Proposal Date: February 21, 2013

**University College**

**Department of Interdisciplinary Studies**

**Proposal to Create a New Course**

**(Action Item)**

Contact Person: Rebekah Phillips, [rebekah.phillips@wku.edu](mailto:rebekah.phillips@wku.edu), 745-3571

**1. Identification of proposed course:**

* 1. Course prefix (subject area) and number: IDST 250
  2. Course title: Prior Learning Portfolio Development
  3. Abbreviated course title: Prior Learning Portfolio
  4. Credit hours and contact hours: 3.0
  5. Type of course: L
  6. Prerequisites: Permission of instructor
  7. Course catalog listing: Leads students through the development of a portfolio demonstrating prior college-level knowledge and skills in academic areas. Portfolio may be evaluated for academic credit not to exceed one-fourth of the credit hours required for the degree/certificate. ***Course fee***.

**2. Rationale:**

* 1. Reason for developing the proposed course: In response to Kentucky’s Council on Postsecondary Education Adult Learner Initiative, which recommends that “All public postsecondary institutions should reevaluate and expand policies regarding the opportunity to earn credit for college-level experiential learning in one or more of its forms,” as well as to our growing number of non-traditional students with prior learning experiences, Western Kentucky University is proposing a formal Prior Learning Assessment Portfolio course. Though there are other prior learning options for college credit outside the traditional classroom, WKU recognizes that some college level learning is not at present recognized and awarded through CLEP, ACE, AP, and SAT and departmental exams. This portfolio course is designed to bridge the existing gap between the adult students and their employment, military experience, civic activities, volunteer service, organizational training or workshops, or other non-traditional forms of learning.

The portfolio course is designed:

* To respect and value the college level learning (not experience) already in existence.
* To give the student opportunity to develop or hone communication skills on a college level for intellectual advancement and efficacy.
* To allow the necessary time for students to evaluate their own prior learning while communicating the same to faculty in the discipline.

According to a 2006 study of 272 college and university administrators conducted by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), approximately 66 percent reported that their institutions grant credit for experiential learning, up from 50 percent in 1991 and 55 percent in 1996.

* 1. Projected enrollment in the proposed course: Fifteen to twenty annually based on current requests from non-traditional students through the WKU Adult Student Services and academic advisors in the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies and at the WKU Regional Campuses in Elizabethtown, Glasgow, and Owensboro.
  2. Relationship of the proposed course to courses now offered by the department: No other formal prior learning course is currently offered by the department.
  3. Relationship of the proposed course to courses offered in other departments: No other formal prior learning course is currently offered by WKU.
  4. Relationship of the proposed course to courses offered in other institutions: A number of colleges and universities in Kentucky offer portfolio courses that are designed to evaluate prior learning. For example, the University of Louisville offers ELFH 300: Prior Learning Assessment, which allows up to 48 hours of credit. Murray State offers BIS 301: Portfolio Development, which allows up to 30 hours.

**3. Discussion of proposed course:**

3.1. Course objectives:

a) The student will tie prior learning to specific current course objectives/competencies and show some relationship to career aspiration and/or educational goals.

b) The student will demonstrate theoretical and practical understanding of the subject area for which credit is being sought.

c) The student will translate prior learning into measurable formats for evaluation.

d) The student will demonstrate prior learning using college-level communication skills.

e) The student will produce a portfolio for assessment and awarding of college credit.

3.2 Content outline:

* Identifying individual student objectives goals and competencies
* Experience vs. learning
* Developing outline
* Quantifying prior learning
* Differences between theoretical and practical learning
* Research methods
* Portfolio format options
* Documentation styles

3.3 Student expectations and requirements: Students will create a portfolio to be evaluated by faculty in the department where credit is being sought. The assessor will be trained by CAEL, having earned the Certificate of Professional Achievement as a Prior Learning Assessor.

* 1. Tentative texts and course materials:

Roslyn Snow, *Preparing the Portfolio for an Assessment of Prior* *Learning* (Charleston: BookSurge, 2008).

Denise M. Hart and Jerry H. Hickerson, *Prior Learning Portfolios: A Representative Collection* (Chicago: CAEL and Kendall Hunt, 2009).

**4. Resources:**

Library resources: Present resources are adequate.

Computer resources: Present resources are adequate.

**5. Budget implications:**

Proposed method of staffing: University College has committed to funding one or two sections of this class every semester utilizing part-time faculty. If demand becomes much higher than that, we will consider requesting additional staffing.

Special equipment needed: None.

Expendable materials needed: None.

Laboratory materials needed: None.

**6. Proposed term for implementation:** Fall 2013

**7. Dates of prior committee approvals:**

Interdisciplinary StudiesDepartment 2/21/13

UC Undergraduate Curriculum Committee 3/6/13

Professional Education Council (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

General Education Committee (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Undergraduate Curriculum Committee \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

University Senate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Attachment: Bibliography, Library Resources Form**, **Course Inventory Form**