their spouses first time exams continue to be funded under DANTES through the DSST.)

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA): Prior learning assessment is the process of faculty evaluation of student learning obtained through sources other than college-level coursework.
Portfolio review and competence demonstration: Portfolio review and competence demonstration are methods of prior learning assessment that include, but are not limited to, documentation review, candidate interview, performance assessment, product review, a combination of these methods, or other means.

Policy:
Students may earn academic credit (CR) in designated college courses if they have obtained skills and/or knowledge in settings other than a traditional college environment that could be assessed to be of college level and equivalent to a course(s) offered at Minnesota State Community and Technical College.

Credit for Prior Learning may be earned through the following opportunities:

- Credit by examination either by faculty assessed course specific examination or standardized exams such as CLEP, AP, or DSST.
- Faculty assessed course specific review by demonstration or portfolio.
- Institutional review of transcripts from a third party agency such as the American Council on Education (ACE).

Students requesting Credit for Prior Learning assessment must be actively enrolled and pursuing a degree through Minnesota State Community and Technical College.

No more than 75% of a degree program conferred by Minnesota State Community and Technical College can be earned through Credit for Prior Learning (Review Residence Policy regarding requirements).

An assessment fee may be charged for applicable Credit for Prior Learning services.

Associated Policies:

Associated Procedures:

Policy History:
Policy Owner: Chief Academic Officer
Policy Author: Holly J. Doyle
Date of Adoption: 10/26/2016
Date of Implementation: Click to select Implementation date.
Date and Subject of Revision: 2.27.14 policy written; 10.26.16 update policy add definitions
Policy Group Assignment: Educational
Procedure Written: Revised/Update