

2023 REPORT TO THE OREGON LEGISLATURE:

Oregon Revised Statute 350.110 Credit for Prior Learning

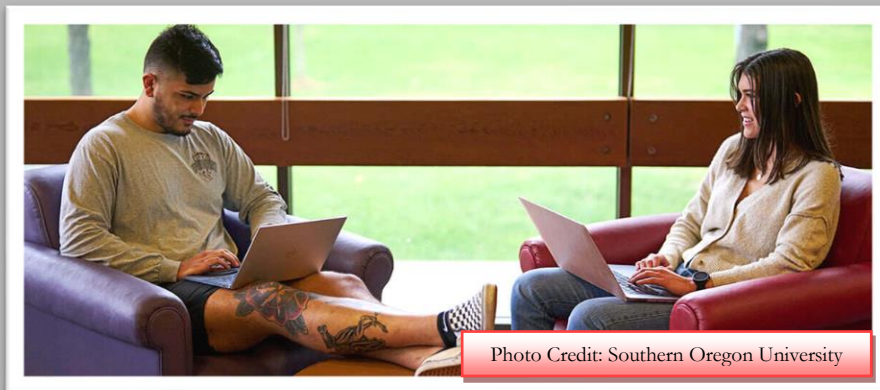


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CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING IN OREGON

INTRODUCTION

The goals of ORS 350.110¹ specify that the Higher Education Coordinating Commission will work with the state's public, independent, and for-profit higher education institutions to achieve the following:

- Increase the number of students who receive academic credit for prior learning and the number of students who receive academic credit for prior learning that counts toward their major or toward earning their degree, certificate, or credential, while ensuring that credit is awarded only for high-quality course-level competencies.
- Increase the number and type of academic credits accepted for prior learning in institutions of higher education, while ensuring that credit is awarded only for high-quality course-level competencies.
- Develop transparent policies and practices in awarding academic credit for prior learning to be adopted by the governing boards of public universities, community colleges, and independent institutions of higher education.
- Improve prior learning assessment practices across all institutions of higher education.
- Create tools to develop faculty and staff knowledge and expertise in awarding academic credit for prior learning and to share exemplary policies and practices among institutions of higher education.
- Develop articulation agreements when patterns of academic credit for prior learning are identified for particular programs and pathways.
- Develop outcome measures to track progress on the goals outlined in this section.

In the past 10+ years, significant progress has been made in achieving these goals.² This report provides an update on that progress, the implementation of Future Ready Oregon (ORS 660.300)³ Credit for Prior Learning, funding to support expansion, and policy recommendations to further support the adoption and expansion of CPL.

ALIGNMENT WITH OTHER ACCELERATION STRATEGIES

In Oregon, Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) is defined as "the knowledge and skills gained through work and life experience, through military training and experience and through formal and informal education and training from institutions of higher education in the United States and in other nations."⁴ Some programs in Oregon that offer CPL also include Competency Based Education (CBE) elements and a Career Pathways approach that includes short-term certificates. This combination provides a great deal of flexibility and can enable students to accelerate progress through courses in multiple ways, recognizing skill acquisition and prior knowledge.⁵ In these programs, students may complete courses by demonstrating competencies, challenging

¹ Oregon Revised Statute 350.110 [ORS 350.110 - Coordination between Higher Education Coordinating Commission, public universities, community college districts and independent for-profit and not-for-profit institutions of higher education](#)

² HB 4059 (2012) Report to the Oregon Legislature (2020) [HECC-Credit-for-Prior-Learning-Report-2020.pdf \(oregon.gov\)](#)

³ Oregon Revised Statute 660.300 - Future Ready Oregon [0028SS \(oregonlegislature.gov\)](#)

⁴ Oregon Revised Statute 350.110 [ORS 350.110 - Coordination between Higher Education Coordinating Commission, public universities, community college districts and independent for-profit and not-for-profit institutions of higher education](#)

