

Credit for Prior Learning Subcommittee EAC Report

BACKGROUND

The Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) committee is an EAC subcommittee formed at the request of the EAC in the Fall of 2005. It is a fact finding subcommittee charged to:

1. Identify current PCC practices for CPL
2. Evaluate the current practices at PCC for effectiveness and answer these questions: Should the college retain the method? Are improvements needed to the method? What are the subcommittee's recommended improvements? (This was added to the committee's charge on March 12, 2007).
3. Research what other colleges offer to students as credit for prior learning (CPL) options, and make recommendations to the EAC based on this research.
4. Based on the research evaluate additional methods for awarding credit, describe the methods, explain why PCC should consider adopting the methods and outline the cost impacts. (This was modified on March 12, 2007).

DEFINITION OF CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING

Credit for Prior Learning is an assessment process that determines the individual's non-college or experience-based college-level learning attained outside the sponsorship of accredited postsecondary education institutions to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards for entry to, and/or partial or total completion of, a qualification. It may include learning acquired from work and life experiences; correspondence and volunteer work; and participation in informal courses and in-service training sponsored by associations, business, government and industry.

COMMITTEE WORK TO-DATE

In the first year, the subcommittee met on a monthly basis to review current policy and identify current practices at PCC. The subcommittee discussed the use of CPL at the college, the efficiency of the current system and policies, the awareness of the college's CPL options and opportunities to strengthen the current program. Additionally, the subcommittee members researched the Credit for Prior Learning opportunities offered by 17 other community colleges across the nation. Based on the findings of the research at other colleges and the findings of the internal research, the subcommittee wrote a preliminary report and presented it to the EAC on November 15, 2006 for feedback, reactions, and redirection.

The EAC provided the subcommittee with comments, feedback and questions about the preliminary recommendations of the committee in the draft report. It was agreed that the

committee Chairs would meet with the EAC Chair and the Vice President of Student and Academic Affairs to discuss next steps for the subcommittee.

A meeting was held on March 12, 2007 to provide additional guidance and structure to the work of the subcommittee. Since that time, the subcommittee has conducted a survey of the SACs to ascertain a variety of information (survey results are reviewed below) about current CPL practices at PCC. The subcommittee has met with the CPL Director at Marylhurst to learn more about their extensive and well regarded program. A Co-Chair of the subcommittee met with the EAC leaders to discuss the progress and direction of the subcommittee. Finally, the subcommittee developed 4 options for the EAC to review and make recommendations on how the college should proceed with the CPL program.

IDENTIFY CURRENT PRACTICES OF CPL AT PCC

PCC currently has the following options available for non-traditional credit:

Military Service Credit: PCC equivalencies can be granted for military training after careful evaluation of training records and information provided in the “Guide to the Educational Experiences in the Armed Services.” Block credit is not granted and only the subject areas taught by PCC are considered.

Military Service Physical Education Credit: Two (2) hours of credit can be granted for military experience. A copy of the DD 214 is required. Applications should be made on the non-traditional credit form and approved by the Graduation Office.

Advanced Placement: Advanced placement scores should be sent to Student Records for evaluation.

College Level Entrance Examination Program (CLEP): Students enrolled at PCC may receive credit from certain college courses by submitting official scores from the CLEP. School policies currently allow credits to be granted based on scores of 500 and above for the Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences general exams. Credits earned in this manner will be recorded on the student’s transcript and will count toward graduation. Application is made on the non-traditional credit form and processed through the Graduation Office.

Formal Coursework/Non Accredited Institutions: Credit granted for course work taken at training sites other than those issued in the “Transfer Credit Practices Directory.” Examples include: hospitals, banks, corporations, business schools, etc. Students must furnish detailed training records, course outlines, and whenever possible, transcripts. Individual departments will evaluate and assign PCC equivalencies. A maximum of 45 credit hours can be assigned through this process. Only those subject areas taught by PCC will be considered.

