

# **Using Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) in Advising: Increasing Awareness and Student Success**

Presentation for the Hendrick Best Practices for Adult Learners Conference

Michele Rice

May 9, 2017



**PennState**

**Hendrick Best Practices for  
Adult Learners Conference**

May 9, 2017

# What is PLA?

Prior Learning Assessment is the process of determining whether knowledge gained outside of the traditional academic environment is at the college-level and worthy of college credit.

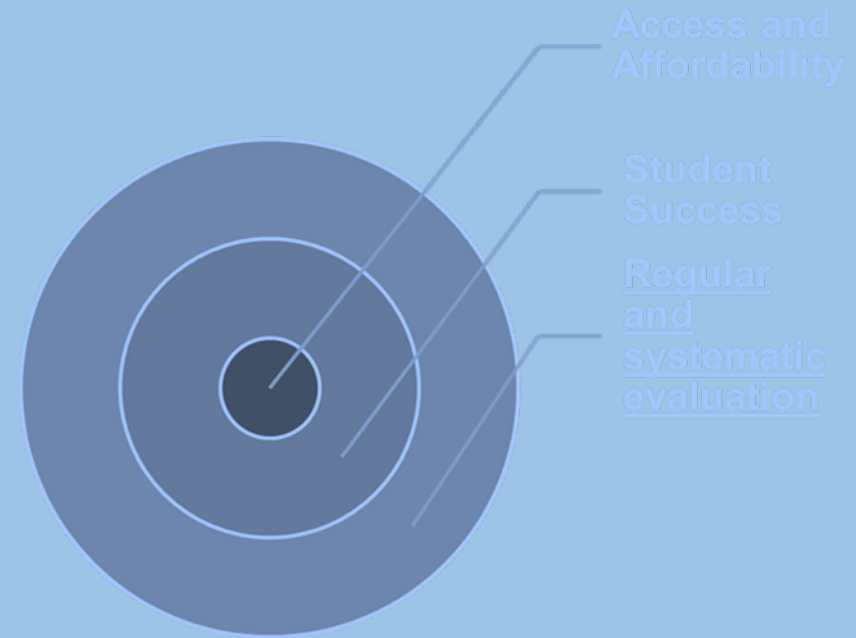
--The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)



# PLA Importance

According to a 2010 study on PLA and adult student outcomes conducted by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), students with PLA credits had better academic outcomes, especially in terms of graduation rates and persistence, than non-PLA students, and many significantly shortened the time required to earn their credential.

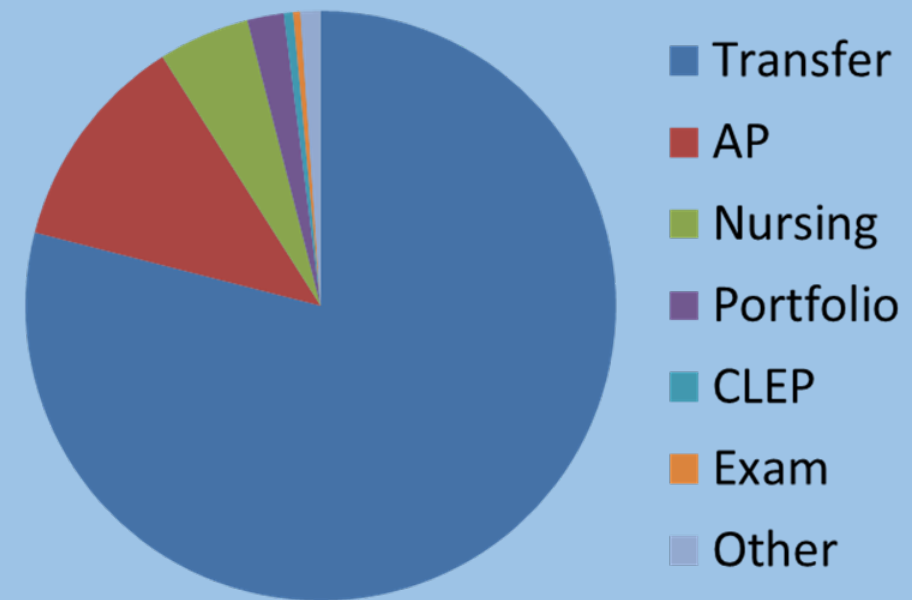
*-Fueling the Race to Post-Secondary Success*



