

BELLARMINE  
UNIVERSITY

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## **Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Handbook**

## Welcome

Bellarmino values the life experiences each student brings to our community and accepts a variety of methods to demonstrate learning achieved through independent scholarship, professional development and competencies, volunteer service, and military and occupational training. This handbook offers information related to Bellarmine's Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) Portfolio policies, application process, and assessment procedures. Students interested in earning credit for prior learning are encouraged to speak to their academic advisor, the registrar, or Bellarmine's Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) Coordinator.

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### **What is a Credit for Prior Learning?**

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) is the process through which credit is awarded for learning that occurs outside of formal college coursework. Some form of prior learning credit is awarded at most colleges and universities. College-level learning can be demonstrated through standardized exams, including AP, CLEP, DSST, FLATS and others; through department administered challenge exams; through military training documented in a Joint Service Transcript; or through a Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) Portfolio. For more information on options for prior learning credit at Bellarmine, see the university course catalog.

### **What is a Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio?**

Bellarmino recognizes that learning takes form through reflection on, and the application of, knowledge gained both inside and outside the classroom. Through analysis, reflection, and documentation of learning, portfolios allow students to demonstrate that they have gained college-level competencies—combined knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors—that meet the essential learning outcomes of courses offered at Bellarmine. The portfolio process encourages students to delve into a deeper understanding of the learning process and the personal competencies they've gained through work, service, and other experiences.

Students may consider applying for prior learning credit through the portfolio process when their professional background or life experiences closely parallel the essential learning outcomes required by a college course. Credit may be awarded for documented learning that is equivalent to specific subjects at the university and sufficient in content and depth to merit consideration. Each student applying for CPL portfolio credit is responsible for providing documentation of the relevant experiences and for clarifying the learning gained through them.

At Bellarmine, a Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio is submitted digitally via email to the registrar's office or the Credit for Prior Learning Coordinator.

### **Advantages of CPL**

Credit for prior learning offers students many advantages. Through the portfolio process, students may ...

Save Time: Undergraduate students can earn up to 60 college credits for prior learning, including 36 credits for exams such as AP, IB, CLEP, DSST, FLATS and others, and up to 30 credit hours through challenge exams (when offered by individual departments) and/or the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio process. This allows students to earn a degree significantly faster. Graduate students can earn up to six credit hours for prior learning.

Save Money: Undergraduate students pay a flat fee for all credit earned through the portfolio process. The combined cost of portfolio assessment and any/all credit awarded for prior learning is lower than the cost of completing one 3-credit course. Graduate students pay a fee for each course they earn credit for, but also at a considerably reduced cost.

Create an Inventory of Personal Competencies: A Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio serves many students as a professional development tool, helping them to better articulate their strengths and abilities to peers, supervisors, and/or potential employers. The process may help students improve their resumes and successfully prepare for employment and performance interviews.

Strengthen Learning and Academic Skills: The portfolio development process hones academic skills including writing, critical analysis, and organization.

Improve the Likelihood of a Successful Path to Graduation: A study of over 62,000 adult students by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) discovered that 56% of students with prior learning credit completed their studies and earned a college credential as compared to 21% of their peers with no prior learning credit (Klein-Collins 2010).

Gain Greater Understanding of Personal Learning and Accomplishments: Many students who complete a Prior Learning Portfolio gain insight and find personal value in the process.

### **Eligibility**

Students considering applying for academic credit through the prior learning portfolio process should be prepared to invest substantial time in the development of their portfolios. Ideal candidates are highly motivated, with significant demonstrable experience and learning. Students may be eligible for CPL credit if they have:

- Years of professional experience, particularly in a leadership position;
- Military experience;
- Documented employer training or credentialing;
- Other training, credentialing, professional licensing, or professional skill development;
- Professional writing experience, including publication;
- Proficiency in a global language;
- Significant volunteer experience, particularly in a leadership position;
- Significant civic or community engagement;
- Completed open-source courseware study;
- Conducted in-depth independent research based on personal interests or hobbies.

For prior learning purposes, “significant” and “in-depth” generally denote sustained engagement demonstrated through substantial time commitments resulting in clearly defined outcomes and/or impact.

Examples of significant volunteer experience might include serving on a board of directors; leadership in a professional organization; serving with the Peace Corps or AmeriCorps; founding or leading a non-profit organization; in-depth experience as a volunteer educator, such as teaching courses for a community center or after-school program.

Similarly, examples of significant civic or community engagement may include holding an elected government office; serving on a school board; or leading a community-based organization.

## **Directory: Credit for Prior Learning Roles and Contact Information**

### Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) Coordinator

Bellarmino's CPL Coordinator chairs the CPL Committee, convenes the Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee, and assists students, faculty, and staff needing information or support related to credit for prior learning.

Contact: Martha Carlson Mazur, CPL Coordinator, [mmazur@bellarmine.edu](mailto:mmazur@bellarmine.edu)

### Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) Committee

The CPL committee consists of faculty, administrators and staff, including representatives from the Registrar's Office and the Student Success Center. The committee oversees Credit for Prior Learning policies and procedures, including monitoring, evaluating and revising the CPL program to respond to university and student needs (see CAEL Standard number ten for Assessing Prior Learning).

Contact: Martha Carlson Mazur, CPL Coordinator, [mmazur@bellarmine.edu](mailto:mmazur@bellarmine.edu)

### Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee

Assessment of portfolios is completed by a Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee of credentialed faculty representing each college and division within the university. Staff from a variety of relevant offices serve on the committee as non-voting members. Committee members are provided training in portfolio assessment and work together to determine whether, and how much, academic credit is awarded for prior learning portfolios. Each portfolio is assigned a primary reader within the committee, who is awarded an amount equal to the portfolio assessment fee for this leadership in the process.

Contact: Martha Carlson Mazur, CPL Coordinator, [mmazur@bellarmine.edu](mailto:mmazur@bellarmine.edu)

### Faculty and Department Chairs

Individual faculty and/or department chairs serve as consultants to the Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee for subject matter expertise, as needed, when determining whether to award academic credit.

### Academic Advisors

Advisors, whether faculty or professional advisors in the Student Success Center, can assist students in planning classes, finding campus resources, making decisions when facing academic challenges, and navigating academic policies. An academic advisor can help students determine whether to apply for prior learning credit through the portfolio process and point them toward the resources needed to make that decision.

Contact: [studentsuccess@bellarmine.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@bellarmine.edu)

### Writing Center

The Writing Center, housed within the Student Success Center, supports all members of the campus community, including undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and staff. Coaches are available to work with writers at any stage of the writing process. Students completing a Credit for Prior Learning portfolio are strongly encouraged to seek assistance from the writing center and work with their writing coaches to edit prior learning narratives and other portfolio content before submitting them for assessment.

Contact: 502.272.8453

<https://www.bellarmino.edu/studentsuccess/writing-center/>

#### Registrar's Office

The registrar is the university official responsible for registering students and maintaining university records. The registrar's office evaluates transfer credit, standardized test scores, and other student credentials. The Bellarmine registrar also manages the university course catalog, and therefore tracks academic policies and procedures, including those related to credit for prior learning. A representative of the registrar's office serves on the CPL committee. If the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee determines to award academic credit for a portfolio, the registrar records that credit on the student's progress report and transcript and informs Student Accounts of related fees.

Contact: registrar@bellarmine.edu

#### Student Accounts Office

The director of Student Accounts oversees the Student Accounts Office and communicates information related to billing, tuition, and fees. Student Accounts will post portfolio assessment and credit processing fees to student accounts once a portfolio has been submitted and assessed.

Contact: studentaccounts@bellarmine.edu

### **CPL Policies**

Credits awarded for prior learning must comply to the standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) as well as the policies of the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education. The following are university policies related to eligibility, guidelines, limitations, and procedures for prior learning portfolio credit.