Course Challenge: Some courses offered at PCC may be challenged. This allows a student to receive credit by taking a specialized examination. Challenged course work will not help meet the necessary residency requirement. Students who wish to challenge a course must:

1. Request a challenge from the instructor or department chair.
2. Complete the challenge form furnished by the Business Office and pay a \$10 non-refundable deposit.
3. Take the examination
4. If the exam is completed successfully, return to the Business Office to pay the balance of the full tuition price.
5. If the exam is failed, the \$10 fee is forfeited.

Waivers: While not strictly speaking a form of credit for prior learning, current practice within some programs allows for certain certificate or degree requirements to be “waived” in lieu of equivalent learning through work-based or other experience. An example would be waiver of cooperative education credits based on evidence of related work-experience.

EVALUATE THE CURRENT PRACTICES AT PCC FOR EFFECTIVENESS AND ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS: SHOULD THE COLLEGE RETAIN THE METHOD? ARE IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED TO THE METHOD? WHAT ARE THE SUBCOMMITTEE’S RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS?

The subcommittee used two methods to evaluate the current practices at PCC for effectiveness:

1. Survey of the SACs
2. Internal research conducted by subcommittee members

Results of Survey of the SACs

In the Fall of 2007 all of the SAC Chairs were sent a survey, via e-mail by the Vice President of Student and Academic Affairs. They were given approximately one month to respond. 37 SACs responded to the survey. Full survey results can be seen in *Exhibit A*.

A summary of the SAC Chairs’ responses to the eight survey questions follows:

- 1.) Which SAC are you representing in this Credit for Prior Learning survey?**
 - 37 SACs responded including: Music, Humanities, Nursing, Gerontology, Machine Manufacturing, Architectural Design and Drafting, Mathematics, etc.
- 2.) Do you offer any CPL (they were asked to check all that applied from PCC’s current options)?**

- 39% of responding SACs said they do not offer any CPL.
- 39% stated they used Challenge Exams.
- 18% stated they used non-traditional credit.
- 18% stated they used Advanced Placement.
- 18% stated they used another type of CPL than listed on the survey—this included: waivers for prior work in the field, portfolio review, and state or other agency requirements for a field.
- 8% stated they used Military Training.
- 3% stated they used CLEP.

3.) For each item you checked in question 2, do you feel that it was an effective approach to CPL?

- 76% of the respondents stated that they felt the methods they were using were effective.
- 24% gave qualified answers including that the SAC offers CPL but it has never been used by students as an option or that it is only effective for certain introductory or other specific classes.

4.) If you checked none in question 2, why doesn't your SAC accept CPL?

- Responses to this question were varied. Common themes that emerged were: the increased workload for faculty; students not requesting CPL for any of the SACs' classes; CPL not being a useful tool because certain fields are so dynamic and ever-changing and standards are set by governing bodies.

5.) If your SAC uses CPL, how many students have attempted to earn credit in the past year?

- 39% responded that 0-5 students had been served through CPL this past year.
- 30% responded that 6-20 students had been served through CPL this past year.
- 9% responded that over 20 students had been served through CPL this past year.
- Several respondents noted that there is no tracking mechanism in place to know how many students have been served.

6.) Do you feel the methods your SAC is using are effective?

- Similar to question number three, 76% felt that the methods they are using are effective. Several stated they had no way to measure success—and one noted that they were always looking for ways to improve.

7.) If PCC moves forward with CPL, what role do you envision for your discipline in the effort to establish or improve CPL?

- 35% responded that they would envision little to no role for their SACs in improving the CPL program at the college.

- 26% responded that they could see a role for their SAC in improving the CPL program at the college.
- 24% responded that they were not sure how their SAC might be involved in improving the CPL program at the college.
- 9% responded that the increased workload would be problematic.
- 6% responded with various other answers.

8.) Are there additional methods that you are aware of to assess CPL?

- 76% responded that they were not aware of any other methods to assess CPL or that their SACs would not be interested in other CPL methods.
- 24% responded that they knew of other methods that might be of use to their students and SACs including: outcomes met through non-accredited institutions, portfolios, professional associations, and mentorships programs.