⁵ Partners in a New Learning Model: Competency Based Education and Credit for Prior Learning [ED617339.pdf](#)

courses by examination, providing evidence of an industry certification or professional license, transcription of military experience, developing a portfolio that demonstrates prior knowledge, and other forms of CPL.⁶

EXPANSION AND STUDENT OUTCOMES

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DATA

The community college data on credit for prior learning continues to be limited by the number of colleges (nine) submitting data. Table 1 shows that the way courses are coded, or data entered continues to illustrate the inconsistencies in reporting this information. Of the reporting colleges, some have been missing data for some years. This most likely indicates inaccurate data coding or poor data entry systems rather than an actual absence of any CPL credits earned. The difference in the number of reported credits illustrates consistency within each college’s system but inconsistency across colleges. Of the colleges that have not reported data or have limited data, seven received capacity-building funds under Future Ready Oregon. After the capacity building year (2022-23), we expect the awarding of CPL credit at those institutions to increase and will be working with them to support data collection and consistent coding.

Community College	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	Grand Total
Blue Mountain				153	240	126	602					1121
Central Oregon	7	3	3		6	1	15	5	13	7	10	70
Chemeketa	8	8	4	8	20	40	24	20	56	48		236
Clackamas	4839	2127	2857	3766	5892	7096	7579	7093	6364	8510	6030	62152
Columbia Gorge						1						1
Klamath	977											977
Linn Benton		18									3	21
Portland	1175	848	1275	1363	3639	3984						12283
Rogue	180	141	91	157	148	68	292	404	1389	652		3522
Southwestern	437	271	458	722	678	610	190	419	314	47	306	4451
Umpqua	4	4		8		9				96		121
Grand Total	7627	3420	4688	6177	10622	11935	8702	7941	8136	9360	6349	84954

Table 1: Community College Number of Total Credits for Prior Learning, Reported by Year⁷

As noted in Table 1 and Figure 1, there has been an overall decrease in the number of CPL credits reported by community colleges in 2020-21 and 2021-22. This is likely related to decreases in community college enrollment during the COVID-19 pandemic. The reporting reported a significant increase in 2022-23, but still lower than the peak in 2017-18. These colleges and others are working to improve reporting processes and with the capacity built in the past year, we expect to see another increase in 2023-24.

⁶ Oregon Credit for Prior Learning Standards 2017-CPL-Standards-2017-Final.pdf ([oregon.gov](https://www.oregon.gov/HigherEducation/ResearchandData/Pages/2017-CPL-Standards-2017-Final.pdf))