- A student must be admitted to Bellarmine in order to be awarded credit for prior learning through the university.
- Bellarmine awards course equivalency credit for portfolios. Portfolios must address the learning outcomes of one or more specific courses offered at Bellarmine.
- If a program-level accrediting agency imposes limitations on, or standards for, prior learning credit, those restrictions or guidelines will be honored for that program.
- Prior learning portfolio credits can apply toward major, minor, prerequisite, general education, or elective courses, unless restricted by a program accreditation policy, and at the discretion of the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee.
- Students may apply for portfolio credit for a specific course only one time, regardless of whether credit is awarded or denied.
- Students cannot receive CPL credit for courses or experiences they have previously received academic credit for (duplication of credit).
- A student may not audit, withdraw from, or fail a course at Bellarmine and later receive credit for the same course through a prior learning portfolio.
- Assessment is based on the learning identified and documented in the portfolio, not the intrinsic value of work, military, or other life experiences.

- Credit for portfolio submissions is not guaranteed.
- Only the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee can determine if and how many credits are awarded. The CPL Coordinator, academic advisors, admissions councilors, and BU 310/311 instructors cannot guarantee credit by portfolio.
- Credit for prior learning is assigned as a “P” (passing) grade, not a letter grade, and will not impact a student’s GPA.
- Credits earned through prior learning portfolios do not meet the residency requirement for graduation.
- Credit for portfolios may or may not transfer to another university, depending on the policies of the transfer institution.
- Students should work with the Accessibility Resource Center if an alternative form of assessment is required based on educational accommodations.

### **CAEL’s Standards for Assessing Prior Learning**

Founded in 1974, the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) is a nonprofit dedicated to supporting adult learners, promoting learning strategies for working students, and improving education-to-career pathways. They are nationally recognized by all regional accreditors for the assessment of prior learning and are endorsed by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), the American Council on Education (ACE), and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The CAEL *Standards for Assessing Prior Learning* inform the guidelines for many universities and are recommended by the Higher Learning Commission.

- 1) Credit or competencies are awarded only for evidence of learning, not for experience or time spent.
- 2) Assessment is integral to learning because it leads to and enables future learning.
- 3) Assessment is based on criteria for outcomes that are clearly articulated and shared among constituencies.
- 4) The determination of credit awards and competence levels are made by appropriate subject matter and credentialing experts.
- 5) Assessment advances the broader purpose of equity and access for diverse individuals and groups.
- 6) Institutions proactively provide guidance and support for learners’ full engagement in the assessment process.
- 7) Assessment policies and procedures are the result of inclusive deliberation and are shared with all constituencies.
- 8) Fees charged for assessment are based on the services performed in the process rather than the credit awarded.
- 9) All practitioners involved in the assessment process pursue and receive adequate training and continuing professional development for the functions they perform.



- 10) Assessment programs are regularly monitored, evaluated and revised to respond to institutional and learner needs.

### **Bellarmino Guidelines for College-Level Learning**

Following are the guidelines Bellarmine follows when assessing prior learning portfolios.

1. Learning needs to be differentiated from the experiences. Credit is awarded for knowledge acquired during life or work experience and not for the experience itself.
2. Learning should be college-level. To demonstrate that learning is college-level, students should use one or more of the following measures:
  - a. relate learning to a specific course or courses taught at Bellarmine;
  - b. compare learning with professionals who have completed college-level study;
  - c. relate learning to a personal goal that requires college-level learning;
  - d. Identify learning as beyond high school level and as expected for professional competency.
3. Learning should be current, especially in those instances in which a student is applying for graduate credit.
4. Learning must be demonstrated to and evaluated by credentialed full-time Bellarmine faculty members.
5. Learning should demonstrate an understanding of both the theoretical and practical aspects of the knowledge possessed.
6. Learning should demonstrate general applicability outside the specific situation in which it was acquired.
7. Learning should be related to the student's goals and proposed degree program.

### **Portfolio Development Courses**

Bellarmino offers undergraduate students a series of two online asynchronous half-term courses to guide them through the portfolio development process, BU-310 and BU-311. Students receive credit for completing these courses and developing a prior learning portfolio, regardless of whether the portfolio is submitted to the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee for assessment. Students must enroll in the course by completing a form from the Registrar, which assists them in assessing whether they qualify for portfolio credit.

Adult degree completion students interested in earning credit through the portfolio process are required to complete BU-310 and BU-311, which offer hands-on guidance through the detailed analysis and documentation of prior learning required for a portfolio submission.

BU-310: *Experiential Prior Learning Assessment I* (1 credit) Using Kolb's Experiential Learning Model, students will identify personal and professional competencies developed through experiential learning and will make connections between these competencies and the skills required for success in their program. Through a structured reflection process, students will identify appropriate

standards to evaluate college-level, credit-worthy experiential learning. Students will develop a prior learning portfolio outline with supporting materials and evidence of competencies.

BU-311: *Experiential Prior Learning Assessment II* (2 credits) Building upon their work in BU-310: *Experiential Prior Learning Assessment I*, students will use a structured documentation process to apply identified competencies and skills gained through experiential learning for appropriate college-level credit. This work culminates in the development of a Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio. Upon completion, students may choose to submit the Portfolio for review by the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee. **This class includes a \$150 course fee that covers the cost of portfolio assessment.** If students submit more than one portfolio, an additional assessment fee will be applied. BU-310 is a prerequisite for BU-311.

### **Fees**

For undergraduate students, a non-refundable portfolio review fee of \$150.00 is charged when submitting a portfolio for assessment, unless the student has paid the \$150 course fee to enroll in BU-311. An additional fee of \$850.00 is charged after a portfolio has been evaluated, if credit is awarded. This fee covers all credit earned through the portfolio. (See Multiple Portfolio Submissions below).

For graduate students, a non-refundable portfolio review fee of \$150.00 is charged at the point of portfolio application. An additional fee equal to one credit hour of tuition is charged for each course credit is awarded for.

### **Deadline**

Portfolios will not be accepted after the mid-point of the semester prior to graduation, to confirm that degree requirements are being met.

### **Credit Limits**

A student can use a single portfolio to apply for credit for multiple courses. Undergraduate students can earn up to 30 credits for prior learning demonstrated through the portfolio process. Graduate students can earn up to 6 credits for prior learning through the portfolio process.

Undergraduate students can earn no more than 60 hours of credit through combined credit for prior learning options, including standardized exams, challenge exams, and portfolios. Credit awarded through Joint Service Transcripts does not count towards this maximum, unless it's included as evidence of learning as part of a Credit for Prior Learning portfolio. Graduate students can earn no more than 6 hours of credit through prior learning assessments, including challenge exams and prior learning portfolios.

### **Multiple Portfolio Submissions**

Students may apply for portfolio credit for a specific course only one time, regardless of whether credit is awarded or denied. However, students are permitted to submit up to three portfolios while at Bellarmine, each seeking credit for one or more courses.

A separate \$150 assessment fee will be charged for each portfolio submission. The initial \$850 fee for credit awarded will cover all credit an undergraduate student receives through the portfolio

process, whether through a single or multiple submission/s. Graduate credit for each portfolio will be charged at a rate equal to one credit hour of tuition for each course equivalent awarded as credit, in addition to the assessment fee.

### **Portfolio Components**

A Credit for Prior Learning portfolio is designed to demonstrate college-level knowledge and academic ability. Portfolios should:

1. provide documentation that the student has gained college-level competencies that directly correlate to one or more Bellarmine University courses;
2. clarify that credit has not already been awarded for these competencies;
3. explain how life experiences have led to the competencies; and
4. demonstrate college-level skills such as organization, analysis, reflection, and effective written communication.

The portfolio should also demonstrate an understanding of the learning process and, where possible, show that life experiences have led to higher-level thinking, learning, and understanding. (See Bloom's Taxonomy below).

### **FORMATTING:**

All written documents should:

- be single spaced or use 1.15 or 1.5 line spacing;
- use a simple 12-point font (ideally a serif font such as Times New Roman, Georgia, etc.);
- have 1" margins.

Each portfolio must include the following elements.