Subcommittee’s Review of the Survey and Effectiveness of the Current Methods:

Based on the results of the survey, the subcommittee determined that:

- Those SACs that are currently offering CPL generally feel that the current options available to them are working well for their SACs and are effective.
- About a quarter of the SACs see a possible need for improving CPL offerings for students and another quarter were not sure how they might be able to improve their CPL offerings.
- There is no mechanism within the college to track the need and success of students who currently use CPL methods.
- There is a concern about an increase in faculty workload to administer more CPL.

Results of the Internal Research Conducted by the Subcommittee

The subcommittee has spent over two years asking questions of faculty, staff and the EAC about the current PCC CPL program. Additionally the subcommittee surveyed 17 other community colleges across the nation to ascertain what CPL methods individual colleges offered and how their programs are administered. The surveyed colleges were also asked what made their programs successful and what opportunities they saw for improvements. A complete listing of the other community colleges surveyed can be found in *Exhibit B*.

General Findings of the PCC Internal Research

This research was not conducted by a formal survey but gathered through multiple sources and individuals at the college by subcommittee members.

- There is a lack of awareness about the PCC Credit for Prior Learning Program among staff, students and faculty. Subcommittee members found that a majority of people they

spoke with had very little understanding of the CPL program. This was true across all stakeholders.

- There is a lack of understanding by staff and faculty about the processes and policies of the CPL program at PCC. With recent retirements and the addition of new staff, there are many on our campuses who do not know CPL procedures and policies.
- The current PCC website contains information about the CPL program, but it is minimal and difficult to find.
- There is a concern about compensation for faculty who review and award CPL credit. This concern was raised in multiple conversations across the district.
- As noted in the SAC survey results there is widespread concern about the increased workload of faculty who take on CPL responsibilities.
- Faculty have provided feedback that they are concerned about the academic integrity of offering some forms of CPL.
- Confusion is created by having multiple offices responsible for different aspects of the CPL program—enrollment, advising, department chairs, faculty, graduation office, student records—a lack of a central point of information makes it difficult for students, staff and faculty to navigate the current system.

General Findings of the Survey of 17 Community Colleges

A full summary of the survey of the other colleges can be found in *Exhibit C*.

- 94% of the surveyed colleges provide credit by a portfolio to document non-traditional credit and experiential learning.
- 88% of the surveyed colleges provide credit by CLEP.
- 76% of the surveyed colleges provide credit by Institutional Challenge Exams.
- 71% of the surveyed colleges granted credit for non-credit classes, licenses, certifications, and professional development—often using a portfolio method.
- 70% of the surveyed colleges provide credit by Military Service.
- 41% of the surveyed colleges provide credit by AP exams.
- 41% of the surveyed colleges provide a course, either credit or non-credit, to instruct students on the development of a portfolio.
- A large majority of the colleges said their success, or failure, of their CPL program was based on their outreach and marketing to students.
- Most colleges responded that whether or not CPL credit is transferrable is based upon the receiving institution.

Subcommittee's Recommendations Based on the Internal and Other College Research

- Appropriate faculty and staff need to be trained on the current CPL program offerings, procedures and policies.

- A portfolio method should be explored further by the subcommittee.
- Additional marketing and outreach is needed for the CPL program (including a stronger Web presence).
- Workload and compensation concerns need to be explored further by the subcommittee.
- SACs are critical to the implementation of the CPL program—in whatever form.
- A class, credit or non-credit, to assist students with portfolio development should be explored further by the subcommittee.
- A central office to track, monitor, and assist students seeking all types of CPL methods should be explored further by the subcommittee.

Some of these items are addressed in the next section, and others are addressed in the options for consideration for the EAC later in the report.

BASED ON THE RESEARCH EVALUATE ADDITIONAL METHODS FOR AWARDING CREDIT, DESCRIBE THE METHODS, EXPLAIN WHY PCC SHOULD CONSIDER ADOPTING THE METHODS, AND OUTLINE THE COST IMPACTS.

