

STUDENT PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK

Updated
Fall 2022

CHRIST ABOVE ALL
BRYAN COLLEGE

Online



Purpose

Bryan College offers non-traditional undergraduate learners an opportunity to earn elective credit for qualifying college-level learning experiences through completing the Portfolio Development Workshop, then submitting a Portfolio petitioning for Credit for Prior Learning (CPL). The purpose of this handbook is to provide a foundation for understanding CPL, developing the Portfolio, and completing the assessment process. The CPL program at Bryan College is aligned with the ten standards established by Council for Adult & Experiential Learning for the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) process and revised for clarification during 2017.

Parameters

Undergraduate students seeking a bachelor's degree through the Bryan College Online programs are eligible to seek elective credits through the CPL program. You may not earn credit for any general education or core program courses through CPL, including those for specialization options. A total of 24 hours may be earned through the Portfolio; however, a maximum of 31 hours may be earned through a combination of Prior Learning Assessment including the CPL Portfolio, Military Training, and Credit by Examination. **Credit for Prior Learning is only awarded for college-level learning, not for experience.**

You must be enrolled in or have successfully completed the GS 110 Portfolio Development Workshop before attempting to submit a portfolio. You are highly encouraged to wait until you are mostly complete with your degree program, prior to enrolling in the course and beginning the CPL process. This is because CPL hours are not eligible to be transferred to other institutions should you wish to finish your program elsewhere.

Parameters Continued

- You only have one calendar year from the time you complete the GS 110 workshop to submit and complete the assessment process.
- You *must* maintain continuous enrollment to submit a portfolio once you've completed the workshop or forfeit the opportunity.
- Due dates based on your anticipated degree conferral date are as follows:

Degree Conferral Month	Portfolio Due Date (1st Submission)	Revised Portfolio Due Date
May	March 1st	March 15th
August	July 1st	July 15th
December	October 1st	October 15th

Remember, you have 1 year from completion of the workshop to submit so if you completed the course early in your academic journey, you must submit at whatever date is closest to 1 year from when the workshop ended.



DEFINITIONS

01 Prior Learning

Prior Learning is learning that has been acquired through non-traditional means such as experienced-based learning, career training, self-study, application, or more. Examples may include learning acquired from:

- work and life experiences
- community & volunteer extension courses
- civic
- community & volunteer work
- participation in informal courses
- in-service training sponsored by associations, businesses, government & industry.

03 Assessment

The evaluation of knowledge acquisition. For the purposes of CPL, the assessment process is an objective, anonymous evaluation completed by a credentialed faculty member to determine if the documentation presented in the Portfolio demonstrates adequate competency of the learning objectives for the college course you are requesting credit for.

02 College-Level Learning

College-level learning indicates you have acquired knowledge of a higher-academic level beyond the secondary (high-school) level, understand the abstract concepts or theories behind specific principles, and are able to or have successfully applied these in a variety of opportunities.

04 Portfolio

The CPL Portfolio is a collection of documents used to petition for college credit for a specific course(s) for which you have demonstrated competency of. This document includes a Portfolio Proposal form, unofficial transcripts, updated graduation plan, resume, learning table, and one or a combination of items specific to the credit request. The credit request items are either a Technical & Professional worksheet with accompanying Learning Narrative and supporting documentation such as a certificate or a Kolb Essay.

05 GS110 Portfolio Development Workshop

You will enroll in a 2-credit hour elective with the above title. During this course, you will explore your learning styles, identify areas of potential credit-worthy learning experiences, develop an understanding of competencies as well as learning outcomes, and begin developing the required elements for your Final CPL Portfolio. This course is 8 weeks in length and requires approximately 10-12 hours per week which includes reading assignments and supplemental materials, discussion forums, lecture videos, written assignments, and quizzes. The Director of Prior Learning facilitates this course and will work with you on an individual basis after the course is completed to finish the portfolio development and facilitates the assessment process. The course grade is pass/fail; however, you are required to earn a minimum of 700 points in the workshop along with submit the sample portfolio to earn a "pass" grade. This course does not contribute to your cumulative GPA calculation.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is Prior Learning Important?

The CPL portfolio development and assessment process recognizes the value of prior or experiential non-traditional learning and translates that learning into academic credit. As a non-traditional learner, much of your personal and professional development occurs outside the traditional academic classroom. Through the development of your CPL portfolio, you have an opportunity to earn college credit in areas of learning that may not be offered as courses through the institution.

