



**SUBJECT:** Student Affairs

**PROCEDURE:** 306.1.1 Prior Learning Assessment

**EFFECTIVE:** June 2007

**REVISED:** September 2023

**REVIEWED:** September 2023

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### **Number of Credits and Assessment Methods**

Credit will be assessed using the following options:

- PASS IT – Take and pass a standardized exam or challenge exam
  - PROVIDE IT – Submit military/occupational training transcripts, submit current/valid industry certifications/licenses, submit transcripts/certificates/documentation from training accomplished through non-credit trainings or community partners.
  - PROVE IT – Develop a learning portfolio and submit it for assessment.
- The Division Director will designate the appropriate faculty member, Department Chair or Program Director to develop the criteria of the portfolio, individual performance or demonstration assessment and/or other faculty-determined assessment methods.
  - Credit for PLA standardized exams (i.e. CLEP, DSST and UExcel) are evaluated as transfer work.
  - Credit for PLA instructional based credits (i.e. AP (formal Advanced Placement passing exam score), IB (formal International Baccalaureate passing exam score), military training and educational programs (evaluated by the American Council on Education (ACE)), faculty-developed course challenge exams, formal training and educational programs offered via business and industry evaluated by the American Council on Education (ACE) or the National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS) are not considered experiential learning-based credits. At Great Falls College MSU they are evaluated as transfer work.
  - Materials and documents submitted for consideration of credit for PLA must comply with all Great Falls College MSU and Montana University System Policies.
  - All submitted materials and documents become part of the students' academic record and will not be returned.
  - The student is responsible for providing the appropriate documentation as required by the guidelines and/or criteria established by the faculty member, program director, or department chair for the award of credit for PLA.
  - **NOTE:** AP, CLEP, DSST, UExcel, IB, ACE and NCCRS recommendations may include many credits which will not apply to a student's degree program. Only recommendations directly applicable to the student's degree at Great Falls College MSU will be accepted. If the student chooses a different degree, the assessment of the recommendations will be updated. Once credits have been applied to a transcript they will not be removed. PLA credits in excess of degree requirements may limit the student's eligibility for financial aid.

### **Credits Awarded**

No assurances are made as to the number of credits to be awarded prior to the completion of the institution's review process.

### **Credits earned through PLA:**

- Are posted on transcripts when the credit is awarded.
- Are applied to degree program requirements in the same manner as all other credits earned at Great Falls College MSU.
- Will be designated on the student's transcript by the appropriate course prefix, course number, course title and number of credits awarded as aligned with the course for which the credit was awarded.
- Will be identified as earned via PLA on transcripts in accordance with Montana University System standards.



- Will not be posted on the student's transcript until the student has completed the institution's review process.
- Will be treated the same as transfer credit and it will not count toward the students' Great Falls College MSU GPA.
- Will be assigned a "P" (pass) grade or "TP" (transfer pass).

### **Review & Grievance**

- A student who disagrees with the result of a prior learning assessment performed at Great Falls College MSU may ask to have the assessment reviewed. A student who believes that an error has been made in the process of an assessment may file a grievance. Procedures for review and grievance are published at:  
[https://gfcmsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/300\\_4.pdf](https://gfcmsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/300_4.pdf)

### **Fees**

- Fees are based on the type of assessment method and may be set by an external agency (i.e. the cost of CLEP exams is not set by Great Falls College MSU.)
- Great Falls College MSU may add an administrative fee to the cost imposed by an external agency
- Students will be assessed a \$25 PLA fee per credit (plus any additional material costs) for each course attempted through challenge exams. Fee is capped at \$300 per course.
- Students will be assessed a \$75 PLA fee per course (plus any additional material costs) for each course attempted through evaluation of a portfolio. Fee is capped at \$200 per course.