Evaluation of additional methods for awarding credit

Most of the community colleges that were surveyed use the same methods that PCC is currently using for awarding CPL. The subcommittee noted that there was one exception to this finding, as noted in the previous section, 94% of the surveyed colleges also offer a portfolio as a method for students to document their previous learning. The portfolios offered students a mechanism to be awarded credit for work-based, experiential, non-credit, on-the job or professional training that led to gains in knowledge, skills and competencies that could translate into outcomes associated with specific courses.

Subcommittee members were impressed by the portfolio option and conducted further research with the surveyed colleges to find out more about their portfolio CPL method. A full summary of the portfolio research can be seen in *Exhibit C*. Additionally, subcommittee members read articles, books and research papers to learn more about using portfolios and granting credit for non-traditional learning, including standards and procedures used. Most of these resources are referenced in *Exhibit D*.

General Findings of the Subcommittee

- Using a portfolio as a method to award prior learning is not a new concept. Community colleges, universities and other educational institutions have used portfolios as a method to document learning achievements for decades.
- Progressive community colleges that recognize the change in demographics of their students, and the need to acknowledge the prior learning of adult students, are adopting a portfolio method to allow adult learners to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and

competencies gained from years of experience, on-the-job training, certificates/licensures and professional development.

- The National Council for Continuing Education and Training is strongly encouraging community colleges to adopt not just paper portfolios, but electronic portfolios that are student driven and allow employers and other institutions to see documentation of the student's skills, knowledge and competencies.
- Colleges that are using portfolios find them to be a deeply reflective and educational experience for students.
- Surveyed colleges either allowed individual departments to decide on the format of the portfolio, or had a standardized format for students to follow.
- Faculty/subject matter experts review the portfolios and award credit.
- Faculty members are generally compensated for reviewing portfolios, and at some colleges for designing challenge exams.
- A centralized point of contact within the college for portfolio development, and credit for prior learning in general, produces the best results for students, faculty and staff.
- Offering either a credit or non-credit class to help students design their portfolio is beneficial to the students and to the faculty who ultimately review the portfolios.

Why Should PCC Consider Adopting Portfolios

The subcommittee had lengthy and comprehensive discussions about the adoption of portfolios as a method to award credit for prior learning at PCC. Based on changing demographics (specifically the need to serve more adult learners); the increasing needs in a global economy for business and industry to hire qualified individuals who can demonstrate their skills, knowledge, and competencies; the competition from other colleges who offer portfolios as a method for awarding credit for prior learning; and the college's desire to provide access and affordability, the subcommittee strongly feels that the EAC should recommend the adoption of the portfolio method for awarding credit for prior learning.

The National Business Alliance stated "Employers recognize skill and certificates, not degrees, as the signal that people have skills grounded in competencies that are valued in the real world." PCC's Institutional Effectiveness Department has estimated that the 50+ bracket in our community is projected to increase by 43% by 2020. The current average age of our continuing education students is 43, with the highest proportion (33%) being in the 50+ bracket. As an educational institution that recognizes the future needs of our economy, workforce, and students, we must move quickly to adopt a form of awarding credit for prior learning that is critical to the institution, student and our regional economic success. Adults who are retraining for specific high-wage, high demand jobs should have the opportunity to demonstrate their previous learning through multiple methods at the college. Adopting a portfolio method increases student's options and places PCC in a competitive position to provide access to all of our students.

See *Exhibit E* for Cost Impact Analysis of Options 1-4.

Summary

The credit for prior learning subcommittee has dedicated a great deal of time on behalf of all the faculty, staff and students at PCC to evaluate current CPL practices at PCC, research other organizations and practices and develop 4 options for the EAC to consider for recommendation of implementation. Based on the subcommittee's research, there is a unanimous committee recommendation that option number 3 is the ideal option—one that places PCC in a position that is on par with other institutions of excellence in the credit for prior learning arena. The options are described in the following pages.

