

Credit for Prior Learning Policies and Procedures

Central New Mexico Community College



Purpose of Credit for Prior Learning

Learning occurs throughout life and work experiences. To recognize college-level learning students achieve outside of formal higher education, Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) relies on the following policies and procedures to ensure that Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) practices are consistent with academic integrity and responsive to lifelong learners.

The term “credit for prior learning” (CPL) refers to all of the processes CNM uses to review, evaluate, and award academic credit based upon evidence of learning in accordance with academic and administrative standards. CPL is awarded for demonstrated proficiency of college-level learning. This entails systematic evaluation of the knowledge, skills, and competencies students have obtained as a result of their learning experiences outside of higher education.

Student Policies and Procedures

Eligibility - In order to apply for and receive CPL, the student must be an active CNM certificate or degree seeking student.

CPL Award

1. Various assessment methods exist to measure the student’s ability to demonstrate proficiency in learning outcomes associated with existing courses.
2. CPL will only be awarded for courses that are directly applicable to program requirements in the student’s declared certificate or degree as specified in college publications and is consistent with other institutional policies.
3. Students will still be required to meet the minimum academic residency requirement for any certificate or degree. Residency requirements are the minimum number of credit hours that a student must earn from CNM to graduate. CPL credits earned through challenge exams and portfolio assessment are applied toward academic residency requirements; however, CPL credits earned via any other method are considered transfer credit and do not count toward academic residency requirements. Students may earn up to 75% of their required program hours through any combination of CPL methods. (See Appendix 1 for details.) Students can speak with a school advisor to discuss requirements for a specific program.

Financial Aid - Financial aid does not cover the costs of CPL. However, financial aid and Veterans benefits may be affected by credit hours awarded through CPL methods. Credit hours awarded through CPL methods count toward the total earned hours that a student has acquired and the 150% rule. Students should consult with a financial aid advisor to determine how credits earned through CPL may affect them prior to requesting any CPL.

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Assessment Methods - The following guidelines and methods are acceptable for assessing prior learning for awarding credit:

1. **Military Training:** Credit recommendations listed in the American Council on Education (ACE) [Military Guide](#) serve as the basis for assessing transferability of military training and occupations. For military training that has not been evaluated by ACE, credit is assessed by the academic school that offers the course on a case-by-case basis.
2. **Standardized Exams:** Credit will be awarded for passing scores on some national for-credit examination programs, such as the [College Board College Level Examination Program \(CLEP\)](#) and [Advanced Placement \(AP\) exams](#). Passing scores are available on the [Credit for Standardized Exams website](#).
3. **Challenge Exams:** Institutionally-prepared exams developed for specific CNM courses to validate that a student's prior learning meets the learning objectives of the course being challenged. A list of current challenge exams can be found on the [CPL website](#). *If an approved standardized exam exists, schools may choose not to create a challenge exam.*
4. **Certifications and Licensures:** Current industry-recognized credentials validated through the issuing agency or organization may be used to award credit, as approved by the academic school.
5. **Workforce and On-the-Job Training:** Locally evaluated employer training (CNM Community Partnerships), non-credit workforce training offered through CNM Ingenuity, Inc., and ACE credit recommendations listed on the [National Guide to College Credit for Workforce Training](#). On a case-by-case basis, workforce training and nationally recognized exams not yet listed on the [CPL website](#) are evaluated by the academic school that offers the applicable course. School evaluations are conducted using ACE credit recommendations (if applicable) and/or evaluation of the workforce/on-the-job training learning outcomes.
6. **Portfolio Assessment:** Portfolios consist of documentation and corresponding narrative submitted for credit that comprehensively, demonstrates proficiency of the learning objectives for a particular course. Individual portfolios are assessed using current CNM standards. *If an approved standardized or challenge exam exists, schools may choose not to offer a CPL portfolio option.*

Students interested in the CPL Portfolio option are directed to a Connect Academic Coach, a School Advisor, or the CNM [CPL website](#) for more information.

Application of CPL Award - Credits awarded through CPL will be applied to program requirements in the following ways:

1. CPL credits are applied to degree or program requirements in the same manner as other credits earned at CNM. *Please refer to CPL Award section of this document for further information.*
2. CNM awards credit for prior learning only for courses or programs for which there are active CNM catalog listings.

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3. CNM will assign the appropriate CNM course title(s) and number(s) to the credit(s) awarded. Neutral grades of CR (credit), for challenge exams or portfolios, or TR (transfer credit), for all other assessment methods, will be utilized and will not affect a student's GPA. Traditional letter grades are not assigned for CPL awards.
4. Earned credit is transcribed onto the student's record within 10 business days of the award.

Transferability - CPL is granted for the purpose of satisfying CNM graduation requirements. These credits may not be accepted at other colleges and universities. Students are responsible for contacting the institution to which they intend to transfer to determine that institution's policy on accepting CPL awarded at CNM.

CNM reserves the right to evaluate, apply, or deny CPL awarded at another institution. CPL, or PLA, awarded at another institution is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Students should contact the academic school from which they are seeking credit.

Fees - Fees charged for any method of CPL must be paid in full prior to the student's submission of the CPL request. CPL fees will be reviewed and approved annually by the CNM Governing Board. Current fees are located on the [CPL website](#).

1. **Credit for Industry Certifications/Licensures, Apprenticeships, evaluated Military Occupations/Trainings, and CNM Community Partnerships:** A fee is charged for processing requests for the following CPL assessment methods: State and national industry certifications and licensures, apprenticeships, CNM evaluated military credit, and community partnerships between CNM and specific employers that offer equivalent training, such as Albuquerque Fire Academy, Albuquerque Police Department, New Mexico State Police Department, and Bernalillo County.
2. **Credit by Exams:** Fees associated with standardized exams and challenge exams vary by exam. Students can visit the [Credit by Standardized Exams](#) or [Credit by Challenge Exams](#) website to verify fees associated with each exam offered at CNM. No fee is charged for transcribing credit earned by an exam that was taken outside of CNM.
3. **CNM Ingenuity, Inc. (Non-credit to Credit):** There is no fee for granting credit to programs/courses offered through CNM Ingenuity, Inc. that have been evaluated for equivalency to credit programs/courses.
4. **e-Portfolio Assessment:** Students pay a non-refundable assessment and processing fee upon registration in a CPL e-Portfolio course. Students should visit the [Credit for Portfolio Assessment website](#) for information on the e-Portfolio Assessment fee.

CPL Appeals - Students may appeal a CPL credit award decision in writing to the Academic School to which the initial CPL request was made. Appeals of credit awards are initiated using the [Credit for Prior Learning Appeal Form](#), attached to any supporting documentation for the appeal, and the

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packet is submitted by the student to the appropriate academic school within 10 work days of the decision to deny equivalent course credit.

Institutional Policies and Procedures

Tracking - CNM will prepare an annual report reflecting the level of student participation in each form of CPL and the resulting credit awards in each category. Tracking information is used to inform CNM on how to best serve students and to ensure the quality of the CPL Program.

Staff and Faculty Professional Development – Staff and faculty involved with the CPL Program at CNM receive training for the role they serve. Periodic professional development is provided to ensure consistent practices among assessors and to keep staff up-to-date.

Review - This policy is reviewed on an annual basis and revised to reflect conformity with academic and administrative standards.

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Appendix 1 – CPL Award Limits Based on Program Hours

Program Hours	Residency Hours	Maximum CPL Hours
3-12	3	0-9
13-24	6	7-18
25-36	9	16-27
37-48	12	25-36
49-60	15	34-45