

# **Wright State University**

**College of Education  
and Human Services**

**Department of Leadership Studies in  
Education and Organizations**

## **PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT (PLA) HANDBOOK**

**ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP  
PROGRAM**

## OL 4025-99

### Community Based Internship – Portfolio Prior Learning Assessment

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Office Hours: By appointment. If you need to meet with me, email me to schedule an appointment.

#### Course Description of Internship (Course to be aligned with Portfolio approach)

*Students will be provided with an on-site experiential learning experience coupled with specific academic assignments in which the intern demonstrates his/her familiarity with a related scholarly literature base, while also identifying specific career/learning objectives joined with performance indicators.*

These are the required course objectives **that must be met with Portfolio process:**

Knowledge – Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of:

- \* Increase knowledge and understanding of the role leadership plays within organizations
- \* Understand the connection between leadership theory and application

Skills – Students will be able to demonstrate their ability to:

- \* Self-understanding as it relates to the work environment
- \* Critical thinking, problem solving, and effective interpersonal skills
- \* Investigation of current, real-world leadership issues
- \* Articulation and application of leadership principles in a work environment

Dispositions – Students will be able to affirm their disposition toward:

- \* Realize the importance of leadership in organizations
- \* Appreciate the role effective leadership plays in strengthening organizations

Required Text: Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z. (2012). *The Leadership Challenge: Five Practices for Becoming an Exemplary Leader* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: The Leadership Challenge.

The procedures for implementing the WSU Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) policy are contained in this document.

**Website:** A Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) website is established and monitored within the Academic Affairs website. The website will be maintained by the Assistant Vice President for University Curricular Programs, who will serve as the WSU PLA coordinator. This document and the PLA policy document will be posted to the website, as will be resources for students to easily access options for assessing prior learning.

**PLA coordinator:** The PLA coordinator will work with advisors throughout campus to help students choose their best option for assessing knowledge learned from their professional experience or other methods of instruction. The PLA coordinator will work with campus advisors, faculty, and departments to maintain updated resources and information related to PLA.

Fees for PLA awarded by internally administered portfolio assessment: The student will be charged \$150 to have a portfolio assessed the first time and an additional \$75 if they choose to submit a revised portfolio if it is resubmitted within 30 days. The fee does not guarantee receiving course credit. If course credit is awarded, there is no additional transcription fee.

Wright State University recognizes that students may acquire knowledge equivalent to that obtained through completion of courses through their professional experience or other methods of instruction. Prior knowledge may be demonstrated in three ways: standardized examinations by nationally recognized external testing organizations; examinations administered internally by Wright State departments; and portfolio assessment.

Prior learning assessment is a student-centered and faculty-driven process for awarding students college credit for demonstrated knowledge. Wright State's Prior Learning Assessment program will be administered through Wright State University Division of Academic Affairs in collaboration with the Faculty Senate.

**Eligibility:** To earn credit for prior learning, a student must be enrolled and registered at Wright State University. The student should have at least 10 years of full-time, relevant work experience. Relevance and suitability for PLA will be determined by the LDR PLA Coordinator. If less than 10 years, the OL PLA Coordinator must approve the experience equivalency exception.

**Application of Credit:** Credit for prior learning shall be applied to the undergraduate Organizational Leadership program requirements in the same manner as credits earned through the completion of the equivalent course at Wright State University. Credit will be applied for WSU course equivalents when students demonstrate mastery of OL 4025 objectives. Credit will be counted only once for the same course.

**Residency:** Credits for demonstrated knowledge earned through any prior learning method do not fulfill Wright State University residency requirements.

**Grading:** Credit awarded by prior learning assessment at Wright State University shall receive a neutral grade of "P" for Pass. Conventional letter grades will not be used. The transcript will not

indicate an unsuccessful attempt to earn credit for prior learning. A “P” grade will not affect the student’s GPA.

**Transcription:** Credit awarded for prior learning will be transcribed indicating the method of prior learning assessment used.