Credit for Prior Learning Options

What is CPL? Credit for Prior Learning is a system for awarding academic credit for prior learning, based on a standardized assessment process.

Prior learning can include sponsored and unsponsored learning. Sponsored learning includes preplanned learning experiences offered by a college or university, such as service learning and cooperative education. Unsponsored learning (also called non-formal learning) includes organized events or unplanned results of life or work experiences, or skills and knowledge gained through unstructured events and experiences. This proposal primarily focuses on unsponsored learning.

Several methods can be used to assess prior learning, including oral, written, and performance examinations, assessment of non-traditional credit, and portfolios. A portfolio is a collection of evidence in support of a person's claim for credit through a prior learning assessment process. Development of the portfolio can be assisted by a course to structure a standardized, step-by-step process.

Why CPL?

Credit for Prior Learning is one component of effective policies designed to meet the needs of adult learners. Adult learners (25 and older) face significant barriers to educational access, retention and success. While adult learners are becoming the norm in higher education, particularly at community colleges, college services and programs continue to be largely structured to fit the needs of the typical 18-22 year old student transitioning directly or with only a brief interruption from secondary to post-secondary education, still economically dependent on family and pursuing higher education full-time.

Over half of PCC's credit-students are 25 and older, with that age demographic projected to increase in the PCC district within the next decade or more, particularly in the 50+ age group. Non-credit 25+ student population constitutes an even larger percentage. The *Boomers Go to College* (<http://www.pcc.edu/about/commitments/aging/documents/boomer-report-033007.pdf>) report, which detailed the concerns and needs of PCC's student population 40 and older based on a Spring 2006 survey, highlighted how a credit for prior learning program would address some of the challenges confronting those students in meeting their academic and career goals. [See Institutional Effectiveness for details].

Most adult learners are financially independent, work full- or part-time, have dependents, and must juggle many responsibilities along with school. Jobs for the Future's research (See *Exhibit D*) found four consistent and powerful barriers to higher education for working adults: lack of time to pursue education, family responsibilities, the scheduling of course time and place, and the cost of educational courses.

Despite these barriers, adult learners are pursuing higher education in record numbers, while millions more are interested but unable to participate. The demand for a highly educated workforce with postsecondary skills and credentials is increasing dramatically, while over 60 percent of the US population 25 and older in 2004 had no postsecondary education. With

expected demographic, global economic and technological shifts over the next decade, the gap between qualified workers and job demands is expected to widen. Adult workers could fill that gap if provided the necessary education, including programs that would increase their persistence and completion rates.

Credit for Prior Learning is one program that, in combination with other services and supports, could streamline the education and training of these adult learners, and ensure their persistence in achieving necessary certificates and degrees.

Why a centralized CPL office?

The Credit for Prior Learning subcommittee recommends the adoption of a centralized Credit for Prior Learning office, as the best way to meet the educational needs of adult learners and to ensure high quality academic standards in the CPL process. The CPL process needs to align with the college's academic programs and outcomes, and to ensure standardized, accessible and transparent policies and procedures. A centralized office under the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs would assure attainment of these goals.

Functions of the CPL Office: The CPL office would oversee all methods of awarding CPL, and coordinate among all college services and programs through the CPL process, from enrollment through graduation. Specific functions would include:

- The setting of standards and procedures for all CPL, in coordination with involved SACs
- The publishing and dissemination of all standards and procedures to students, faculty and staff, and through all concerned college services and programs
- The training of all involved personnel
- The staffing and offering of portfolio courses to structure the CPL process
- The monitoring, tracking, data analysis and reporting of the CPL process, including credits offered and students served, internally and to accrediting bodies
- The financial management of the CPL process, including student fees, faculty review and assessment compensation, and other CPL costs

For details on the CPL process, CPL standards, principles and procedures, and the functions of a CPL office, see *Exhibit D*.

The Four Options

This section outlines 4 possible Credit for Prior Learning Options for PCC to consider.

