Proposal Date: 4/1/2014

**Academic Policy Subcommittee of UCC**

**Proposal to Revise an Academic Policy**

**(Action Item)**

Contact Person: Name: Sylvia Gaiko, email: [Sylvia.gaiko@wku.edu](mailto:Sylvia.gaiko@wku.edu) , Phone: 745-8985

Identification of proposed policy revision:

1. **Catalog statement of existing policy (highlights to indicate change):**

**Credit for Prior Learning** (Senate Approved 11/21/2013): Students who have acquired extensive college-level knowledge and skills in academic areas including but not limited to employment, military experience, civic activities, volunteer service, organizational training or workshops, or other non-traditional means may be granted credit for the knowledge and skills they have gained through nationally standardized exams (AP, CLEP, IB, ACE, etc.), departmental exams, or portfolio development and evaluation. This policy focuses on portfolio development and evaluation, while referencing national and departmental exams when appropriate.

Prior learning by portfolio evaluation is considered an opportunity for students to demonstrate their knowledge and is not a guarantee of credit for experience. Students will complete a portfolio of their prior learning as a part of a portfolio development course, IDST 250, taught by an instructor who has undergone training by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). The portfolio, with varying forms of documents, will tie content learning outcomes to

the knowledge and skills students have acquired through experiential learning. Credit earned will depend upon the student’s ability to produce a portfolio that communicates learning outcomes consistent with the WKU mission on the level expected for the credit sought. Before registering for this course, students will consult with the instructor to evaluate the feasibility of seeking credit in a particular area.

The student will identify a maximum of two content areas for which credit is being sought, and his or her portfolio will be submitted to two full-time WKU faculty members, at least one from each area for which the student is seeking credit, upon successful completion of the course. These faculty experts will review the portfolio and determine if and how much academic credit is to be granted, as well as whether the credit should be given for a specific course, or for non- course-specific credit (see below). The consensus recommendation of the reviewers must be approved by the department head(s) and dean(s) of the college(s) concerned, and then will be forwarded to the Office of the Registrar to transcript recommended credit.

**Policies**

1. Credit may be awarded for experiential learning and/or for non-collegiate sponsored

instruction. In evaluating non-collegiate sponsored instruction, faculty may utilize American Council on Education (ACE) guidelines or other criteria meaningful to their discipline.

2. Credit may be awarded for a specific course. Each academic department will determine which of their courses, if any, are appropriate for credit by portfolio evaluation, and the department head will identify (an) assessor(s) for each subject field deemed appropriate. These assessors will receive portfolio assessment training, and receive a modest stipend for each portfolio they evaluate, regardless of outcome.

3. Credit by portfolio evaluation will not be awarded for courses in General Education or the Core Curriculum (Colonnade Program). Students may use departmental examinations, CLEP, AP, or IB for credit in General Education.

4. If WKU does not have a specific course equivalent to the student’s prior learning, non-course specific credit may be awarded provided that WKU offers an academic program in a pertinent discipline. Non-course specific credit will be transcripted as XXX-PLA-EL-L (lower division elective credit) or XXX-PLA-EL-U (upper division elective credit), where XXX stands for the WKU disciplinary area awarding the credit (e.g. LEAD, HCA, etc.), and PLA stands for Prior Learning Assessment.

5. Non-course specific credit will only be granted if WKU offers a program in a discipline similar to the student’s prior learning.

6. The total number of credit hours awarded for prior learning by portfolio evaluation shall not exceed one-fourth of the credit hours required for the major or minor, and shall not exceed one- fourth of the total credit hours required for the degree/ credential.

7. WKU does not accept non-discipline specific credit for prior learning based solely upon its appearance on other institutions’ transcripts.

8. The Prior learning credit will count toward the residency requirement for a degree/credential.

9. If, on initial review of the portfolio, the assessors determine that evidence of learning is insufficient for credit, the assessors shall permit the student to provide one revision of the portfolio within six months of notification of insufficiency.

10. A student must have earned at least 12 hours of college credit, including credit for ENG 100 or its equivalent, prior to pursuing credit for prior learning.

11. A student may not request prior learning credit for a course that has been previously taken.

12. A student may not request prior learning credit for a course in which he/she is currently enrolled.

13. Prior learning credit will appear in the same section of the transcript as does transfer credit. Only the portfolio course will be considered part of the term’s course load.

14. Earned hours will be recorded for prior learning credit; neither letter grades nor quality points will be awarded for the credit.

15. WKU cannot guarantee that prior learning credit earned through portfolio evaluation will transfer to another college or university.

16. Students will pay tuition for the portfolio course, and a course fee will be charged for evaluation of the portfolio. The fee will be collected and administered by the Division of Extended Learning and Outreach (DELO). There will be no further charges for the credit that is awarded for prior learning.

1. **Catalog statement of proposed policy:**

Students who have acquired extensive college-level knowledge and skills in academic areas including but not limited to employment, military experience, civic activities, volunteer service, organizational training or workshops, or other non-traditional means may be granted credit for the knowledge and skills they have gained through nationally standardized exams (AP, CLEP, IB, ACE, etc.), departmental exams, or portfolio development and evaluation. This policy focuses on portfolio development and evaluation, while referencing national and departmental exams when appropriate.

Prior learning by portfolio evaluation is considered an opportunity for students to demonstrate their knowledge and is not a guarantee of credit for experience. Students will complete a portfolio of their prior learning as a part of a portfolio development course, IDST 250, taught by an instructor who has undergone training by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). The portfolio, with varying forms of documents, will tie content learning outcomes to

the knowledge and skills students have acquired through experiential learning. Credit earned will depend upon the student’s ability to produce a portfolio that communicates learning outcomes consistent with the WKU mission on the level expected for the credit sought. Before registering for this course, students will consult with the instructor to evaluate the feasibility of seeking credit in a particular area.

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6. The total number of credit hours awarded for prior learning by portfolio evaluation shall not exceed one-fourth of the credit hours required for the major or minor, and shall not exceed one- fourth of the total credit hours required for the degree/ credential.

7. WKU does not accept non-discipline specific credit for prior learning based solely upon its appearance on other institutions’ transcripts.

8. The three credits earned in the WKU portfolio course (IDST 250) itself will count toward residence, while the prior learning credit awarded will be treated as nonresidence credit.

9. If, on initial review of the portfolio, the assessors determine that evidence of learning is insufficient for credit, the assessors shall permit the student to provide one revision of the portfolio within six months of notification of insufficiency.

10. A student must have earned at least 12 hours of college credit, including credit for ENG 100 or its equivalent, prior to pursuing credit for prior learning.

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1. **Rationale for proposed policy revision:**

This aligns residence language to be consistent with other WKU policies regarding residence according to SACSCOC standards.

1. **Impact of proposed policy revision on existing academic or non-academic policies:**

4.1 Impact on policies: n/a  
4.2 Impact on populations that may be affected: N/A (policy has not been implemented)

1. **Proposed term for implementation:** Fall 2014, with no negative impact to students.
2. **Dates of prior committee approvals:**

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| Academic Policy Subcommittee: | **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_4/14/2014\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |
| Undergraduate Curriculum Committee: | **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |
| University Senate: | **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |