PLA with a Purpose

Amy Sherman
CAEL
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Council for Adult and Experiential Learning

A 501(c)(3) non-profit, international organization with nearly 40 years of lifelong learning experience

National leader in PLA best practices, research, and writing

Dedicated to removing barriers to adult learning

Recognized by regional accrediting bodies
Ensuring PLA Quality

- Quality Assurance Principles

Source:

Graduation rates are 2 ½ times higher for students with PLA credit.
Credit Accumulation,
No Degree Earners

- Did not earn PLA credit (n=23,101)
- Did earn PLA credit (n=1,800)

Earned fewer than 10% of credits for degree
- Did not earn PLA credit: 20%
- Did earn PLA credit: 1% 

Earned 10-19% of credits needed
- Did not earn PLA credit: 12%
- Did earn PLA credit: 2%

Earned 20-39% of credits needed
- Did not earn PLA credit: 16%
- Did earn PLA credit: 7%

Earned 40-59% of credits needed
- Did not earn PLA credit: 13%
- Did earn PLA credit: 16%

Earned 60-79% of credits needed
- Did not earn PLA credit: 18%
- Did earn PLA credit: 9%

Earned 80% or more of credits needed
- Did not earn PLA credit: 56%
- Did earn PLA credit: 22%
Time Saver: Time to Degree

Months to Bachelor's Degree

- No PLA Credit (n=5,342) - 39.7 months
- 1-6 PLA credits (n=860) - 37.2 months
- 7-12 PLA credits (n=782) - 36.1 months
- 13-24 PLA credits (n=1,170) - 33.1 months
- 25-36 PLA credits (n=668) - 34.5 months
- 37-48 PLA credits (n=161) - 35.8 months
- 49 or more PLA credits (n=219) - 29.6 months
An adult student who earns 15 credits from PLA applied to a degree saves $1,605 to $6,000 on tuition costs.
LearningCounts.org
Overview of LearningCounts.org

- Free PLA College Credit Predictor
- Complimentary student guidance on all forms of PLA
- Courses to teach students how to discover their own college-level learning and build a portfolio online
- One portfolio per subject area, 1-12 credit hours can be requested per portfolio. Portfolio Assessment Fee: $250
Overview (cont.)

- Portfolios are routed electronically to CAEL-trained faculty assessors with appropriate subject matter expertise.
- Students find out within 2 weeks if credit is recommended or denied.
- Credits are transcribed on a CAEL/NCCRS Transcript or directly by LearningCounts.org Partner colleges and universities.
Some of the other colleges and universities working with us:

- Loyola University Chicago
- Tennessee State University
- Saint Leo University
- Northern Arizona University
- Widener University
- Indiana Tech
- Illinois Central College
- Southwestern State University
- Bismarck State College
- University of Wisconsin River Falls
- Providence College
- Valdosta State University
- University of Maryland University College
- CAF
Portfolio credits awarded

- Liberal Arts: 24%
- Business/Human Resources: 32%
- Information Technology: 12%
- Liberal Arts: 24%
- Finance: 11%
- Communication: 11%
- Criminal Justice: 4%
- Vocational: 6%
Impacting Veterans through LearningCounts.org

“This was a great experience for me, saving thousands of dollars and a year of school.”

-Jason Wolfe (2013)
Examples of “System” Approaches to PLA

- Tennessee
- Pennsylvania
- Indiana
- Minnesota
Ensuring that PLA has purpose

✓ When are students eligible for PLA?
✓ Does financial aid cover it?
✓ Can we assure faculty is trained?
✓ Who accepts PLA credits within a college?
✓ Are PLA credits accepted in transfer?
✓ Will PLA credits within associate degrees transfer to 4-year colleges and universities?
✓ Do PLA credits count toward Gen Ed/Major Requirements?
✓ How will the credits appear on the transcript? Block credit, course match credits, or competencies? *Can they be discriminated against?*