### **PORTFOLIO COMPONENTS:**

- A completed **Credit for Prior Learning Application Form**;
- A **Cover Letter** that explains which course or courses the student is seeking credit for and provides a brief overview of relevant prior learning;
- A **Resume** that includes educational, professional, service, and other relevant experiences;
- Official or unofficial **Transcripts** for university credit received to date;
- For Each Course:
  - A Bellarmine **Course Syllabus** (with course description and learning outcomes) for the course that applicant is seeking credit for;
  - A **Course Competency Chart** that matches all course learning outcomes with the applicant's training or experiential learning;
  - A **Prior Learning Narrative** addressing all course learning outcomes and linking them to prior training or learning achieved through professional, service, creative, scholarly, or other experiences;

- An **Index of Supporting Documentation**;
- Supporting **Documentation** organized in correlation to the Prior Learning Narrative.

### **Application for Portfolio Credit**

Students must complete a Credit for Prior Learning Application Form available from the CPL Coordinator.

### **Cover Letter**

The cover letter provides an introduction to, and overview of, the student's credit for prior learning goals. It should be addressed to the "Members of the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee" and include:

- academic and career goals;
- details explaining the request for prior learning credit, including what course or courses the student is seeing credit for and how this credit supports academic goals;
- a brief overview of life experience/s relevant to course learning outcomes;
- any additional information that may help the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee understand the student's background, competencies, and qualifications for college credit.

### **Resume**

A resume is an overview of professional, educational, and other relevant experiences. It should be thorough but succinct, limited to 1 to 3 pages in length. Resumes should be organized using reverse chronological order, with experiences in clearly defined sections (Employment, Volunteer Experience, etc.). Concise narrative descriptions may be included where helpful.

Contents may include:

- Formal Education - high school, college/university;
- Informal Education - Training, workshops, seminars, non-credit courses, private lessons;
- Certificates, Licenses, and similar credentials if not listed elsewhere;
- Employment, with clear job descriptions of responsibilities if related to prior learning;
- Military Experience;
- Volunteer/Service Experience, with clear descriptions of duties if related to prior learning;
- Publications;
- Accomplishments, Awards, and relevant Interests and Activities, if not listed elsewhere.

### **Transcripts**

Transcripts clarify the learning that students have received credit for. The portfolio should include the student's Bellarmine transcript – official or unofficial – plus transcripts for any additional college credit that the student expects to count towards graduation and that is not included on the student's Bellarmine transcript. For transcripts of coursework that has not yet been transferred to Bellarmine, students must contact the previous institution where credit was awarded. For questions, please email Bellarmine's Registrar's Office at [registrar@bellarmine.edu](mailto:registrar@bellarmine.edu).

#### To Download Unofficial Bellarmine Transcripts

1. Log onto one.bellarmine.edu.
2. On your Student Dashboard, click on the Hamburger menu in the upper lefthand corner and select "Student & Academic"
3. In the "Academic Information" card, select "Unofficial Transcript".

#### **Bellarmino Course Syllabus**

For each course identified for portfolio credit, a copy of the course syllabus must be included. Students may obtain a syllabus by reaching out to the department chair or the division administrative assistant for the course. If needed, academic advisors or the CPL Coordinator can assist with this.

#### **Course Competency Chart**

In the Course Competency Chart and Prior Learning Narrative (the following two sections of the portfolio), students explain how prior or experiential learning meets all or most learning outcomes identified in the course syllabus.

For each course for which credit is sought, students must submit a Course Competency Chart. The chart connects—but distinguishes between—experience and learning. It matches experiences to competencies; relates competencies to specific course learning objectives; and explains how the competency is documented. This chart should form the foundation of the Prior Learning Narrative.

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Experience:</b> job title, position, etc.	<b>Description of Activities</b> (tasks & responsibilities)	<b>Competencies</b> (Learning)	<b>Documentation:</b> related evidence included in the portfolio
<b>Course Learning Outcome One:</b> [include outcome here]				
<b>Course Learning Outcome Two:</b> [include outcome here]				
<b>Course Learning Outcome Three:</b> [include outcome here]				


The chart should be customized to include all outcomes and relevant experiences.

For each experience, students should specify:

- What the experience/activity was. Examples may include: employment, training, workshops, seminars, volunteer service, committees, certificates, licenses, credentials, non-credit coursework, awards, publications, exhibits, travel, military experience, and others;
- The time spent on the experience/activity;
- A description of the experience/activity, making clear how it relates to the Learning Outcomes for the course;
- The documentation included in the portfolio that will help demonstrate the experience/activity's relation to course learning objectives. For example, job duties listed in the chart (and the relevant competencies gained from them) might be evidenced by a letter from an employer or supervisor. See the *Supporting Documentation* section for details.

### Competencies

Competencies involve knowledge, skills *and* behavior. They're often defined as the applied skills and knowledge that enable a student or employee to perform successfully. Competencies take *skills* and *knowledge* and incorporate them into *behaviors* that demonstrate the ability to perform competently.

Students are encouraged to seek out the reading materials required for each course (or similar materials, if needed) in order understand the competencies covered by each learning outcomes. As an example, course learning outcomes may include "demonstrating effective oral communication," which could be further broken down into competencies such as organizing ideas, effective writing, creating visual aids, non-verbal communication, and adapting to an audience through careful listening and perception. O\*Net is an excellent source to begin analyzing the competencies developed through professional experience. See the O\*Net section under "Supporting Documentation" letter in this handbook.

### **Prior Learning Narrative**

The Prior Learning Narrative is an autobiographical essay explaining how learning acquired through life experiences meets the learning outcomes of the specific college course identified for portfolio credit. Learning statements within the Narrative should align with the learning outcomes listed in the Bellarmine course syllabus and reflect both the Course Competency Chart and the portfolio's Supporting Documentation.

The Narrative should be:

- approximately 3-4 pages in length for each course learning outcome;
- written in first person;

- in 12-point font;
- with 1” margins;
- and numbered pages.

The narrative should integrate theoretical knowledge related to the course subject area with reflection on one’s personal experience with the practical application of this knowledge.

Students should explain anecdotally (through stories) – and reflect on – what they have learned, relevant to the course learning outcomes, including how/when/where learning was acquired. Additionally, students should explain how learning was applied, both in the learning environment and in other situations, along with reflecting on the results (both successful and unsuccessful) of these applications. The focus should be on concrete examples rather than general statements about personal skills, knowledge, and behaviors.

The narrative should demonstrate a basic understanding of how concrete experiences transform into learning (see Kolb’s Model of Experiential Learning) and which levels of learning demonstrate greatest cognitive processing (see Bloom’s Taxonomy). Where possible, students should attempt to demonstrate learning at a high level: application, analysis, evaluation, and/or creation.

The narrative should detail each item of Supporting Documentation and make clear which experience each item of documentation reflects and which learning outcome each document helps demonstrate.

Portfolios are reviewed for writing clarity and persuasiveness in addition to content. Working with Bellarmine’s Writing Center is highly recommended:

<https://www.bellarmino.edu/studentsuccess/writing-center/>

### Getting Started

Following are some questions to help students as they begin to map out a Learning Narrative.