### **Policies for PLA Awarded by Portfolio Assessment**

Credit for prior learning can be awarded for OL 4025 equivalency through a portfolio assessment process managed by the LDR department at Wright State. Prior learning assessment by portfolio assessment will follow a course-equivalency credit model. Students demonstrate college-level learning by submitting a portfolio consisting of an organized collection of evidence that demonstrates mastery of the learning outcomes of OL 4025.

#### **Internal Portfolio Analysis**

To submit a portfolio for assessment, students must contact the OL PLA Coordinator and follow the schedule established by the department. Once the portfolio is completed, the department will notify the student of the results within thirty days. Notification will simply indicate whether credit has been awarded. The portfolio will be returned unmarked.

Students may submit a portfolio for assessment at most two times for a given course. The second portfolio **MUST BE SUBMITTED** within 30 business days of notification of the outcome of the initial submission. No eligible student can be refused the opportunity to submit a portfolio assessed for course credit.

All portfolio assessments will be completed by discipline-appropriate faculty trained in assessing portfolios for credit. Departments offering prior learning assessment by portfolio will establish rubrics to guide faculty assessment and scoring.

Fees for portfolio assessments by Wright State University Departments: Fees shall be consistently applied and will cover transcription as well as administration. These will be posted to the PLA website.

## PORTFOLIO TEAMPLATE\*

### PORTFOLIO ELEMENTS

The following items should be placed in a 3-ring binder in the order in which they are listed.

#### **I. Approved/Paid Application for Credit by Prior Learning Assessment**

#### **II Course Syllabus with Learning Outcomes for target course.**

Before you begin writing your PLA Portfolio, have the OL PLA Coordinator sign and date the Course Syllabus with Learning Outcomes as approved for this purpose.

#### **III. Title Page**

Follow current APA guidelines for your title page.

- Title will be “Prior Learning Assessment Portfolio for OL4025
- Your name
- Wright State University
- Running Head
- Pagination

#### **IV. Focused Autobiography (chronological narrative account of education, work, and life experience leading to relevant learning) [approximately 4 – 6 pages]. THIS IS THE PRIMARY BASIS FOR OL PLA COORDINATOR TO DETERMINE IF A PLA COURSE APPROACH SUFFICES TO “COUNT” FOR THE OL 4025 REPLACEMENT.**

This narrative provides the context for the more detailed account of experiential learning that will be integrated into the next section, the Analytical Essay. Experiential learning does not occur in a vacuum; it occurs in the context of your whole life – where you went to school, what your community was like, why you chose to pursue work instead of college, and/or why you chose a career in the military, or how you managed work, family, college all at once.

Remember, though, that this is a focused autobiography. You do not need to include (nor should you) all the events of your life since birth. You DO need to include enough detail to provide the framework by which your portfolio assessor can approach your request to proceed, and if approved, to provide a great background intro to the analytical essay so as to provide the OL PLA Coordinator with a sense of the “big picture.”

**THIS SECTION IS THE BASIS FOR THE OL COORDINATOR TO DETERMINE APPROPRIATENESS OF PROCEEDING IN THE PLA COURSE. Each potential candidate for the PLA course should meet with the OL PLA Coordinator prior to completing Section V to determine if that person should proceed.**

**V. Analytical Essay (essay that explicitly connects experience to theoretical and practical knowledge, specifically addressing each course outcome) [approximately 6 – 10 double-spaced, typed, single sided, 12-point font pages]**

***This section is the core of the PLA Portfolio. Remember that credit will not be awarded for experience; credit will only be awarded for the college-level learning that resulted from the experience.***

In order to clearly show the learning that resulted from your experience, your essay needs to explicitly demonstrate the process by which you moved from experience to learning. Educational theorist David Kolb provides a good working definition of the process we want you to show in your essay. He writes that “learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” and his four-stage cyclical model is useful for organizing your essay effectively to show your learning process.

For each Learning Outcome (Knowledge, Skill, Disposition), you should describe, in writing, these four stages in the learning process (the bolded terms are Kolb’s):

A. Your **concrete experience** (what you did) related to this outcome. What did you do? What action did you take?

B. Your **reflective observation** about your experiences (what you observed or discovered).

- Depending on the learning outcome in question, this may be the section in which you explicitly state the learning outcome (“I learned that [complete the sentence with the statement of the relevant learning outcome and underline the sentence].