⁷ Source – Higher Education Coordinating Commission, Office of Research and Data

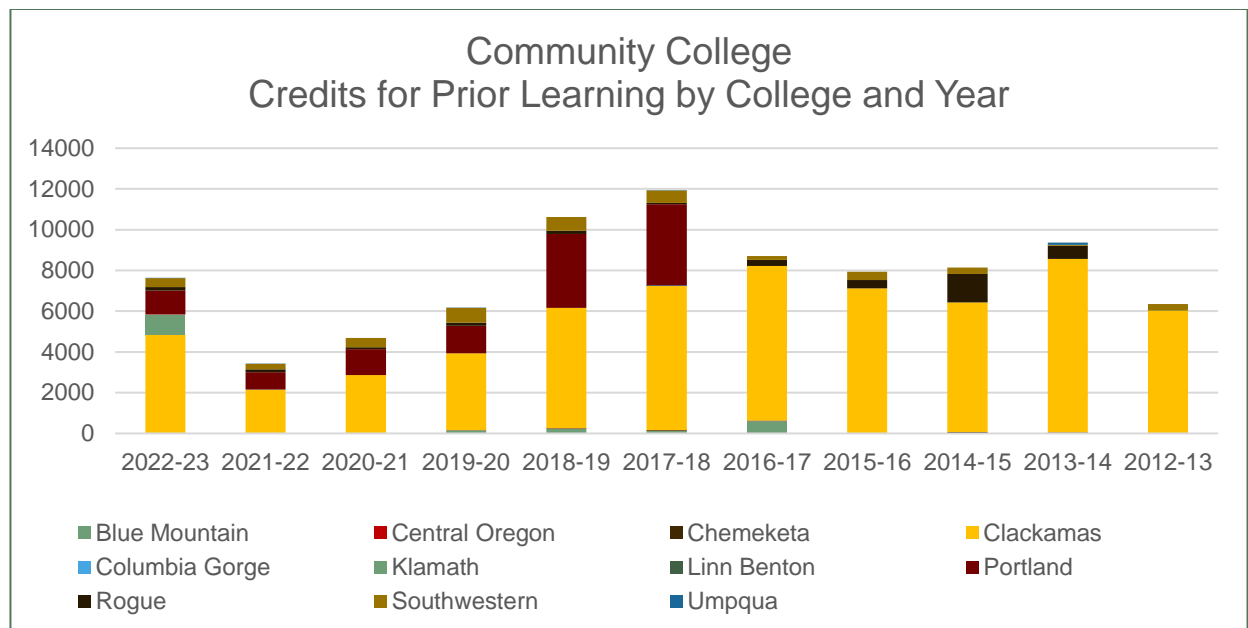


Figure 1: Community College Credits for Prior Learning by Year and College⁸

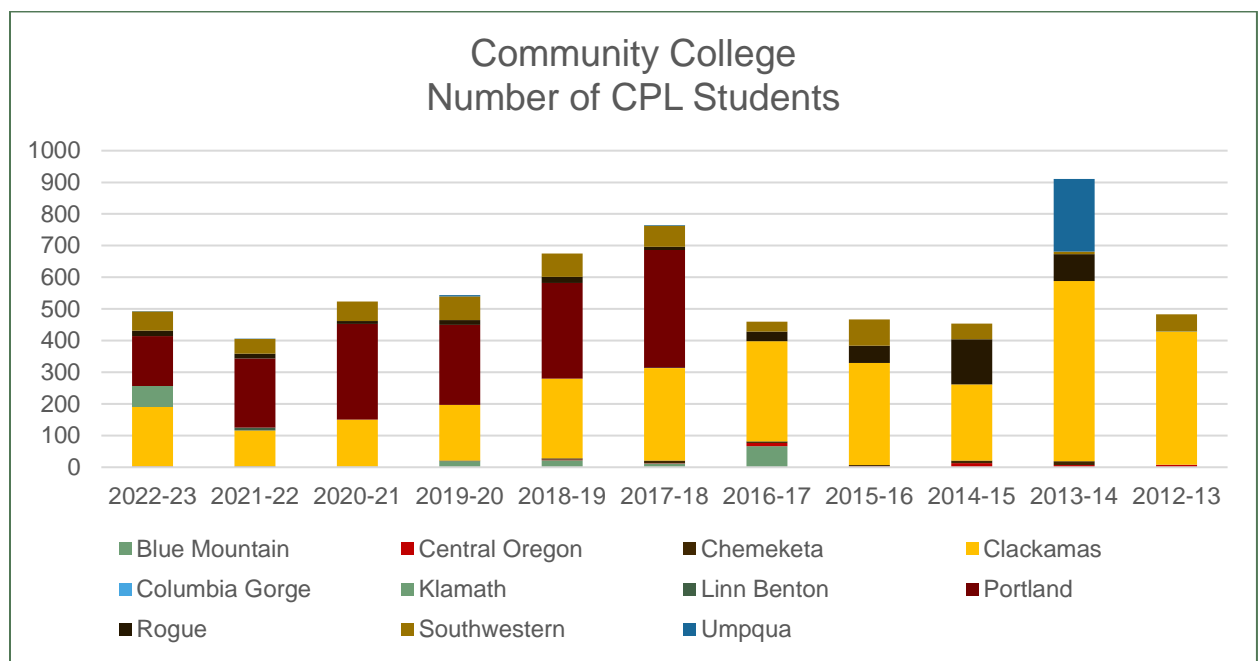


Figure 2: Community College Students Earning CPL Credit⁹

The number of community college students earning credit for prior learning also increased in 2022-23 (Figure 1). Again, this is likely due to capacity-building efforts in Future Ready Oregon and is expected to increase again in 2023-24 as colleges implement outreach to priority populations and engage students in these opportunities.

