

# What is Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)?

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Memorandum: [Title 5 55050 Credit for Prior Learning](#)

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) is college credit awarded for validated college-level skills and knowledge gained outside a college classroom. Students' knowledge and skills might be gained through experiences such as:

- Military training
- Industry training and certification
- State/federal government training
- Volunteer and civic activities
- Apprenticeships, internships, work-based learning, or other industry-based experiential learning

# Course Waiver vs Substitution vs CPL

Feature / Aspect	Course Waiver	Course Substitution	Credit for Prior Learning
Definition / Purpose	Removes a prerequisite or placement requirement; lets student enroll without completing the prerequisite course.	Uses another completed course to fulfill a degree, certificate, or GE requirement.	<b>Grants actual college credit (units) for prior knowledge or experience via exam, portfolio, or training.</b>
Units / Grade Impact	No units or grade awarded.	Original course's grade and units count as usual.	<b>Units awarded</b> with assessment method notation
When Used	Before enrollment, to bypass a prerequisite or placement block.	During program or transcript evaluation to meet a requirement.	Before or during enrollment, after approved assessment or exam.
Limitations	Applies only to prerequisite or placement; doesn't count for credit.	Requires counselor/department petition; must meet equivalency standards.	Credit may not count toward 12-unit residency; transfer acceptance varies.
Official SMC Reference	Prerequisite Waiver Request Form via Counseling Center (smc.edu).	Student Petitions for Course Substitution/Equivalency (smc.edu).	Administrative Regulation AR 4235 — Credit for Prior Learning (admin.smc.edu).
Effect on Degree Progress	Allows enrollment access but does not fulfill any program requirement.	Fulfills specific course requirement in a degree/certificate plan.	<b>Applies credit toward degree, certificate, or GE requirements.</b>
Example	Waiving BIO 22 to take BIO 23 after showing equivalent prior coursework.	Substituting a completed statistics course from another college for SMC's required one.	<b>Earning units</b> for a course through various assessment methods.

# Closing the Racial Equity Gap

## CA Competes "Credit for Prior Learning: Leveraging Past Learning to Close Present-Day Equity Gaps"

- Validates a student's learning that has occurred
- Saves students money and time
- Encourages degree completion

<sup>1</sup> California Competes [CACompetes\\_CPL-Brief\\_Final.pdf \(californiacompetes.org\)](https://californiacompetes.org)

Figure 1: Many students who could benefit from CPL are nonmilitary veterans.

Adults (25-54) without a degree, by military experience

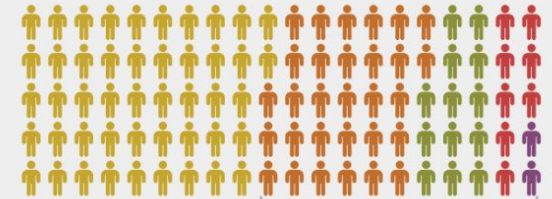


No Prior Military Experience 96% Prior Military Experience 2%

Only 2% of California adults 25-54 with a high school diploma or some college hold prior military experience.

Figure 2: Most Californians who could benefit from CPL are people of color.<sup>1</sup>

Adults (25-54) without a degree, by race/ethnicity



White 47% Black 30% Latinx 13% Asian 8% Other 2%

# CPL Student Experience Champions

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## Instructional Faculty

- Identify CPL Courses & Build Assessment Methods
- Develop Portfolio Rubric & Exams
- Identify Industry Certs and Military ACE IDs
- Assess the student's prior learning

## Counselors

- Counsel students on their Ed Plan
- Offer CPL transfer expertise
- Guide the student through the CPL process

## Student & Enrollment Services

- Support the CPL petition process
- Transcribe CPL



Respiratory Care

# Methods of Assessment:

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- Portfolio Review
- \*Credit by Exam
- Industry Certification
- Military Transcript
- Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), College Level Exam Preparation (CLEP)

# Course Eligibility Verification Form-Adobe Sign



## CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING COURSE ELIGIBILITY APPROVAL FORM

Department

Course Title

Course ID

Units

Credit for Prior Learning Eligibility – Check all that apply:

Credit by Exam

Industry Certification

Portfolio

Military Joint Service Transcripts

Specify:

C-ID Mapping, if determined:

Attach scoring rubric

ACE ID:

Course Title:

Length/Hours:

ACE URL:

Ace Credit Recommendation:

            Other:

Please describe:

Per accreditation policy on assessing prior learning, in making the determination whether to award college credits, certifications and degrees to students for prior learning, the following should be considered:

- Credit or its equivalent should be awarded only for learning, and not for experience
- Assessment should be based on standards and criteria for the level of acceptable learning that are published
- The determination of credit awards and competence levels must be made by appropriate subject matter experts and by academic or credentialing experts
- Credit or other credentialing should be appropriate to the context in which it is awarded and accepted

Please also review [AR 4235 Credit for Prior Learning and Credit by Examination](#) which outlines the examination and assessment methods and determination of eligibility to receive Credit for Prior Learning and Credit by Exam.