# Credits by type and usage

- Transfer
- Advanced Placement (AP)
- Nursing portfolio
- Portfolio
- College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
- Exam (local)
- International Baccalaureate Program
- Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Educational Support (DANTES) Subject Standardized Tests (DSSTs)
- American Council of Education (ACE)
- Military and military transfer

by type



# PLA by the Numbers

Data provided by Outreach Analytics and Reporting—Penn State internal use only

Student Headcount and Credit Summary

	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16
<b>Headcount of Students with PLA Credits</b>	<b>10,469</b>	<b>10,759</b>	<b>11,448</b>	<b>11,943</b>	<b>11,884</b>	<b>12,133</b>	<b>12,328</b>	<b>10,986</b>
Adult Student Headcount	1,772	2,343	2,516	2,893	2,768	3,199	3,199	3,336
Traditional Student Headcount	8,697	8,416	8,932	9,050	9,116	8,934	9,129	7,650
Headcount of Students with PLA Credits with...								
...One Type of PLA	8,866	9,022	9,548	9,843	9,831	10,185	10,556	9,559
...Two Types of PLA	1,520	1,619	1,812	1,990	1,947	1,859	1,707	1,364
...Three or More Types of PLA	83	118	88	110	106	89	65	63
Total Number of PLA Credits								
Mean Number of PLA Credits Per Student	25	28	27	29	29	30	30	32
Median Number of PLA Credits Per Student	13	15	14	16	16	17	17	20



# Breakdown by Adult and Traditional Age Students

## Adult Students

	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16
Headcount of Adult Students with PLA Credits with...								
...One Type of PLA	1,370	1,763	1,889	2,190	2,097	2,519	2,591	2,706
...Two Types of PLA	357	506	556	635	609	616	559	573
...Three or More Types of PLA	45	74	71	68	62	64	49	57
Number of PLA Credits	104,339	136,840	140,826	176,810	168,327	193,762	184,215	191,932
Percent of Total PLA Credits	39%	46%	46%	50%	49%	52%	50%	54%
Mean Number of PLA Credits Per Student	59	58	56	61	61	61	58	58
Median Number of PLA Credits Per Student	57	57	55	59	59	60	57	58

## Traditional Students

	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16
Headcount of Traditional Students with PLA Credits with...								
...One Type of PLA	7,496	7,259	7,659	7,653	7,734	7,666	7,965	6,853
...Two Types of PLA	1,163	1,113	1,256	1,355	1,338	1,243	1,148	791
...Three or More Types of PLA	38	44	17	42	44	25	16	6
Number of PLA Credits	160,038	160,545	167,953	175,119	175,873	176,041	181,080	163,581
Percent of Total PLA Credits	61%	54%	54%	50%	51%	48%	50%	46%
Mean Number of PLA Credits Per Student	18	19	19	19	19	20	20	21
Median Number of PLA Credits Per Student	11	12	11	12	12	12	12	14



# Academic Year 2015-2016 Numbers

Summary Total - PLA Activity - New Students BAY 15/16

Type of Activity	Adult Count of Activity	Adult % of Activity	Traditional Count of Activity	Traditional % of Activity	Grand Total Count of Activity	Grand Total % of Activity
ACE Recommendations	0	0%	7	0%	7	0%
Advanced Placement	135	0%	12,901	24%	13,036	11%
CLEP	188	0%	59	0%	247	0%
Credit by Examination	4	0%	30	0%	34	0%
Credit by Portfolio	60	0%	0	0%	60	0%
Dantes	62	0%	6	0%	68	0%
International Baccalaureate	11	0%	652	1%	663	1%
Military	2,135	3%	16	0%	2,151	2%
Military Transfer	822	1%	4	0%	826	1%
Nursing Block Credit	47	0%	2	0%	49	0%
Transfer Credits	61,902	95%	40,458	75%	102,360	86%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>65,366</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>54,135</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>119,501</b>	<b>100%</b>



