

## **Davenport University's Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) and CAEL's Ten Standards for Assessing Learning**

***Davenport University has designed its PLA process to align with CAEL's Ten Standards for Assessing Learning as evidenced by the following policies and processes:***

**1. Credit or competencies are awarded only for evidence of learning, not for experience or time spent.**

All PLA credit awarded is based on demonstration of learning outcomes by students via assessments designed and evaluated by subject matter expert faculty on a course equivalency basis.

**2. Assessment is integral to learning because it leads to and enables future learning.**

Students who pursue PLA are provided a faculty mentor who provides feedback to them during the completion of the assessment and after evaluation and credit determinations have been made. Feedback is also provided during and after the student's oral defense of their PLA project.

**3. Assessment is based on criteria for outcomes that are clearly articulated and shared among constituencies.**

Instructions for all prior learning assessments clearly articulate the course learning outcomes students are expected to demonstrate. Students are provided detailed assessment instructions prior to PLA completion and may seek faculty mentor assistance with any clarifying questions about expectations for performance. Limits for PLA credit which may be earned are 12 credits at the undergraduate level and 9 credits at the graduate level.

**4. The determination of credit awards and competence levels are made by appropriate subject matter and credentialing experts.**

Subject matter expert faculty who teach and/or oversee courses for which students seek PLA credit design and evaluate all assessments used to demonstrate competence. Faculty partner with the Assistant Vice-Provost for Assessment and PLA Coordinator to review all assessments and evaluate student submissions.

**5. Assessment advances the broader purpose of equity and access for diverse individuals and groups.**

PLA is available to the breadth of students at the university at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. PLA costs are based on a periodic review of assessment costs for faculty expertise at other institutions and are kept accessible to students. Current cost for PLA assessment is \$130 per course.

**6. Institutions proactively provide guidance and support for learners' full engagement in the assessment process.**

DU's PLA process includes a thorough review of the student's experience, approval to pursue PLA from a subject matter expert (SME) faculty, assignment of a SME mentor, and communication with the student, his/her academic advisor, and other DU staff members about the support available for completion of PLAs.

**7. Assessment policies and procedures are the result of inclusive deliberation and are shared with all constituencies.**

PLA policies and procedures are overseen by the Assistant Vice-Provost for Assessment who coordinates review of these as needed by Department Chairpersons and the University's Curriculum Committee (UCC). Results of such review are communicated out through the UCC members who represent various departments within the university including academics, admissions, advising, financial aid, marketing, the Library, and the Registrar's Office. UCC notes are also distributed.

**8. Fees charged for assessment are based on the services performed in the process rather than the credit awarded.**

PLA fees are a direct pass-through charge from student fee to faculty SME stipend for faculty design, delivery, and credit determination of assessments as well as mentoring and feedback provided to students through the process.

**9. All practitioners involved in the assessment process pursue and receive adequate training and continuing professional development for the functions they perform.**

The Assistant Vice-Provost for Assessment is CAEL Certified in Prior Learning Assessment and provides onboarding training to all new faculty PLA assessors. The Assistant Vice-provost also reviews all PLAs submitted and participates in scheduled student PLA defense sessions.

**10. Assessment programs are regularly monitored, evaluated and revised to respond to institutional and learner needs.**

The PLA process is periodically reviewed by the University Curriculum Committee and Graduate Council. Changes to policy or process must be approved by these bodies.