What are the benefits of developing a CPL portfolio?

In Experience Counts, Dr. Harriet Cabell gives six reasons for developing a CPL portfolio as it may:

- Shorten the time needed to earn a certificate or degree.
- Identify what a person knows and can do.
- Be a part of a course in life, work, or degree planning.
- Provide an opportunity for self-assessment in personal, as well as career development.
- Provide a basis for future planning.
- Provide a document from which subject matter evaluators or specialists can determine academic credit.

Prior learning credit also represents substantial cost savings compared to course credit earned through taking classes. Portfolio assessment fees are approximately a third of the cost of tuition per credit hour—please refer to the current academic catalog or verify with Financial Services the current assessment fee. Please note fees are assessed regardless of the credit earned.

Your final CPL portfolio can become a tool that you find useful in navigating future career, personal, and educational transitions.



Frequently Asked Questions Continued



How do I start on my CPL portfolio?

First, you must be enrolled as a bachelor's level student in Bryan College Online. Once enrolled, your academic advisor will review your official college transcripts and determine the remaining course hour needs. You will be informed of the requirements already met and what requirements are needed to complete your degree.

Next, you must enroll in GS 110, the Portfolio Workshop online in which the entire CPL portfolio development process is discussed in depth. Through this workshop, you can determine what credit may be earned through experiential learning, and how your CPL portfolio should be assembled.

Before beginning the CPL portfolio process, you must:

- Make sure all your college transcripts have been submitted to Bryan College. Include credits from any time period and from any school (even if that school is no longer open).
- Talk with your advisor about military training that was accepted toward your degree. You must have an AARTS or SMARTS transcript sent directly to the Registrar or present a copy of your DD214 or DD295. *All military transcripts should be submitted during the admissions process.*
- If you have taken examinations for college credit, submit official copies of your scores to the Registrar's Office.
- If you are planning to take examinations, review the College Catalog to make sure you know what testing is accepted and submit a Petition for Off-Campus credit to verify your eligibility with your advisor prior to taking these exams.

These essential first steps ensure that program requirements are met, there is no duplication of credit, and that all appropriate experiential learning options have been considered.

How much time does it take?

Most students underestimate the time it will take them to develop a CPL portfolio. The amount of time needed to complete your portfolio depends on how well you write, how many credits you request, and how difficult it is for you to obtain the needed documentation.

What is the assessment process?

Once you have developed your final CPL Portfolio, you will submit it electronically to the Director of Prior Learning. This individual will review your Portfolio to recommend revisions prior to forwarding it to evaluation. This initial unofficial evaluation may take up to 1 week. Once the Director notifies you of necessary revisions, you will then have 2 weeks to complete these and resubmit. The unofficial evaluation is repeated until the portfolio is deemed ready for evaluation.

Once the Portfolio is forward for the official evaluation, the anonymous faculty evaluators will have up to 2 weeks to review, provide feedback, and decide on the Portfolio.

If the Portfolio is approved, the Director:

- Notifies the student
- Provides the feedback from the evaluators
- Submits notice for the assessment fees to be charged
- Submits appropriate documentation for the credits to be posted to your transcript.

If the portfolio is rejected, you have one opportunity to revise and return for a second evaluation at no additional cost.

Should the portfolio be approved at the second review, the aforementioned process is followed, however, if it is not, the Director submits the appropriate paperwork for the assessment fees and provides the necessary feedback explaining the results.

The evaluators utilize an electronic rubric to evaluate the portfolio as seen below:

T&P		Kolb Essay		Overall Portfolio	
Rate the following portfolio elements based on the scale below. Please note the total before moving on to the next section.		Please rate the essay on the following categories, please note the total before moving on to the next section.		Overall Portfolio *	
Learning Narrative *		Concrete Experience		1 2 3 4 5	
Poor <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5 Superior		Poor <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5 Superior		Poor <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Superior	
T&P Course Appropriateness *		Observations/ Reflections		T&P Credit: Students must score at least 50% or 10 points for the T&P credit to be approved for the full amount. Students scoring less than 10 points may be eligible for partial credit—the amount is at the evaluator's discretion. If returning for revision, please mark credit awarded as TBD and provide further information in the comments section.	
Poor <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5 Superior		Poor <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5 Superior		Total Points from T&P *	
T&P Supporting Documentation *		Concepts/Generalizations		Your answer <input type="text"/>	
Poor <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5 Superior		Poor <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5 Superior		Kolb Essay Credit: Students must score at least 80% or 20 points for the Kolb credit to be approved for the full amount. Students scoring less than 20 points may be eligible for partial credit—the amount is at the evaluator's discretion. If returning for revision, please mark credit awarded as TBD and provide further information in the comments section.	
Please note the total from the above before moving on to the next section.		Implications to New Situations		Total Points from Kolb Essay *	
		Poor <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5 Superior		Your answer <input type="text"/>	
		General Characteristics			
		Poor <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5 Superior			

Should I develop a CPL Portfolio?

Below is a list of questions that will help you determine if the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio is the right option for you. As you are exploring the advantages and challenges associated with developing a CPL portfolio, discuss all your options with your advisor as well as the Director for Prior Learning. Each question is followed by information that may be helpful as you carefully consider the portfolio process.

Can you write about your learning experiences in a way that demonstrates the concepts, skills, and competencies you have acquired?

YES NO

Credit is given for learning you acquired through your prior experiences, with emphasis on the concepts, skills, and knowledge that reflect college-level credit.

Can work, training, and life experience be verified by others?

YES NO

Documentation may be needed to verify the completion of as well as explain the level of involvement and learning. Usually the more distant the experience, the more difficult it is to document.

Are individual work experiences at least 10 months in duration?

YES NO

In general, work experiences of less than 10 months will not receive credit unless the evaluators can logically combine them with other work and/or training experiences. This is based solely on non-traditional learning experiences and does not apply to appropriate internship experiences that traditional students may elect to complete outside of degree requirements.

Check each documentation type the following for training experiences.

- Content of the training
- Proof of completion
- Method of evaluation of learning (if needed)

Questionnaire Continued

Do key life experiences extend across several years?

YES NO

For life experiences, one-time events of short duration do not equate to college credit that would typically be earned through an academic program.

Have learning experiences been college-level?

YES NO

In general, experiences that warrant college credit reflect relatively complex activities and substantial analytical skills and judgments.

Is the learning different from learning acquired in the classes on your college transcript?

YES NO

Prior Learning credits must not duplicate learning already acquired from college classes.

Even if you answered no on some of these items, it does not indicate that CPL will be impossible. It may be that you haven't considered some experiences that can be used for credit! Discuss with the Director of Prior Learning before making any final decisions!

GENERAL PORTFOLIO CONTENT

After determining you would benefit from the CPL program, begin collecting any documentation that would support your learning experiences. This documentation will be the evidence that you present for each section of your CPL portfolio. Direct documentation (examples on the right) offers the strongest support of the learning you describe in your CPL portfolio.

However, there are some indirect options (a few are listed below on the right) if you cannot obtain direct documentation. Review your documentation with the Director of Prior Learning.

Direct (Product of your work).

- Licenses
- Certificates
- Newspaper or magazine articles
- Descriptions of Training Courses
- Commendations
- Event Programs
- Supervisor Letters

Indirect (About your work).

- Personnel policies
- Drawings
- Short stories
- Computer programs
- Brochures
- Music compositions
- Case Studies
- Research reports
- Demonstration (video)
- Models
- Diagrams
- Maps
- Personal Journals
- Testimony

CREDIT THROUGH TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

For the non-traditional student, learning has often taken place through workshops, seminars, institutes, continuing education programs, and unaccredited college courses for which no academic credit has previously been granted. This learning is verified through official documentation of training in a particular area of learning. Supporting documentation may include:

- Copies of certificates of completion for training programs
- Original licenses or diplomas
- Seminar completion awards
- Examples of projects or presentations
- Letters of verification.

Through completion of a technical training worksheet, a written self-assessment called a Learning Narrative, and supporting documentation, credit may be earned through this method.

Remember to evaluate whether this constitutes college-level learning—many organizations require annual training that is basic in nature and does not require any higher-level thinking to complete. It's also important to note that prior-learning especially college-level learning, is not about “seat-time” but rather the practical application of skills, concepts, etc. after the seminar, conference, etc. have taken place.

Technical and Professional Training Worksheet

T&P

This document outlines the training that took place and where it was held. It specifies the learning objectives met. One worksheet will be completed for course requested through this method of CPL.

Learning Narrative

You will complete one Learning Narrative for each experience you are presenting for evaluation for credit. For example, if you worked in manufacturing for 20 years, but in several positions, you will write one narrative explaining your progression and learning throughout the time period. Be sure to include background for each area of learning for which you are requesting credit.

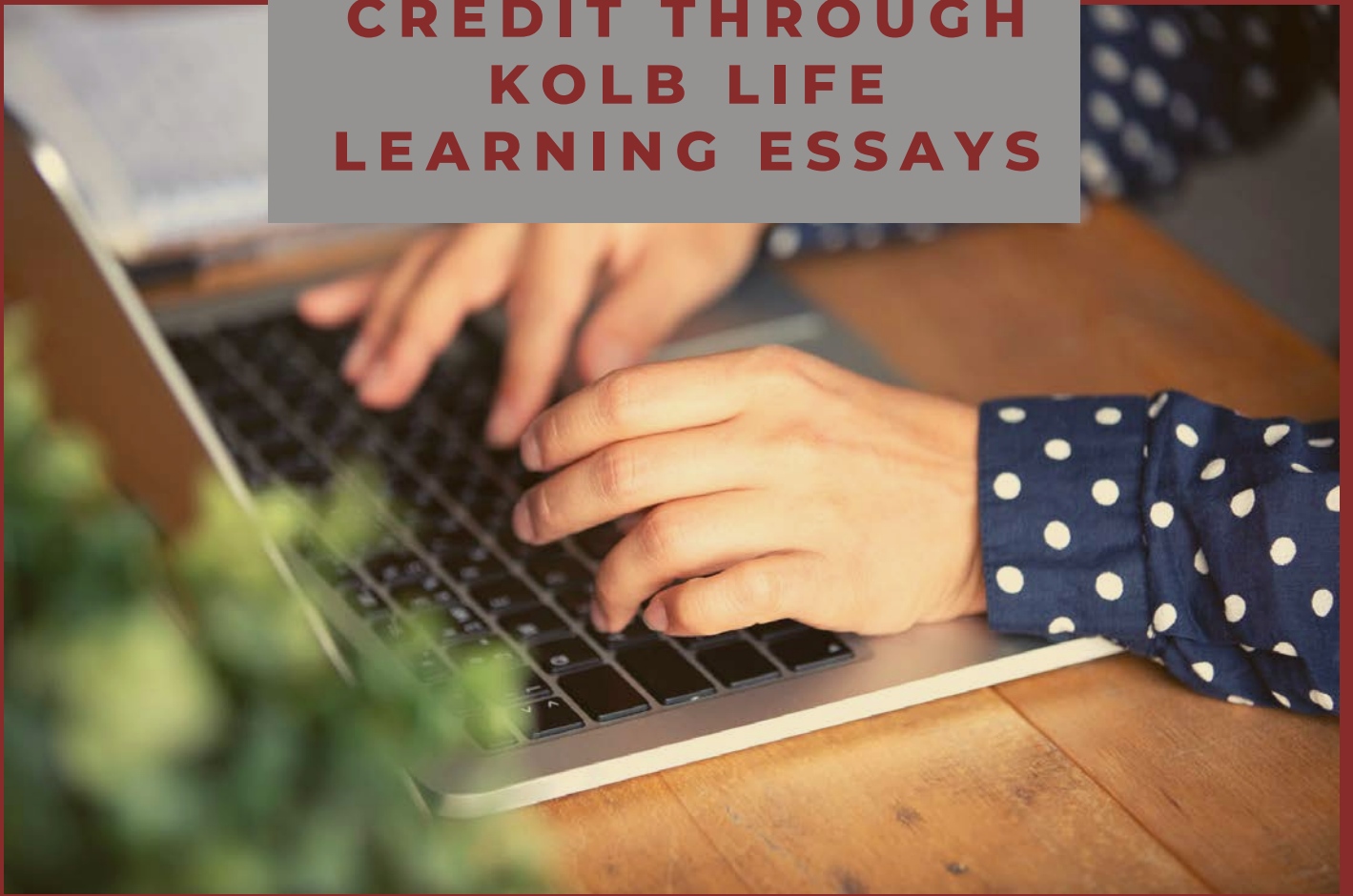
LN

Supporting Documentation

Docs

Having the proper documentation for your learning experience is crucial to earning credit. It is important to remember that proper documentation is official and clearly indicates the specific training completed.