# Case Study: Max

- Penn State courses: MIS 204, PL SC 022, BI SC 003, ART 020, CMLIT 185
- Central Texas College: English 1301 and 1302, PHIL
- Credit for Phys Ed upon receipt of military transcript
- Resume with Naval human resources and several languages



# Talking about PLA with students



# Transfer Courses

[Information for transfer students](#)

[How to earn credit](#)

\*using the Transfer Credit Tool: ENGL 1301 and 1302

\*providing syllabi to Admissions: PHIL

Between 2008 and 2014 in Pennsylvania, 45,048 students transferred: 56% transferred once, 28% twice, and 15% three times or more.

In 2015—2016, Penn State students transferred 102,630 courses.



# **United States Navy, *Petty Officer* *Second Class* 2012-2015**

*Yeoman (2014-2015)*

*Performed office personnel administration, maintained records and official publications and performed administrative functions for legal proceedings.*

- \* Worked as office secretary for Capt. John Doe and created correspondence for the ships different rules and regulations
- \* Utilizing a chain-of-command system to properly route different types of documentation throughout the military

ACE says:

<http://www2.acenet.edu/militaryguide/ShowAceOccupations.cfm?ACEID=NE R-YN-004>



# United States Navy, *Petty Officer Second Class* 2012-2015

*Personnel Specialist (2012-2014)*

*Provided personnel with information/counseling related to career occupations and opportunities, including education and job training, requirements for promotion, and rights and benefits. Maintained and audited pay and personnel records. Performed counseling and interviewing personnel on a variety of matters. Administered advancement examinations, ordered examinations and processed examination returns. Created and wrote official letters and reports. Maintained payroll and accounting databases for disbursement and collection of government funds.*

- \* Calculation and payment of over 5,000 members pay and allowances.
- \* Overseeing 3 work centers and overall of operations and inventory of parts and supplies .
- \* Counseled over 60,000 members of opportunities and expectations to advance in their military career.
- \* Managed movement of supplies/equipment and preformed planning and executions to support a smooth transition into Operation Enduring Freedom.

ACE says: <http://www2.acenet.edu/militaryguide/ShowAceOccupations.cfm?ACEID=NER-PS-002>



# Personal Skills

CPR, Stress management, Personnel management, Communication, Capable problem solver, Detail oriented, Conversational Arabic, Conversational Mandarin, Conversational Spanish, Conversational French, Budget planning, Bookkeeping

Testing—CLEP or Credit by Exam for languages

Budgets and Bookkeeping: several DSST options

Personnel management: DSST Human Resource Management



# Education

## Leadership Principles

CLEP [Principles of Management](#)

## Management Information Systems

CLEP [Information and Computer Applications](#)

DSST [Management Information Systems](#)



# Awards and Honors

Navy & Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Navy "E" Ribbon, Navy Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal



# Consider a Portfolio

[LA 201W Experiential Learning Portfolio](#)

[Turn practice into theory](#)



# Discussing PLA

- Website targets four audiences that are intermingled
- “Is PLA right for me?” and a video introducing PLA
- Five modules on earning credit
- Looking for feedback
- Increase awareness; increase usage





# Contact Information

Michele Rice

[smr57@psu.edu](mailto:smr57@psu.edu)

814.867.6096

[priorlearning@psu.edu](mailto:priorlearning@psu.edu)

[priorlearning.psu.edu](http://priorlearning.psu.edu)



PennState

Hendrick Best Practices for  
Adult Learners Conference

May 9, 2017