PUBLIC UNIVERSITY DATA

Similar to community colleges, Oregon’s public universities also report on CPL credit awarded. Overall, the universities report more CPL credit than the community colleges and award credit for a wider variety

⁸ Source – Higher Education Coordinating Commission, Office of Research and Data

⁹ Source – Higher Education Coordinating Commission, Office of Research and Data

of CPL categories. This is likely attributed to differences in the community college and university support funds as well as regional mission nuances. Table 2 and Figure 3 show that there has been a slight overall decrease in the amount of CPL awarded at the public universities in the past year. Five of these institutions participated in Future Ready Oregon Credit for Prior Learning capacity-building activities and anticipate higher CPL credit totals in future years.

University	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	Total
Eastern Oregon University	6696	8170	7963	7479	7549	6826	5941	5052	4640	4787	5302	70404
Oregon Institute of Technology	32399	41169	42514	44833	45874	43639	45140	41243	35555	29542	29453	431357
Oregon State University	142526	131561	124584	118762	113973	109570	103728	94785	86230	76500	68223	1170439
Oregon State University, Cascades	4176	4091	4723	3812	2681	2380	2625	2142	1380	856	1063	29926
Portland State University	35523	41837	45980	45596	36663	34860	32177	29534	27879	25002	26070	381119
Southern Oregon University	39194	47454	45212	42606	44516	44704	40505	38260	36601	35394	31832	446275
University of Oregon	156477	142868	129994	118943	106806	107446	111708	110589	107988	103167	96364	1292347
Western Oregon University	8500	9220	9867	10450	11107	10672	9034	7990	7269	6913	6310	97330
Grand Total	425490	426367	410835	392478	369167	360095	350857	329594	307541	282159	264614	3919196

Table 2: Public University Number of Total Credits for Prior Learning, Reported by Year¹⁰