CREDIT THROUGH KOLB LIFE LEARNING ESSAYS

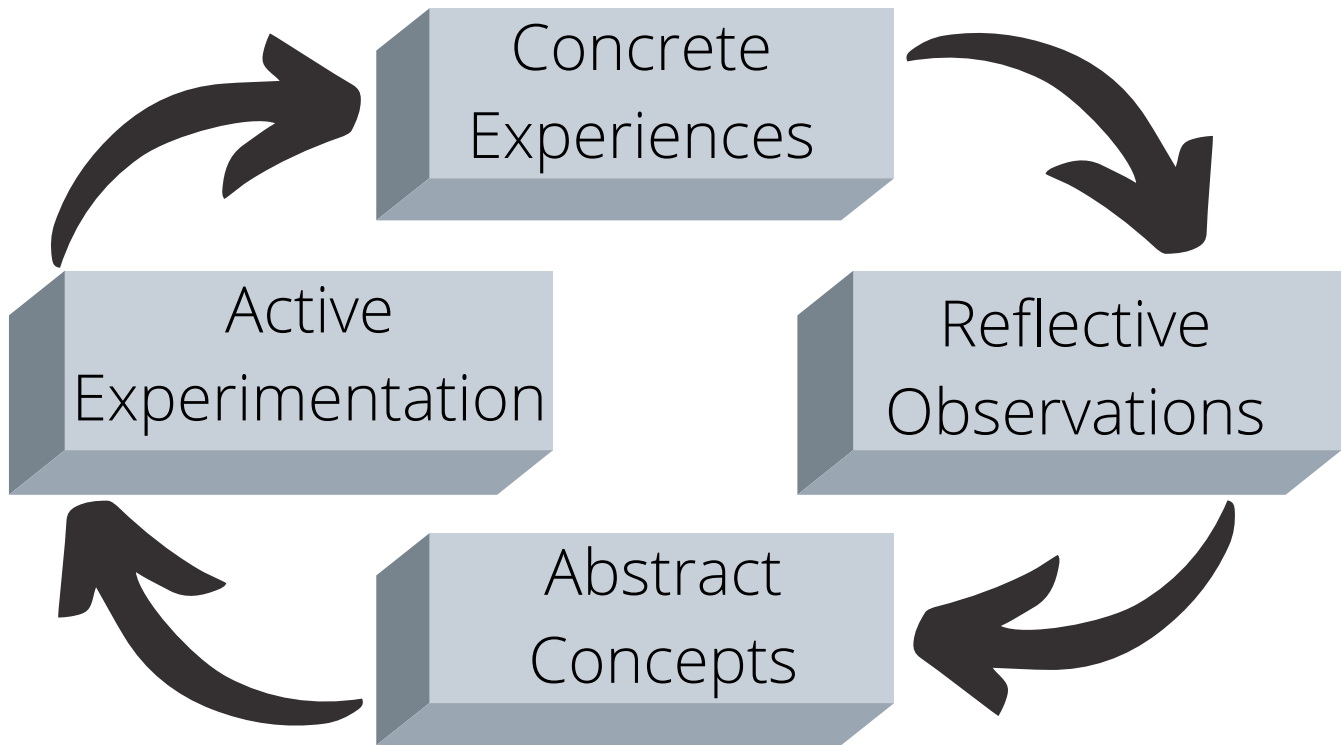


A Kolb Life Learning Essay allows a student to present prior learning which has taken place outside of the traditional classroom setting or other structured learning environment and where no academic credit was offered. The experiential learning must be presented in a way that shows adequate conceptual knowledge and life application of the subject. In these essays, you are expected to demonstrate to the CPL portfolio evaluators (subject matter experts) that you have mastered certain content and/or skills related to the topic that is equivalent to what would be learned in a formal college classroom environment.

In the evaluation of these essays, subject matter experts consider the level of technical skill and factual knowledge the paper demonstrates. In addition, the evaluator looks for an ability to understand, summarize, analyze, and synthesize those skills or knowledge. The essay should show evidence that the student can draw conclusions about basic principles and apply them in new situations. The value of credit awarded will vary and is contingent upon the depth and breadth of a student's knowledge, understanding, and ability to articulate relevant learning outcomes.

Your Kolb Essay should be written in the first person and should build upon phrases such as "I have learned" or "I have discovered." Examples and illustrations should be used to support the principles and further identify the learning outcomes. The quality of writing within these essays is expected to be college-level: vocabulary, organization, grammar, and mechanics are important components of acceptable essays. Each essay will be patterned after David Kolb's model of experiential learning: a diagram of the model is included for your review.

