

# Credit for Prior Learning Policies and Procedures

## Central New Mexico Community College

### Purpose of Credit for Prior Learning

Learning may occur during various 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 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 and evaluate evidence of learning and to award academic credit in accordance with academic and administrative standards. CPL is awarded for demonstrated mastery of college-level learning. This entails 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. The student’s prior learning must match existing courses using course descriptions and learning outcomes for guidance.
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 sought. CPL credits earned through challenge exams and portfolio assessment count toward academic residency requirements. CPL credits earned through all other methods are considered transfer credit and do not count toward academic residency requirements. Residency requirements are the minimum number of credit hours that a student must earn from CNM to graduate. 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 learning through any of the assessment methods.

**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

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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 [Assessment Center](#) website.
3. **Challenge Exams:** Institutionally-prepared exams have been 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, a challenge exam will not be offered.*
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. **Portfolio Assessment:** Portfolios consist of documentation submitted for credit that demonstrates mastery of the learning objectives for a particular course. Individual portfolios will be assessed using Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) standards. *If an approved standardized or challenge exam exists, portfolios will not be used to assess CPL.*

Students can find out how to get started by contacting an Academic Coach or visiting the CNM [CPL website](#).

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

1. CPL credits will be 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 will award credit for prior learning only for courses or programs for which there are active CNM catalog listings.
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 will not be used.
4. Earned credit will be 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 transfer to other colleges. Students are responsible for contacting the institution to which they intend to transfer to determine that institution's policy on transferring CPL awarded at CNM.

Determination of CPL awarded at another institution and transferred to CNM will be made on a case-by-case basis. Students should contact the academic school from which they are seeking credit.

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**Fees** - Fees charged for any method of CPL must be paid in full prior to the student's submission of the CPL application. CPL fees will be reviewed and approved annually by the CNM Governing Board.

1. **Licensures, certifications, apprenticeship, military credit, and workforce or non-credit training:** No fee is charged for evaluating or granting credit for the following methods of CPL: State and national licensures and certifications, apprenticeships, military credit, training received through CNM Ingenuity, and articulation agreements 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. **Exams:** Fees associated with standardized exams and challenge exams vary by exam. Students can visit the [Assessment Center](#) website to verify fees associated with each exam.
3. **Portfolio Assessment:** Students will pay a non-refundable assessment fee in order to submit a portfolio for formal assessment. Students can visit the [CPL website](#) to verify the Portfolio Assessment fee.

**CPL Appeals** - Students may appeal a CPL decision in writing to the Academic School to which the initial CPL request was made. Students will complete the [Credit for Prior Learning Appeal Form](#), attach any supporting documentation for the appeal, and submit the packet to the appropriate academic school, within 10 work days from the original denial of 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 will be 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 will receive training for the role they serve. Periodic professional development will be provided to ensure consistent practices among assessors.

**Review** - This policy will be 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
1 - 3	3	0
4	3	1
5	3	2
6 - 7	3	3 - 4
8	3	5
9	3	6
10 - 11	3	7 - 8
12	3	9
13	6	7
14 - 15	6	8 - 9
16	6	10
17	6	11
18 - 19	6	12 - 13
20	6	14
21	6	15
22 - 23	6	16 - 17
24	6	18
25	9	16
26 - 27	9	17 - 18
28	9	19
29	9	20
30 - 31	9	21 - 22
32	9	23
33	9	24
34 - 35	9	25 - 26
36	9	27
37	12	25
38 - 39	12	26 - 27
40	12	28
41	12	29
42 - 43	12	30 - 31
44	12	32
45	12	33
46 - 47	12	34 - 35
48	12	36

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Program hours	Residency Hours	Maximum CPL Hours
49	15	34
50 - 51	15	35 - 36
52	15	37
53	15	38
54 - 55	15	39 - 40
56	15	41
57	15	42
58 - 59	15	43 - 44
60	15	45
61	15	46
62 - 63	15	47 - 48
64	15	49
65	15	50
66 - 67	15	51 - 52
68	15	53
69	15	54
70 - 71	15	55 - 56
72	15	57
73	15	58
74 - 75	15	59 - 60
76	15	61
77	15	62
78 - 79	15	63 - 64
80	15	65
81	15	66
82 - 83	15	67 - 68
84	15	69
85	15	70
86 - 87	15	71 - 72
88	15	73
89	15	74
90 - 91	15	75 - 76
92	15	77
93	15	78
94 - 95	15	79 - 80