C. The **abstract conceptualization** you derived from your experience and reflection: how you developed a concept or theory that is consistent with a relevant theoretical framework (how what you learned is supported by college-level theory and research).

- Depending on the learning outcome in question, this may be the section in which you explicitly state the learning outcome (“I learned that [complete the sentence with the statement of the relevant learning outcome and underline the sentence].\*  
• Any sources that you use in this section (or any section) to provide evidence of college-level theory and research need to be accurately cited using current APA documentation formats (use the same format consistently throughout the portfolio).

\*Be careful to only include the statement of the learning outcome once, in either section 2 or section 3. Ideally, it may serve as your topic sentence for that section.

D. Your **active experimentation** that applied, tested, and modified your concept/theory (how did you apply what you learned in new situations, or how did this shape your behavior?)

- You'll notice that at this stage, you might have a new concrete experience, and you might begin at stage 1 again as you discover new or refine existing concepts. Thus, this model is one that recognizes that learning is continuous.

The last page(s) of your Analytical Essay will be your References page. You may have multiple A – D sections for each Learning Outcome, but you will only have one References page at the very end of the Analytical Essay.

### **Evidence of Experiential Learning**

In this section, you provide evidence that documents the experiences you've included in your Focused Autobiography and Analytical Essay as ones that helped you achieve the learning related to the targeted course. Evidence may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Certificates of completion for training courses, workshops, etc.
- Performance evaluations
- Technical or professional writing written by you
- Programs from performances
- Job Description
- Explanation of your rank or classification in a job
- Products designed or produced by you
- Work projects
- Membership in professional organizations
- Membership requirements for certain organizations
- Licenses/diplomas
- Third-party verification of your work (co-workers, news clippings)
- Military records
- Annotated bibliography of books read
- Travel documents/mementos
- Notes taken in class

Note: Include as much evidence as you can to support your claims, but limit your evidence to that which is directly related to this claim. [Page limit determined by number of evidences]

### **VII. Appendices**

- A. Transcript
- B. Transfer Equivalencies (if any)
- C. Degree Audit

## **PORTFOLIO FORMAT**

Please carefully observe all the formatting requirements for your Portfolio.

- All elements must be word-processed, except for Section I and certain types of Evidence in Section VII that may be hand-written.
- Consistently follow the formatting guidelines of the current APA citation style, including margins, font style & size, title page, main body, in-text citations, References, etc. Do not include an Abstract or the specified APA sections of the essay (such as Discussion or Summary). Your essay sections are described in VI above.
- Sources that you use, especially for VI.C (Abstract Conceptualization) should be credible, academic sources, such as textbooks, scholarly journals, etc. Research and source-based evidence is a hallmark of academic learning and is expected in the OL 4025 Portfolio, similar to the work that would be expected in an upper-division university course.
- Application of The Leadership Challenge to the prior learning experience must be covered.
- Application of the course objectives must be covered in the portfolio.

### **PLAGIARISM**

If you submit someone else's work, writing, or ideas without acknowledging the source, you are guilty of plagiarism. Credit will be denied if any portion of this Portfolio is plagiarized and a copy of the plagiarism charge will be forwarded to the appropriate office on campus for further investigation and sanctions in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. For this process and for any college course you take, your best defense against a charge of plagiarism is to keep accurate notes and to keep a record of your intellectual progress (i.e., journal entries, brainstorming, free writes, outlines, drafts saved as separate documents at different stages of your writing process, etc.) that shows how you arrived at your ideas and your expression of those ideas. Follow the guidelines provided by APA carefully for paraphrasing, quoting, and citing all source-based evidence and ideas.

### **Criteria to enter PLA**

- Should have 10 years of relevant, full-time work experience. If less than 10 years, the OL PLA Coordinator must approve the exception.
- Must have successfully completed OL 2010, 3020, 3030, and 3040.
- Complete Section V.
- Get OL PLA Coordinator approval to proceed

### **Criteria to exit with a Passing grade**

- Connect Leadership theories to work experience
- Connect The Leadership Challenge to experiences.
- Ensure course objectives of the OL 4025 are met or exceeded.