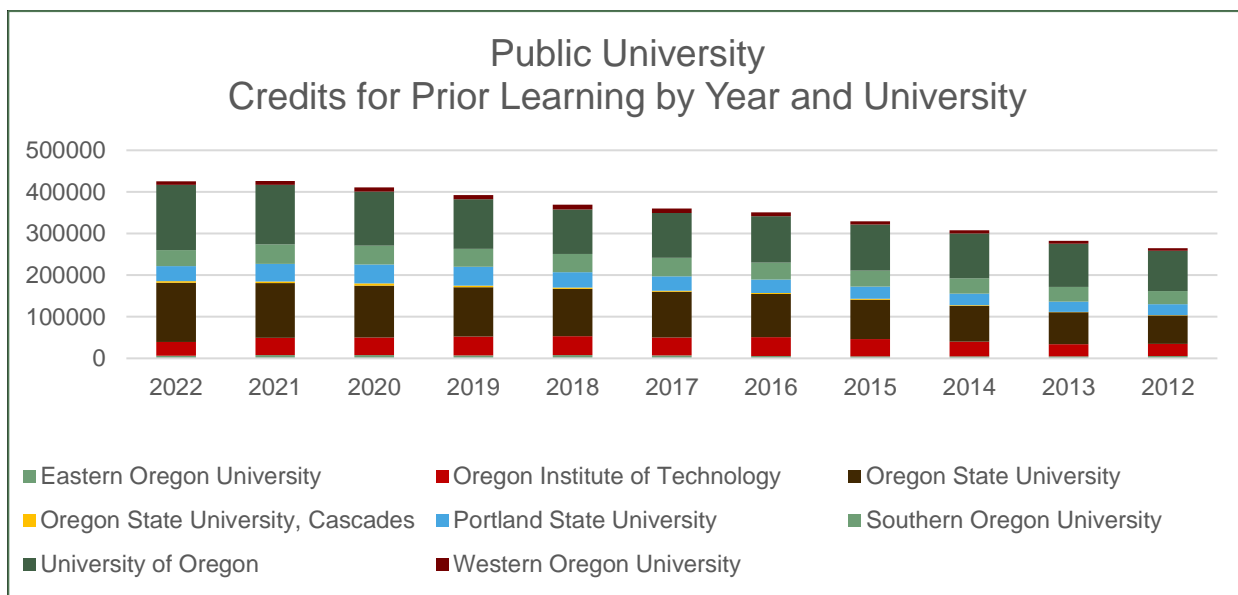


Figure 3: Public University Credits for Prior Learning by Year and College¹¹

¹⁰ Source – Higher Education Coordinating Commission, Office of Research and Data

¹¹ Source – Higher Education Coordinating Commission, Office of Research and Data

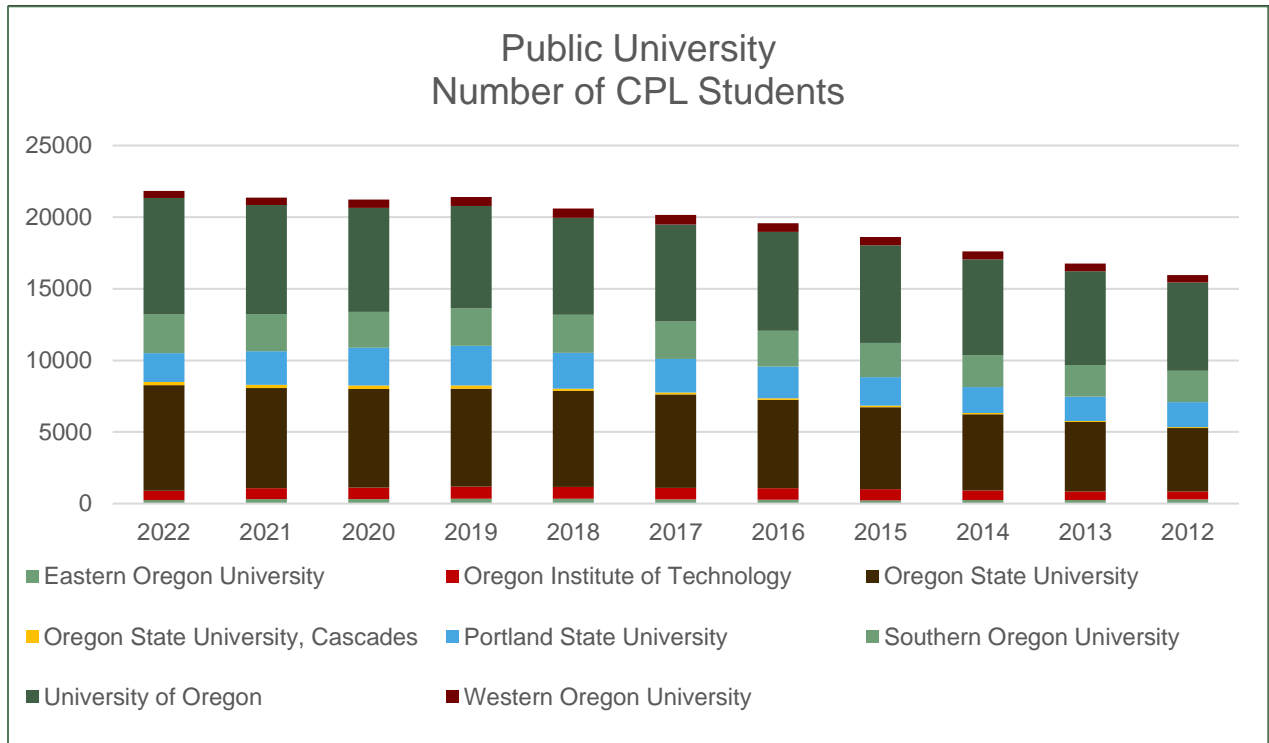


Figure 4: Community College Students Earning CPL Credit¹²

While the number of CPL credits awarded has decreased slightly at the public universities, the number of students served has increased. Similar to the community colleges, this is likely due to capacity-building efforts in Future Ready Oregon and is expected to increase again in 2023-24 as colleges implement outreach to priority populations and engage students in these opportunities.