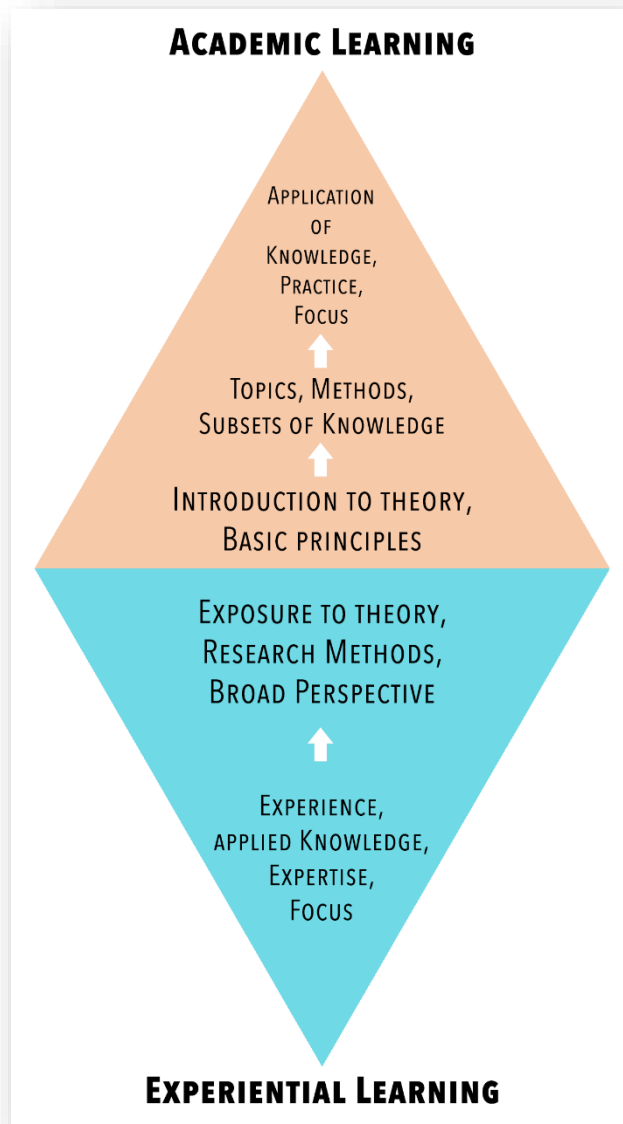
- In what area of your life have you gained knowledge that directly relates to the course learning outcomes?
- As a starting point, what can you state in general about your competencies as they related to each course learning outcome? What is your skill level?
- Can you break down the learning outcomes and speak to one or more component competencies touched on by the learning outcome? Consider researching the component parts of each outcome. For example, oral communication might include organizing ideas, creating visual aids, gauging audience engagement, overcoming nervousness, etc.
- What have you learned about the course subject area through work, training, research, workshops, observation?
- How have you demonstrated the competency?
- What mistakes were made along the way that helped you learn? Evaluate actions that occurred in a learning situation. What did and did not work? How did you – or would you – approach the situation again to produce a more successful outcome?

- How have you applied your learning to similar situations?
- Have you applied this learning to different situations/other areas of your life? If so, can you discuss this?

### The Organization of Learning: Experiential vs. Academic

Understanding theories of learning will assist students in identifying and clarifying how they have demonstrated the competencies expected of course learning outcomes.

One challenge of assigning academic credit for experiential learning is that the organization of the learning process is different.



College courses are generally designed to **first** introduce theories, concepts, and principles **and then** to encourage students to apply them to experience or examples. In this way, college learning is frequently designed 'from theory to practice'.

On the other hand, life learning most frequently develops 'from practice to theory.' One experiences phenomena or behavior, often repeatedly, and develops theories and responses based on observation. Experiential learners draw conclusions, sometimes unconsciously, from actions and personal observations.

It may benefit students preparing a portfolio to make knowledge more complete in order to receive college credit. Students might read books, seek additional training, and complete other research to gain greater knowledge of the relevant theoretical principles.

In addition, because much of experiential knowledge is tacit, learning to reflect on one's experience is a critical part of the learning (and portfolio) process. Portfolio authors are expected to link personal knowledge of the course content with the theory and concepts examined in the classroom.

### Blooms Taxonomy

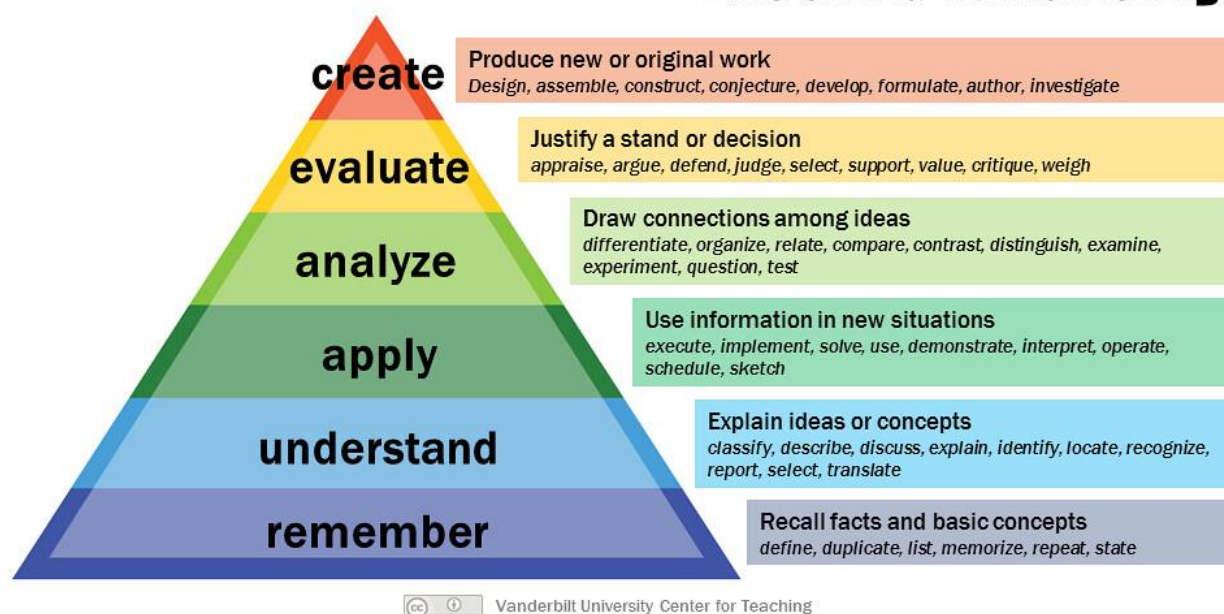


Bloom's Taxonomy is a framework used to classify distinct levels of thinking, learning, and understanding running along a continuum from simple to complex and from concrete to abstract. Each level of understanding builds on the ones below it and demands greater cognitive processing. Each level of Bloom's "pyramid" represents a fundamental skill supporting successful learning and critical thinking.

An understanding of Bloom's Taxonomy can help students move beyond a superficial discussion of personal experiences and support a deeper understanding and analysis of the learning gained through aspects of their professional and personal life. Where possible, students should strive to demonstrate learning at the higher levels of Bloom's hierarchy.

1. **Remember:** At this basic level, students commit information or ideas to memory. This is helpful when needing to recall terms, facts, methods, formulas, and the like.
2. **Understand:** At the comprehension level, students are able to manipulate information, beyond simply recalling it in a rote fashion, by grasping, interpreting, paraphrasing, describing, or translating it from one form to another.
3. **Apply:** At the application level, students are able to use what they've learned in new environments and situations and to solve problems by applying the theories and concepts they've come to understand.
4. **Analyze:** At the level of analysis, students can break down information into its component parts, draw connections between ideas, recognize organizing principles, identify the relationship between facts, compare and contrast, and distinguish relevancy.
5. **Evaluate:** Evaluation is the ability to render an informed judgement regarding the value of information or ideas based on relevant criteria. For example, careful evaluation allows students to effectively assess whether an argument is well-supported, whether information is logical, and whether and why an action or process is successful.
6. **Create:** At the highest level of cognition, students use what they've learned to originate new ideas and to integrate diverse concepts and sources of information in order to solve problems, design plans, investigate new areas, and create original theories, proposals, and projects.

# Bloom's Taxonomy



There are a number of resources online and elsewhere that offer lists of verbs organized by the tiers of Bloom's Taxonomy. Students are encouraged to consider these when writing their Learning Narrative and, where applicable, to use verbs associated with higher tiers in order to demonstrate advanced understanding. Following is a helpful guide from CAEL to support students in the effort to apply Bloom's Taxonomy to the learning narrative (Colvin 2012, see Resources).

Level	Description	Key Words & Reflections
Remembering	Recall and describe information: facts, terms, and basic concepts	What, where, when, which, how. Can you describe, define, recall, name, and explain your knowledge?
Understanding	Describe, clarify, explain concepts, facts and ideas.	Demonstrate, compare, interpret, clarify. Can you explain your knowledge in your own words?
Applying	Demonstrate how the concepts, facts, or ideas can be used.	Apply, experiment, do. How did you apply your knowledge to a specific situation?
Analyzing	Examine your decisions and actions in more detail.	Explain, categorize, deduct, problem solve. Why did you arrive at your conclusions about the subject matter?
Evaluating	Judge the validity of the decision or action taken.	Evaluate, judge, make recommendations. What recommendations do you have as a result of evaluating your learning?
Creating	Create or change something based on previous learning.	Plan, change, create, innovate. What innovation resulted in your learning?

## Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning

David Kolb's theory of experiential learning can also help students ascertain and demonstrate what they've learned through professional and other life experiences. Kolb's theory describes a repeating

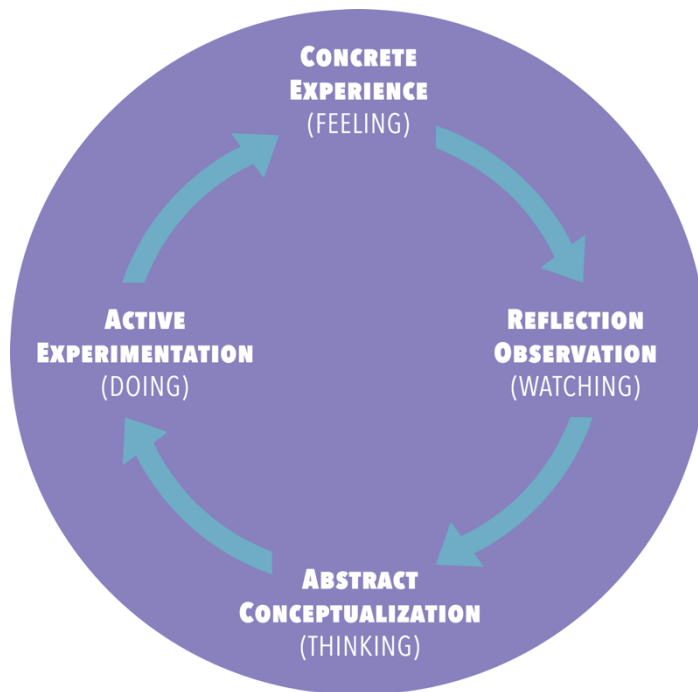
cycle of four processes that students can use as an organizing tool for their discussions of experiential learning.

1. Concrete Experience

2. Reflection and Observation of the Experience, drawing connections between personal experiences and what students have read and researched.

3. Development of Abstract Concepts based on the experience, with evidence

4. Active Experimentation, generalizing the learning by applying it to new situations and environments, which leads back to concrete experiences.



### **Index of Supporting Documentation**

The Index of Supporting Documentation lists and describes each document or file used as evidence in the portfolio.

Documents should be organized in the order in which they are discussed in the Learning Narrative, and the index should include the file name and a 1-2 sentence description for each item. Ideally file names should help identify and systematize the documentation. Unless redundant, the description for each item of documentation should include:

What: the evidence is;

Who: authored, created, or is included in the document (people or institutions);

Where: the experience took place (geographic locations, institutions, or venues);

When: the experience took place, including dates or a date range;

Why: the evidence is included. What does it demonstrate or illustrate?

### **Supporting Documentation.**

The purpose of Supporting Documentation is to verify statements in the Course Competency Chart and Learning Narrative.

Whenever possible, documentation should be:

- Relevant: directly tied to learning outcomes;
- Complete: covering all activities used in the narrative to explain learning;
- Detailed: including dates as well as the breadth and depth of responsibilities, contributions, and competencies;

- Reliable: authentic, notarized, signed on letterhead, or otherwise verifiable;
- Consistent: correctly matching the details outlined in the resume, course competency chart, and narrative;
- Persuasive: providing the strongest evidence possible, with a focus on quality over quantity.

Examples of External Evidence: generated by a third party

- Letter/s from employers or supervisors
- Training records, certificates or licenses
- Joint Service Transcripts
- Employment Contracts
- Awards
- Performance evaluations
- Letters from clients or customers
- Test Scores
- Non-credit course descriptions. Evidence of course completion is required
- Corporate or media announcements of promotion or achievement
- Patents
- Conference or meeting programs
- Workshop descriptions
- Business cards
- O\*Net job description/s

Examples of Internal Evidence: generated by the student

- Professional work samples: presentations, reports, articles written, meeting minutes, brochures, budgets, correspondence, lesson plans, syllabi, proposals, reports, spreadsheets, graphics, websites
- Creative or scholarly output: publications, recordings, musical scores, artwork
- Photographic or video documentation of professional or scholarship activities
- Annotated Bibliographies of Readings
- Works created specifically for the portfolio to demonstrate creative or technical skills.

### Letters from Employers

Whenever possible, letters from employers or supervisors should speak directly to the skills the student hopes to demonstrate in the portfolio. One option is for students to share all or part of the learning narrative and seek a letter confirming that the employer/supervisor agrees with the learning statements within it. Another option is for students to provide the employer/supervisor with a list of skills or competencies they hope will be addressed in the letter. Like all letters of support, writers should identify their own position or role within the business or organization and discuss how long, and in what capacity, they have known the student.

### O\*Net

O\*Net describes itself as “the nation's primary source of occupational information,” with a “database, containing hundreds of standardized and occupation-specific descriptors on almost 1,000 occupations covering the entire U.S. economy.”

In addition to helping Americans to find occupations that meet their skills, and to understand the training needed to qualify for the jobs they aspire to, O\*Net provides a breakdown of the competencies demonstrated through work in hundreds of professions. In this regard, it is an excellent tool for assisting students seeking credit for experiential learning, both as a starting point to analyze competencies they’ve acquired through their professions and as a document to help support learning statements made in the Learning Narrative.

To discover the skills, knowledge, abilities and tasks O\*Net associates with an occupation:

- Visit <http://www.onetonline.org>
- In “Occupational Search”, denoted by a blue icon with a key, type in a job title or description.
- Click the arrow to the right of the text box.
- Search the results list for a strong match, and explore the information provided.

### Confidential Documentation

Highly confidential content should be redacted, blacked out, or omitted from documentation where possible. As needed, student should explain edits to any documents.

### **Academic Writing Standards**

Prior Learning Portfolios both document experiential learning and demonstrate that students are developing college-level skills including organization, analysis, and persuasive writing. Components of the portfolio including the cover letter, resume and Prior Learning Narrative will be assessed in part using basic academic writing expectations. These include, but are not limited to, the following.

The Cover Letter, Resume, and Prior Learning Narrative should demonstrate:

- the clear and effective communication of ideas;
- organization meeting the expectations of the writing genre;

- few or no errors in grammar, syntax, punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and usage;
- the correct citation of sources; and
- a tone that is sufficiently academic or professional and writing that avoids colloquialisms and overly informal language.

Additionally, the Prior Learning Narrative should follow fundamental rules for essay writing.

- An introduction should present the topic and content effectively.
- A conclusion should summarize main points and state the significance of the learning aligned with course objectives.
- Main points should be well organized within the body of the narrative, which progresses in a logical order and creates convincing arguments.

### **Academic Honesty and Integrity**

Prior Learning Portfolios must adhere to Bellarmine's academic policies, including those related to academic honesty and integrity. The entire policy, and the procedures entailed in reporting violations, can be found in the university course catalog. Following is a summary of violations related to academic writing and other potential components of a portfolio. Claims of ignorance cannot be used to justify or rationalize violations of the policy.

- Cheating: includes receiving or giving help on work submitted for academic credit. It also includes submitting the work of another as one's own.
- Plagiarism: is the fraudulent misrepresentation of any part of another person's work as one's own. Submitting any writing that does not properly acknowledge that one is quoting or paraphrasing another person's words or that fails to give proper credit for another person's ideas, opinion, or theory, is plagiarism. Any unacknowledged use of sources to which one is indebted, including but not limited to music, video, audio, theatre projects, compositions, web site, and computer software, constitutes plagiarism.
- Fabrication: is the falsification or invention of information or data in any academic undertaking.
- Multiple Submissions: refers to submitting identical work for credit in more than one course, including portfolios or portfolio courses, without prior permission of the faculty member.
- Obtaining Unfair Advantage: includes any activity designed to obtain an unfair academic advantage over another student. It also includes gaining or providing access to course materials prior to the time authorized by a faculty member or engaging in unauthorized collaboration on any work submitted for academic credit.

