

Northern Marianas College
CURRICULUM ACTION REQUEST

Effective Semester / Session: Fall 2014

Type of Action:

- New
- Modification
- Move to Inactive (Stop Out)
- Cancellation

Course Alpha and Number: BE 200

Course Title: Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Portfolio Development

Reason for initiating, revising, or canceling:


The initiation of ID200 is to create a course that will become a basis and requirement at NMC for requesting credit for prior learning experience in the development of a portfolio with assistance from a faculty advisor. Every student requesting credit for prior learning must enroll in this course and complete a portfolio for evaluation that demonstrates the college level learning that has resulted from experiences outside a formal academic framework. The student utilizes this method to document mastered knowledge or skills that are equivalent to college level credit. Any credit earned in ID200 may not apply towards the 30 credit limit. The portfolio will created in this course will be part of the evaluation process in the PLA process. Grading is on a Pass/Fail Basis.


Lorraine Cabrera Maui/Barbara Merfalen

Proposer Date

Thomas Sharts 

Department Chair Date

Barbara K. Merfalen 

Dean of Academic Programs and Services Date

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Course Guide

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1. Department

Social Sciences and Fine Arts

2. Purpose

To provide a means to award credit for prior learning experiences also known as experiential learning. Students enrolled in this program may receive up to 30 credit hours toward degree completion. The Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) approach will target primarily adult students who wish to complete a degree while working in their careers. The typical student enrolling in this program is generally 25 years or older with at least five-years of work experience and meets the general admission requirements of the college. Students, who enter the program are expected to follow the College requirements as outlined in policy and admission guidelines of the PLA, must be able to understand and use the conventions of standard written English, must be able to access and navigate information online, and submit the portfolio for assessment and evaluation that will demonstrate, explain, and verify that there is undergraduate or graduate level learning that could be awarded credit. (Offered fall and spring)

3. Description

A. Required/Recommended Textbook(s) and Related Materials

No textbook required.

Readability level: N/A

B. Contact Hours

1. **Lecture:** 3 hours per week / 45 hours per semester
2. **Lab:** None
3. **Other:**

C. Credits

1. **Number:** 3
2. **Type:** Regular Degree Credits

D. Catalogue Course Description

Through the Prior Learning Assessment Portfolio Development course, a student is able to fulfill one of the requirements necessary in the Northern Marianas College PLA Process. The course provides a tool in evaluating experiential learning for academic recognition for undergraduate level learning acquired outside the traditional college

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classroom. The portfolio development will collect and submit materials that documents experiential learning as evidence of what has been learned through work, training, academic and other life experiences. Any credit earned in ID200 may not apply towards the 30 credit limit. Grade for ID200 is a Pass/Fail. (Offered fall, spring, summer)

E. Degree or Certificate Requirements Met by Course

For Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Requirement

F. Course Activities and Design

In this course students will explore adult learning, prior learning assessment, portfolio assessment and other alternative methods of earning college credit. The specific skills needed to successfully gain credit through prior learning assessment will be emphasized. They include: defining, documenting, measuring, evaluating, and writing. This class involves a significant amount of independent work. Much of the focus of this class will be on portfolio preparation with the expectation that by the end-of-the- semester each student will be able to make an informed decision about completing a portfolio.

G. Course Resource/References:

University of Wisconsin: Central Michigan University; CAEL; WASC; Mohawk College.

4. Course Prerequisite(s); Concurrent Course Enrollment; Required English/Mathematics Placement Level(s)

Prerequisites: None

English Placement Level: None

Math Placement Level: None

5. Estimated Cost of Course; Instructional Resources Needed

Cost to the Student: Tuition for a 3-credit course and applicable fees

Cost to the College: Instructor's Salary and Instructor Textbook/Instructional resources.

Instructional resources needed for this course: None

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6. Method of Evaluation

Student grades will be a PASS/FAIL Basis.

NMC's grading and attendance policies will be followed.

7. Course Outline

This is a topical outline and does not necessarily indicate the sequence in which the material will be presented.

- 1.0 Prior Learning Assessment Information
 - 1.1 Guidebook
 - 1.2 What is a Portfolio
- 2.0 Prior Learning Assessment Portfolio
 - 2.1 Denise Scammon: Specialdee.wordpress.com
 - 2.2 Writing a Learning Outcomes Paper
 - 2.3 Description of Experience
 - 2.4 Experiential Learning: Learning from experience
 - 2.5 Documentation

8. Instructional Goals

This course will introduce students to:

- 1.0 History of Prior Learning Assessment/Experiential Learning;
- 2.0 Prior Learning Guide;
- 3.0 Prior Learning Assessment Portfolio;
- 4.0 Portfolio Definition;
- 5.0 Writing a Learning Outcomes Paper;
- 6.0 Description of Experience;
- 7.0 Experiential Learning;
- 8.0 Documentation of relevant information for consideration in a portfolio;
and,
- 9.0 Types of Assessment Tools used for the evaluation of Prior Learning

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9. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1.0 Discuss the history of Prior Learning Assessment/Experiential Learning;
- 2.0 Review information guide about the NMC Prior Learning Assessment Program;
- 3.0 Apply the key elements for Developing a Prior Learning Assessment Portfolio;
- 4.0 Define the meaning of portfolio;
- 5.0 Produce a Learning Outcomes Paper as part of the portfolio;
- 6.0 Recognize the types of experience for consideration in a PLA Portfolio;
- 7.0 Organize work related experience as part of the portfolio;
- 8.0 Distinguish information required for completion of a PLA Portfolio; and,
- 9.0 Identify local and national assessment tools used to evaluate PLA Portfolios.

10. Assessment Measures

Assessment of student learning may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- 1.0 Course Portfolio Checklist;
- 2.0 Course Portfolio Reflections;
- 3.0 Program Instructor Review; and,
- 4.0 Nationally Recognized Evaluation Tool as contracted with the College.