KOLB'S MODEL OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING



Our assessors have found that essays that prove college-level learning equivalent to a 3-semester hour course typically exceed 10 pages.

How to Follow Kolb's Model

In analyzing your move from a novice to an expert in your field, you will find it to be a developmental process. Perhaps through a work or life experience, you learned something serendipitously. You thought about what you learned from that experience and decided you wanted to know more. Your intent was to improve or to gain a level of expertise. Your learning became more purposeful:

- You set goals
- Analyzed patterns
- Actively experimented

An important component of the CPL portfolio development is your identification and documentation of this developmental learning process. The essay should follow the format presented in the following pages. You must include all section headings provided.

Title Page

Include the equivalent course name, number, and course description for each essay.

Concrete Experiences

Identify and describe the learning experience in paragraph form: the environment, your role, and your actions. Answering questions similar to these might help in developing your explanation of the concrete experience:

- What did you do?
- For how long did you participate?
- Who else was involved in the activity?
- What were your goals and objectives?
- What techniques, methods, or procedures did you use?

Reflective Observation

Reflect on your learning experience in paragraph form. Answering questions similar to these might help in developing your reflection of this experience:

- What worked or didn't work?
- Did you notice any patterns in your learning?
- What was important, significant, different, or unique?
- What relationships have you noticed?
- What can you say in retrospect?

Abstract Concepts

This section should contain an explanation, in your own words, of key concepts you have learned, and which are included in the course description of the course to which you are equating your learning. Most of your essay should be contained in this section and utilizing appropriate academic references is helpful in demonstrating your competency in the discipline. Identify the knowledge you gained and its uses. Answering questions similar to these might help in developing your explanation of what you learned:

- What are the theories, rules, principles, or insights resulting from your reflection?
- Can you explain why these theories, rules, principles, or laws occur or transpire, or why certain rules or principles may not always work?

Active Experimentation

Analyze possible applications. This should contain the second highest amount of content for the essay. Answering questions similar to these might help in developing your explanation of the implications of your learning:

- How have you tested your learning?
- Is your knowledge relevant or significant to other situations?
- How have you applied it in other situations?
- What knowledge would be useful in a new setting?
- What results could you imply and why?



PORTFOLIO EVALUATION CRITERIA

When evaluating a CPL portfolio, the subject matter expert will assess:

- Current skills and knowledge.
- Applicability of skills and knowledge to circumstances outside the specific job or context in which it was learned.
- Learning that includes major principles applying to a given field.
- Familiarity with current trends and assertions.
- Knowledge that can be measured and evaluated.
- Overall writing skills.

Academic credit is earned for clearly identified college-level learning that meets the above and is matched to an appropriate course.

Poor writing will result in a negative assessment of your CPL portfolio. You must demonstrate college-level writing skills for college-level credit. **Proofread, revise, and edit.** Critique your writing for organization, clarity, completeness, and technical accuracy.

Academic credit may be denied for the following reasons:

- Demonstrated learning is not college-level.
- Inadequate evidence of learning.
- Poorly written narrative:
 - brevity
 - grammar
 - vocabulary
- Sources of knowledge are unclear.
- Lack of breadth of knowledge.
- Inappropriate match of knowledge with the subject area.
- Authenticity of direct or indirect evidence is questioned.





FINAL CPL PORTFOLIO CONTENTS

You will submit your final CPL portfolio to the Director of Prior Learning in one .doc or .pdf file. Each section should be clearly indicated with a bold heading. All pages should be numbered. All original writing should be double-spaced, in 12-point font, and following the current edition of the APA style guide. Your CPL portfolio should contain the following:

- Title Page
- Table of contents (include page numbers, pattern after this listing)
- Section I: Introduction (this is a section title, not a written introduction)
 - Proposal
 - Copy of advisor transcripts (available in MyBryan under Course History)
 - Updated Copy of your Graduation Plan
 - Resume
 - Learning Table
- Section II: Technical and Professional Training
 - Learning Narratives for Technical and Professional Training*
 - Technical and Professional Training Worksheet *
 - Documentation*
- Section III: Kolb Life Learning Essays
 - Essay including title page and reference page**

An example portfolio is available to students during the GS110 Portfolio Development Workshop course.

*Repeat Learning Narrative, Technical and Professional Training Worksheet, and documentation as needed for each topic of training.

**If utilizing more than one essay, you will need to include title pages and reference pages for each.