- **Unauthorized Access to Academic or Administrative Systems:** includes viewing or altering computer records in any way, modifying computer programs or systems, misrepresenting through digital media oneself or someone else, or in any way interfering with the use or availability of computer systems/information.
- **Aiding and Abetting:** is assisting someone in an act of academic dishonesty as defined above.

### **Portfolio Development and Submission Process/Steps**

Following are the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio creation, submission, and assessment steps for Bellarmine undergraduate and graduate students. Questions regarding this process can be addressed to the CPL Coordinator.

#### For Undergraduate Students Completing BU-310 and 311

- 1. Review Eligibility:**  
Discuss eligibility for prior learning credit with an academic advisor or the CPL Coordinator.
- 2. Enroll in Portfolio Classes:**  
Enroll in BU-310 and BU-311. Students enrolling in BU-311 will be charged a non-refundable \$150 course fee that covers one portfolio assessment.
- 3. Create the Portfolio:**  
Complete BU-310 and BU-311. A Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio is due at the completion of BU-311. Do not submit the portfolio for assessment prior to its final draft.
- 4. Prepare Portfolio for Final Submission:**  
If the BU-311 instructor feels the portfolio is worthy of credit, make final edits. If desired, the portfolio can be expanded to seek credit for additional courses (up to a 30-credit maximum) before final submission.
- 5. Solicit Feedback** (optional but encouraged):  
If desired, share the portfolio with the CPL Coordinator and/or campus Writing Center for input prior to submission for assessment. The Coordinator may provide feedback related to: formatting, organization, demonstration of learning, alignment with course learning outcomes, or the strength of documentation. The Coordinator may make general notes related to writing errors or clarity but will not edit the work. It may take several weeks to receive feedback. The Coordinator may recommend working with the Writing Center for writing improvement. Writing Center coaches can help to polish portfolio elements prior to submission. Students are welcome to solicit feedback from others on campus, including peers and mentors.
- 6. Submit Portfolio:**  
Submit the final portfolio to the CPL Coordinator. Only digital submissions are accepted. Files should be organized and easy to navigate. The CPL Coordinator sends the Application for Portfolio Credit to Student Accounts and the Registrar. The CPL Coordinator will also make the portfolio available to the registrar, reviewers, and others as needed.

**7. Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee Assesses Portfolio:**

The CPL Coordinator will convene the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee to assess the portfolio for academic credit using the prior learning portfolio rubric and will identify the primary reader. The assessment process will take approximately three weeks.

All members of the portfolio review committee will read the portfolio and complete an assessment rubric. The primary reader will lead a discussion of the portfolio, as needed; collect the assessment scores and comments from fellow committee members; create a Portfolio Assessment Report by averaging the assessment scores; determine whether credit should be granted; and provide numerical and written feedback directed to the student.

**8. Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee Submits Assessment Report:**

On the completion of the review, the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Assessment Committee will submit the Portfolio Assessment Report to the CPL Coordinator, including an explanation of credit awarded or declined.

**9. CPL Coordinator Reviews Assessment Report, Submits Report to the Registrar, and Informs the Student of Results:**

If the CPL Coordinator is in agreement with the Portfolio Assessment Report, the CPL Coordinator will sign off on the recommendation and submit it to the Registrar. The CPL Coordinator will inform the student of credit awarded via email and provide the student with the Portfolio Assessment Report.

**10. Registrar Applies Credit:**

The Registrar will apply credit to the student's transcript, notify Student Accounts, and submit a check request for payment to the primary reader.

**11. Student Accounts Office Charges Fee for Credit Awarded**

The Student Accounts Office will then charge an \$850 credit fee for all credit awarded.

**12. Update Graduation Plan:**

As needed, students should discuss an updated degree completion plan with their academic advisor once credit for prior learning is awarded.

**For Undergraduate Students Not Completing BU-310 and 311**

**1. Review Eligibility:**

Discuss eligibility for prior learning credit with an academic advisor or the CPL Coordinator.

**2. Inform the CPL Coordinator:**

The CPL Coordinator will provide materials and answer questions related to the process.

**3. Create the Portfolio:**

With guidance from the CPL Portfolio Handbook, create a Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio. Portfolios are submitted digitally. Each undergraduate portfolio may seek credit for up to ten 3-credit courses, for a maximum of 30 credit hours.



4. **Solicit Feedback** (optional but encouraged):  
If desired, share the portfolio with the CPL Coordinator and/or campus Writing Center for input prior to submissions. Don't submit the portfolio for assessment prior to its final draft. The Coordinator may provide feedback related to: formatting, organization, demonstration of learning, alignment with course learning outcomes, or strength of the documentation. The Coordinator may make general notes related to writing errors or clarity but will not edit the work. It may take several weeks to receive feedback. The Coordinator may recommend working with the Writing Center for writing improvement. Writing Center coaches can help to polish portfolio elements prior to submission. Students are welcome to solicit feedback from others on campus, including peers and mentors.
5. **Submit Portfolio:**  
Submit the final portfolio to the CPL Coordinator. Only digital submissions are accepted. Files should be organized and easy to navigate. The CPL Coordinator sends the Application for Portfolio Credit to Student Accounts and the Registrar. The CPL Coordinator will also make the portfolio available to the registrar, reviewers, and others as needed.
6. **Student Accounts Office Charges Fee for Portfolio Assessment:**  
A non-refundable \$150 portfolio assessment fee will be charged to the student's account.
7. **Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee Assesses Portfolio:**  
The CPL Coordinator will convene the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee to assess the portfolio for academic credit using the prior learning portfolio rubric and will identify a primary reader. The assessment process will take approximately three weeks.  
  
All members of the review committee will read the portfolio and complete an assessment rubric. The primary reader will lead a discussion of the portfolio, as needed; collect the assessment scores and comments from fellow committee members; create a Portfolio Assessment Report by averaging the assessment scores; determine whether credit should be granted; and provide numerical and written feedback directed to the student.
8. **Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee Submits Assessment Report:**  
On the completion of the review, the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Assessment Committee will submit the Portfolio Assessment Report to the CPL Coordinator, including an explanation of credit awarded or declined.
9. **CPL Coordinator Reviews Assessment Report, Submits Report to the Registrar, and Informs the Student of Results:**  
If the CPL Coordinator is in agreement with the Assessment Report, the CPL Coordinator will sign off on the recommendation and submit it to the Registrar. The CPL Coordinator will inform the student of credit awarded via email and provide the student with the Portfolio Assessment Report.
10. **Registrar Applies Credit:**  
The Registrar will apply credit to the student's transcript, notify Student Accounts, and submit a check request for payment to the primary reader.

#### **11. Student Accounts Office Charges Fee for Credit Awarded**

The Student Accounts Office will then charge an \$850 credit fee for all credit awarded.

#### **12. Update Graduation Plan:**

As needed, students should discuss an updated degree completion plan with their academic advisor once credit for prior learning is awarded.

### For Graduate Students

#### **1. Review Eligibility:**

Discuss eligibility for prior learning credit with an academic advisor, graduate program chair, and/or the CPL Coordinator.

#### **2. Inform the CPL Coordinator:**

The CPL Coordinator will provide access to materials and answer questions as needed.

#### **3. Create the Portfolio:**

With guidance from the CPL Portfolio Handbook, create a Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio. Portfolios are submitted digitally. Graduate students may apply for up to 6 credits through the portfolio process.

#### **4. Solicit Feedback** (optional but encouraged):

If desired, share the portfolio with the CPL Coordinator and/or campus Writing Center for input prior to submissions. Don't submit the portfolio for assessment prior to its final draft. The Coordinator may provide feedback related to: formatting, organization, demonstration of learning, alignment with course learning outcomes, or strength of documentation. The Coordinator may make general notes related to writing errors or clarity but will not edit the work. It may take several weeks to receive feedback. The Coordinator may recommend working with the Writing Center for writing improvement. Writing Center coaches can help to polish portfolio elements prior to submission. Students are welcome to solicit feedback from others on campus, including peers and mentors.