Option 1 essentially retains and somewhat enhances the current system with more prominent web presence and additional educational training of involved faculty and staff.

Option 2 includes Option 1, adding some compensation to faculty for review and assessment processes, a portfolio concept, and articulation of outcomes, tracking, and education and training of involved faculty and staff through a resource team under the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs office.

Option 3, which the CPL subcommittee considers the ideal for PCC at this time, adds a centralized CPL office that would monitor, support and document the CPL process across the district, including a portfolio process structured through a portfolio class, and coordinate among all involved parties, with SACs retaining responsibility for portfolio reviews and disciplinary standards. Option 3 would apply only to those programs and departments that have opted into the system, and would award credit only for courses approved by the concerned SACs and to students who met the standards set by the concerned SACs.

Option 4 would mandate the CPL process to all SACs and all courses, adopting the model employed by Marylhurst University.

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3 (Ideal)	Option 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continues current non-traditional credit & waivers • Adds web presence and better advertising (internally and externally) • Adds education and training for staff and faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes Option 1 • Adds compensation for reviews • Adds tracking and outcomes • Adds portfolio based on outcomes of course being challenged • Adds district-wide standardization • Adds Resource Team to educate and train SACs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes Option 2 • Adds Office of CPL, staffed and available on all campuses • Adds centralized tracking & statistics • Adds a (credit) Portfolio class • Adds Portfolios, Oral Exams & Performance Exams as options for receiving transcribed credit • Adds published process (higher profile web presence and promotion) • Adds SAC oversight on standards • Adds PT or FT Faculty Review for CPL • Adds SACs opt into portfolio system and designation of courses eligible for CPL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes Option 3 • Adds CPL mandated for all classes [The “Marylhurst Model”]

Option 1:

- **Continues current options for non-traditional credit and waivers**
 1. **Military Service Credit** – PCC equivalencies may be granted for formal military courses after careful evaluation of transcripts, records and information provided in the “Guide to the Educational Experiences in the Armed Services,” only in the subject areas taught by PCC.
 2. **Military Service Physical Education Credit** of two (2) credits may be granted for military training with proper documentation.
 3. **Advanced Placement Program** college-level courses may receive college credit pending official copies of test results. Credit awarded varies based on scores received.
 4. **College Level Entrance Examination Program (CLEP)** official scores in math and certain other subject areas may result in credit, are recorded on the student’s transcripts and may count toward graduation.
 5. **Formal Course Work at Non-Accredited Institutions** can waive comprehensive degree and/or certificate requirements, substitute course work to meet General Education requirements, and substitute course work to meet degree or certificate requirements. Students submit a “Non-Traditional Credit Form,” pay a non-refundable \$10 fee prior to evaluation, and submit petitions to the Records Office.
 6. **Course Challenge** is allowed for some courses. Student receives credit by taking a special examination under certain conditions.
 7. **Waivers** of certificate or degree requirements can be granted for equivalent learning through work-based or other experience, on a program level.
- **Adds a web presence outlining available options and procedures**

A web page outlining options and procedures would tend to promote standardization and better inform students of their options.
- **Adds other advertising of the options, both within the college and to prospective students**

In addition to the web presence, the current options could be advertised in course schedules and through CTE programs
- **Extends training of staff and faculty**

More explicit and regular training and updating of options and procedures would be offered Academic Advisors, CTE Program Advisors, and other staff and faculty in affected programs and departments.