# CPL and the Curriculum Process

**MIL 103 - Military Leadership Philosophy**

Status: Active [View Proposal History](#)

**Credit for Prior Learning**

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) is college credit awarded for validated college-level skills and knowledge gained outside of a college classroom. Students' knowledge and skills might be gained through experiences such as:

1. Military training
2. Industry training
3. State/federal government training
4. Apprenticeships, internships, work-based learning, or other industry-based experiential learning
5. Validated volunteer and civic activities (e.g. Peace Corps)

Faculty can choose to make their course CPL eligible if applicable. For more information, refer to the CPL Faculty Resources webpage: <https://www2.palomar.edu/pages/cpl/> And then contact the CPL Coordinator at [cpl@palomar.edu](mailto:cpl@palomar.edu)

**This course is currently eligible for CPL. The CPL Course Eligibility Approval form is complete and uploaded in META as an attached file in the left menu.**

Credit for Prior Learning:  Yes  No

Program Association (New Courses Only):  Yes  No

**Select all CPL Methods of Assessment that apply**

Military transcript

Industry Certificate


Portfolio

Credit by Exam

**I have reviewed and verified that the CPL Methods of Assessment and the CPL Eligibility Approval Form are current (attached file in the left menu). To make updates, I will contact the CPL Coordinator at [cpl@palomar.edu](mailto:cpl@palomar.edu) \***

Fields marked with \* are required

Future development: Courses that have gone through the CPL eligibility verification process will be indicated in our curriculum database.



**CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING COURSE ELIGIBILITY APPROVAL FORM**

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title	Course ID	Units
Credit for Prior Learning Eligibility – Check all that apply:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Credit by Exam		
<input type="checkbox"/> College Level Exam Program (CLEP)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Advanced Placement (AP)		
<input type="checkbox"/> International Baccalaureate (IB)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Industry Certification		Specify: C-ID Mapping, if determined:
<input type="checkbox"/> Portfolio		Attach scoring rubric
<input type="checkbox"/> Military Joint Service Transcripts		ACE ID: Course Title: Length/Hours: ACE URL: Ace Credit Recommendation:
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:		Please describe:

Per accreditation policy on assessing prior learning, in making the determination whether to award college credits, certifications and degrees to students for prior learning, the following should be considered:

- Credit or its equivalent should be awarded only for learning, and not for experience
- Assessment should be based on standards and criteria for the level of acceptable learning that are published
- The determination of credit awards and competence levels must be made by appropriate subject matter experts and by academic or credentialing experts
- Credit or other credentialing should be appropriate to the content in which it is awarded and accepted

Please also review [AR 4235 Credit for Prior Learning and Credit by Examination](#) which outlines the examination and assessment methods and determination of eligibility to receive Credit for Prior Learning and Credit by Exam.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Discipline Faculty Expert: \_\_\_\_\_

Department Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Articulation Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

CPL Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

# CPL: Student Petition Form

dynamicforms.ngwebsolutions.com/Submit/Page?form=fe71c9ec-b7b1-40e1-8c23-95288eec2b85&section=1025101&page=655930&token=6XFGA6NGuz-mjBPp5hafiaomXi5mc\_vimjknfH0amd1

### About Credit for Prior Learning (CPL):

- For full details, please refer to the [SMC Credit for Prior Learning webpage](#).
- Credit may be granted for prior CPL if it matches a course in the college catalog, and approved.
- Credits can apply to your degree, general education, certificate, or electives. See a counselor.
- Credits earned through CPL do not count toward the 12 units you must complete "in residence" at SMC to get a degree, or as "units "enrolled," but they do count toward total completed units.
- Other colleges and universities may limit transfer credit. See a counselor.
- For AP, CLEP, and IB, please contact [transcriptevaluator@smc.edu](mailto:transcriptevaluator@smc.edu).

**Instructions:**  
Please complete all required fields. The form will be sent to the appropriate staff for review and response.

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### Student Information

Preferred First Name:

Last Name:

ID Number:

SMC Email:

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### Counselor Section

#### Type of Credit for Prior Learning

Which type of Credit for Prior Learning are you seeking? Please select one option below:

Military Service/Training  
 Industry Recognized Documentation  
 Student-Created Portfolio  
 Credit by Exam

Please upload any supporting documents (optional).

# SMC Transcribing Credit for Prior Learning

*"If awards are for credit, transcript entries should clearly describe what learning is being recognized and should be monitored to avoid giving credit twice for the same learning." ACCJC Policy on Credit for Prior Learning*

## Credit by Exam

### Credit for Prior Learning: SMC Credit by Exam

20241 SPR							
NURSNG 1L	NURSNG 1 LAB	P	2.50				20-FEB-2024
20241 SPR							
NURSNG 1	NURSNG CONC 1	P	3.00				25-MAR-2024
20241 SPR							
NURSNG 2	NURSNG CONC 2	P	2.50				19-FEB-2024

## Portfolio Review

### Credit for Prior Learning: Portfolio

20240 WTR							
ART 10A	DESIGN I	B	3.00	3.00	9.00		15-JAN-2024
20241 SPR							
ART 20A	DRAWING I	A	3.00	3.00	12.00		10-MAR-2024

## Military Transcript

### Credit for Prior Learning: Military Training

AR-1728-0136							
ADJUS 5	CRIMIN INVESTGN		3.00				

## Industry Certification

### Credit for Prior Learning: Industry Certification

20243 FAL							
CIS 4	INTRO BUS APPL.	P	3.00				19-SEP-2024

## AP, IB or CLEP

### Credit for Prior Learning: CLEP

SPANISH			5.00				
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# SMC CPL Webpage

## What is Credit for Prior Learning?

**Free** college credit for training and learning gained outside a college classroom!

Students can gain knowledge and skills from a variety of experiences, such as:

- Military training
- Industry training
- State/federal government training
- Apprenticeships, internships, work-based learning, or other industry-based experiential learning
- Validated volunteer and civic activities (e.g., Peace Corps)



# QUESTIONS?

# THANK YOU!

**Contact Info:**

CPL Faculty Lead – **Maria Muñoz** at [cpl@smc.edu](mailto:cpl@smc.edu)