#### **5. Submit Portfolio:**

Submit the final portfolio to the CPL Coordinator. Only digital submissions are accepted. Files should be organized and easy to navigate. The CPL Coordinator sends the Application for Portfolio Credit to Student Accounts and the Registrar. The CPL Coordinator will also make the portfolio available to the registrar, reviewers, and others as needed.

#### **6. Student Accounts Office Charges Fee for Portfolio Assessment:**

The CPL Coordinator will inform Student Accounts that the student has submitted a portfolio. A non-refundable \$150 assessment fee will be charged to the student's account.

#### **7. Graduate Program Chair Assesses Portfolio:**

The CPL Coordinator will review the portfolio and give it to the student's program chair – or the chair of the program for which the student seeks graduate credit – for assessment using the CPL portfolio rubric. Assessment will take approximately three weeks.

**8. Portfolio Assessor Submits Assessment Report:**

On completion of the review, the portfolio assessor will submit a Portfolio Assessment Report to the CPL Coordinator, including numerical and written feedback for the student.

**9. CPL Coordinator Reviews Assessment Report, Submits Report to the Registrar, and Informs the Student of Results:**

If the CPL Coordinator is in agreement with the Assessment Report, she or he will sign off on the recommendation and submit it to the Registrar. The CPL Coordinator will inform the student of credit awarded via email and provide the student with the assessment report.

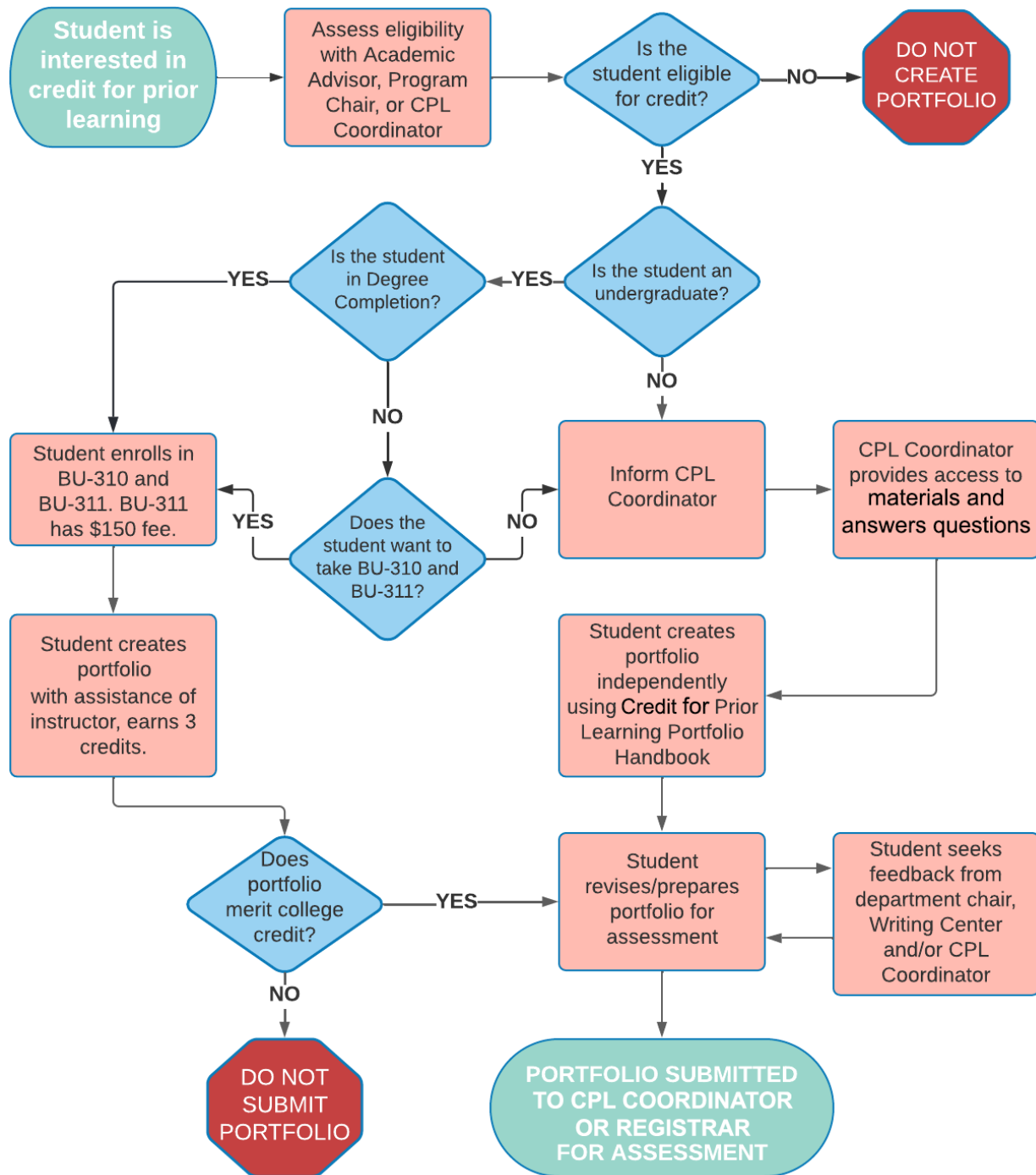
**10. Registrar Applies Credit:**

The Registrar will apply credit to the student's transcript, notify Student Accounts, and submit a check request for payment to the portfolio assessor.

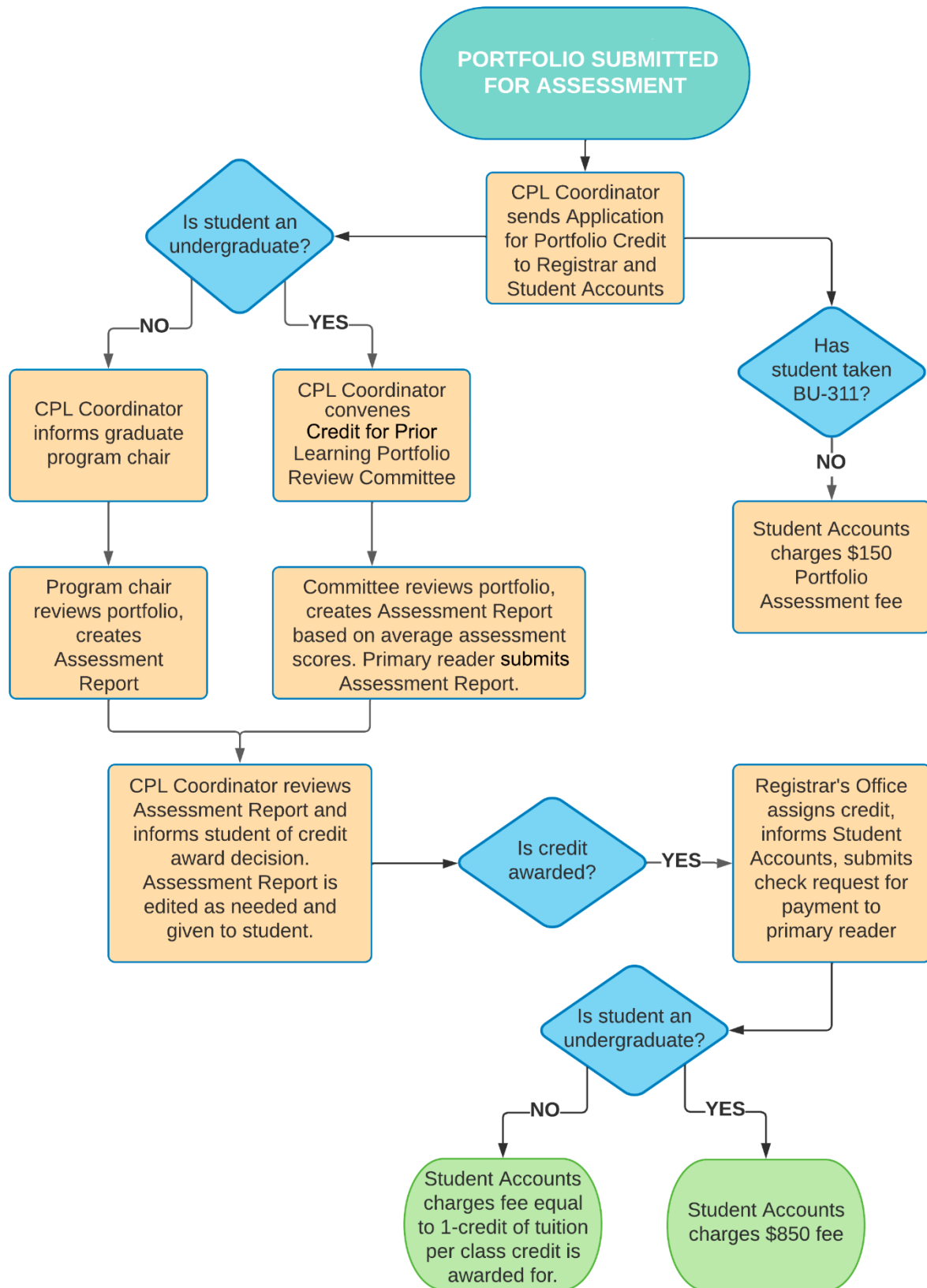
**11. Student Accounts Office Charges Fee for Credit Awarded**