Option 1 Pros:

- Can be instituted with current staff
- Requires only low-cost development of web presence
- Includes training in standardized procedures for involved faculty and staff (academic advisors, CTE program advisors, and other affected program and department staff)

Option 1 Cons:

- Provides students limited opportunities for Credit for Prior Learning, through limited course substitutions, some examinations, and waivers.
- Course work evaluated from non-accredited institutions through the current system is not generally accepted to meet AAOT degree requirements
- Limited options discourage potential students with non-traditional and work-based experience, who will turn to other educational and credentialing institutions
- Increased web presence and other advertising of current options could increase the work load of faculty and staff, without appropriate compensation

Option 2

- **Includes Option 1**
- **Adds compensation for CPL evaluation and portfolio reviews**
A major concern for faculty advisors in promoting the availability of CPL and in conducting required portfolio reviews is the additional workload. Most of the surveyed colleges offering the portfolio method compensate faculty reviewers in the range of \$120 per portfolio (irrespective of the credit awarded).
- **Adds tracking and outcomes**
Current CPL practices at PCC are not systematically tracked and there are no clear guidelines and published outcomes.
- **Adds portfolio approach based on outcomes of course being challenged**
As noted in the Sub-committee report, the portfolio approach is the most widely used and is considered the best option for students.
- **Adds district-wide standardization in all programs and departments**
Since current practice is not tracked or monitored, there is no assurance of transparency and standardization across the district, which is desirable academic practice.
- **Adds a resource team to educate and train SACs**
At a minimum, the resource team would offer regular in-service training and provide a higher level of awareness and publication of accepted standards and procedures.

Option 2 Pros:

- Provides appropriate compensation to faculty and staff conducting reviews and evaluations
- Incorporates a system to track numbers of students utilizing each option and the outcomes of their petitions, including possible impact on completion rates
- Promotes district standardization of procedures and evaluation criteria, better serving students and ensuring accreditation standards
- SACs will receive education and training in the options and procedures and provide oversight of the process

Option 2 Cons:

- Places burden of tracking and assessment on program and department faculty and staff
- Lack of a centralized office diffuses responsibility and can lead to variable tracking and assessment
- Each program and department would be responsible for explaining the process and guiding each student through assessment and reporting to the Records office
- Students could face needing to visit multiple campuses and working with multiple departments and programs to accomplish all assessment procedures

Option 3

- **Incorporates Options 1 and 2** (current options, web presence and advertising, education and training of faculty and staff, compensation for reviews, promotion of standardization)
- **Adds an Office of Credit for Prior Learning, staffed and available on any campus**
- **Adds centralized tracking and statistics, compiled through the Office of CPL**
- **Adds a credit Portfolio class**
- **Adds Portfolios, Oral Exams and Performance Exams as options to receive transcribed credit**

- **Adds SACs maintaining oversight of the standards, with both full and part-time faculty conducting portfolio reviews and being properly compensated**

For all of these additions, see previous discussion of portfolios and the functions of a centralized Office of Credit for Prior Learning

- **Adds that SACs opt into the portfolio system and decide which courses are eligible for CPL**

Since the portfolio system is new for most PCC SACs and there has not been broad awareness of CPL and education concerning its benefits, its standards, and its procedures, the subcommittee recommends the implementation of a voluntary, “opt in” approach, with periodic evaluation to test the effectiveness of the system.

Option 3 Pros:

- Provides administrative support and centralized tracking, statistics, and processing
- Maintains SAC control
- Expands options for students
- Provides greater potential for students to receive actual Credit for Prior Learning (as opposed to course substitutions and waivers)
- Provides adequate compensation to faculty and staff, without adding excess burdens on programs and departments

Option 3 Cons:

- Administrative costs of maintaining a Credit for Prior Learning Center and accessibility on all campuses
- SAC control could limit CPL options for students

Option 4

- **Includes Option 3**
- **Mandates CPL for all courses**

Marylhurst University, an institution serving primarily adult learners, has for many years employed a Prior Learning Assessment model, through a centralized office, offering a credit portfolio course, and applying to all courses in all disciplines and programs. Faculty are compensated for portfolio reviews, and set the evaluation standards.

Option 4 Pros:

- Uniform, standardized and most extensive option for students to receive CPL

Option 4 Cons:

- Mandating CPL for all courses could be resisted by many SACs
While this model has been highly successful and meets the highest academic standards, the subcommittee felt that the mandated model would not be desirable as a first step for PCC, but rather that SACs should have the opportunity to learn more about CPL and its application in their program or discipline.