The Student Accounts Office will then charge the student's account a fee equal to one-credit hour of tuition for each course equivalent for which a student is awarded credit.

**Workflow: Portfolio Development and Submission**



**Workflow: Portfolio Assessment**



## Portfolio Assessment Rubric

Members of the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee use a rubric to assess portfolios. Bellarmine has adopted the rubric created by CAEL, the Council on Adult and Experiential Learning. Students receive both written and numerical feedback.

- Credit is recommended if a portfolio receives a score of 20 or higher.
- Credit is not recommended for a score of 19 or below.
- Portfolios must merit a score of no less than 2 in any area.

Category	Zero	One	Two	Three	Four
<b>Course Outcomes Identified and Addressed</b>	Narrative and supporting documentation do not demonstrate a mastery of the course outcomes. Portfolio addresses less than 50% of the course outcomes.	Narrative and supporting documentation do not demonstrate a mastery of the course outcomes. Portfolio addresses fewer than 60% of the course outcomes.	Narrative and supporting documentation support the satisfactory mastery of at least 60% of the course outcomes.	Narrative and supporting documentation support the satisfactory mastery of at least 75% of the course outcomes.	Narrative and supporting documentation demonstrate mastery of all course outcomes.
<b>Learning from Experience</b>	Student does not understand and cannot clearly articulate how work and life experience meets college-level learning.	Student conflates experience of technical practice with mastery. Student argues, for example, that length of time in a position is equivalent to college-level learning.	Student demonstrates understanding of how experience and learning are linked, but provides few, if any, concrete examples of where this happened in his or her experience.	Student describes learning separately from experiences that led to the learning but gives limited concrete examples.	Student is able to distinguish between their experiences and the learning that comes from these experiences. Examples of this distinction appear throughout the portfolio.
<b>Understanding of Theory and Practice</b>	Student does not reference any outside theories or practice, does not provide fact-based experience and only provides general references to concepts.	Student relies on facts and experiences but does not relate learning to broader concepts or theories.	Student acknowledges a difference between theory and application, but provides few, if any, concrete examples.	Student demonstrates a balance between application and theory as appropriate to the course, but provides limited concrete examples.	Student is able to cite broader theoretical or conceptual links that are related to the learning.
<b>Reflection</b>	Student does not provide any reflection on his/her own experiences and learning; simply lists experiences like a résumé.	Student has not demonstrated the ability to apply theory to his or her own experience.	Student includes language appropriate to reflective thinking, but provides few, if any, examples.	Student understands the potential for applying theory to his or her own experience, and provides limited concrete examples.	Student demonstrates an ability to apply theory to his or her own experience, using concrete examples.

<b>Learning Application</b>	Student has not clearly articulated how learning has been impacted through work and life experience.	Student has not demonstrated that the learning is transferable to other contexts. Student has not conceptualized that the learning extends beyond the original experience.	Student understands that the learning is transferable to other contexts, but makes no attempt to do so.	Student understands that the learning is transferable, but clearly states that they have not yet had an opportunity to do so, or, have not otherwise been able to apply the learning to other environments.	Student demonstrates an ability to apply his or her learning to other contexts, as evidenced through specific examples. Student includes explicit references to how this knowledge has been transferred to other environments.
<b>Communication, Writing</b>	Communication is at or below a remedial level. Narrative is unorganized, inarticulate and full of errors in grammar and syntax.	Communication is not at a college level. Narrative is unclear and contains numerous errors in grammar and syntax.	Communication is satisfactory. Narrative flow may be unclear or may jump around. Communication features few or weak transitions. Communication contains grammatical or syntactical errors and sometimes goes off-topic.	Communication is focused and well organized. Communication is relatively free of grammatical or syntactical errors and is reflective of the commonly accepted rules for the English language. Communication is relevant to the learning outcomes being addressed.	Communication, either through the written word or orally, is at a high-level, including strong thesis statements, arguments which follow a logical order, and minimal to no syntactical errors. Communication stays tightly focused on the topic being addressed.
<b>Supporting Documentation</b>	Student does not provide any supporting documentation for reference.	The student has demonstrated an understanding of the connection between the pieces of evidence submitted and the learning acquired. However, supporting documentation is inserted in portfolio without referencing it elsewhere and seems to be independent of other components of the complete portfolio.	Student has demonstrated an understanding of why individual pieces of documentation have been included in this portfolio submission and how each piece relates to the broader petition and narrative. Documentation is not always relevant to demonstrating the mastery of course outcomes	Evidence provided to support the credit request is relevant to the petition and appropriate for a credit recommendation of college-level learning. Some superfluous documentation is included in the credit request.	Student has demonstrated an understanding of why individual pieces of documentation have been included in this portfolio submission and how each piece relates to the broader petition and narrative. Documentation is appropriate to supporting mastery of the outcomes of the course.

## **Appeal Procedure for Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Assessment**

The Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee is entrusted by the university to determine if a portfolio effectively demonstrates prior learning at the college level and meets the learning outcomes or competencies of an undergraduate Bellarmine course. If, however, students are confused by how the committee determined whether to award credit, they may pursue an appeal process. Initial department decisions for graduate Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio submissions are final.

Undergraduate students wishing to appeal a Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee decision must schedule a meeting with the Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) Coordinator within 10 days of receiving notification of the decision. In this meeting, they may review the reason/s for the discrepancy or concern in credit hours awarded. It may be that the issue can be resolved at this level with better documentation or a stronger explanation of the student's work-related learning or prior education. If the student's request gains the approval of the CPL Coordinator, additional details or documentation will be forwarded to Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee for consideration.

If the request for this review by the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio Review Committee is not approved by the CPL Coordinator, or if there is still a discrepancy in the credit hours awarded by the committee after reviewing additional materials, within 10 days of meeting with the coordinator or being notified of the committee's decision students may request in writing a meeting with the department chair of the course for which they are seeking credit, with the knowledge that the burden of proving that learning outcomes and course competencies have been met lies with student.

The department chair will respond to a student's query within 15 days of notification. If the matter continues to remain unresolved, the student may request in writing a consultation with the academic dean for the course. The dean will review the situation and respond to the student's appeal within 10 days. The decision of the dean is final and is reported in writing to the student, CPL Coordinator, and department chair. Upon conclusion of the appeal process, a student may elect to pursue a formal academic grievance in situations where they believe that they may have been treated unfairly or discriminated against on the basis of race, color, disability, religion, age, national origin, gender, or sexual orientation as it relates to the credits awarded or the appeal process.

## **Resources**

Resources for Students:

- Janet, Colvin, *Earn College Credit for What you Know*, Kendall Hunt, 2021

Resources for Faculty and Evaluators:

- Kelley, Chari A. Leader, *Assessing Student Portfolios for College Credit*, Kendall Hunt, 2017
- Younger, Donna and Catherine Marienau, *Assessing Learning: Quality Standards and Institutional Commitments*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Kendall Hunt, 2017