HOW ARE STUDENTS ACCESSING CPL?



Photo Credit: Central Oregon Community College

In this capacity-building year, many institutions were also supporting existing students to access CPL and utilize this tool to achieve their goals. To illustrate the impact of this work, Future Ready Oregon grantees provided examples of how students were engaging with Credit for Prior Learning and benefiting from this strategy at their institutions. The examples below show the immediate benefits of specific types of CPL. Longer-range impacts will not be known until these strategies are fully implemented.

DANTES, etc.)

Credit – By-Exam (CLEP,

¹² Source – Higher Education Coordinating Commission, Office of Research and Data

Blue Mountain Community College noted that CLEP tests administered provided students a clear, quick jump-start to earning credits toward their degree because of their prior knowledge.

Columbia Gorge Community College worked with a first-generation college student who shared her experience. “I was the second in my family to attend college, I began my college journey straight out of high school many, many years ago. I attended the local community college in my hometown for about a year and a half when “life happened”, and married life and the responsibilities of motherhood took priority. I chose to postpone my education to raise and care for my family. I had accumulated enough college credits to where I knew I could attain (at least) my Associate Degree, and eventually work my way to becoming a teacher one day. For years, I embraced and loved my role as a stay-at-home mom and was very involved with my children and their education. I encouraged and supported their inquisitive nature and love of learning. I, soon after, proudly watched one daughter go off to a four-year university, followed by another daughter a year later. With the need to fill my once busy schedule with something for myself, and with two teenage boys still at home, I decided to enroll in my local community college. I took one class per term and life continued “to happen”. I took two years off again and found myself in a new role as an “empty nester”. I very proudly celebrated with my oldest two daughters as they graduated from their universities and watched my two sons go off to their chosen universities. I then found my way back to my hometown, where I originally began my education, and determined to complete my degree, I enrolled in school (again) and began taking classes. My little hometown community college gave me the opportunity to use Credit for Prior Learning, using my CLEP Spanish Language exam, toward the credits I needed to complete my degree. Without realizing it, I had met the requirements for my General Studies Associate Degree. Twenty-eight years after beginning my college education journey, my children watched their mother walk across the stage to receive her degree, proving that it is never too late to go back to school and fulfill your dreams. I am so grateful to have had this opportunity and plan on continuing my education.”

Southern Oregon University worked with a current student majoring in Innovation and Leadership who was able to earn Credit for Prior Learning through CLEP exams. As she said, "It takes a substantial commitment to manage a career, family, and a full-time course load. I am very grateful that Credit for Prior Learning is an option. I am able to receive college credits for skills that I already have and apply them towards my degree.”

Industry Certifications

Southern Oregon University now has a process in place to accept Department of Public Safety Standards and Training Certification as meeting a course and credits in their Criminal Justice Program. A student just benefited from this in that she is currently a police officer who is finishing her Bachelor's degree at SOU and having her professional licensure meant that one course was met through her prior learning.

Institutional Challenge Exams and Other Exams

Portland Community College’s “What is CPL” Video highlights a student who received CPL through Credit-by-Exam and provides an overview of the variety of CPL offerings at the college.

Military Credit

Blue Mountain Community College Video –

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vDc8qbAoDD9hkefTiej06Q6T7oXCjkca/view>

Clatsop Community College awarded an AAS Degree in Automotive and an AAS Degree in Nursing to students who received CPL from a Joint Services Transcript.

Portland Community College’s “What is CPL” Video highlights a military veteran who received CPL and provides an overview of the variety of CPL offerings at the college.

Portland State University’s Military CPL allows returning service men and women a meaningful transition into their civilian lives. In the past four years, we have provided more than 525 credits, on average, to at least 125

veterans. We have witnessed their transformations, as they integrate their active duty and other military experience with their chosen careers. They regularly comment to our Veterans Resource Center how important CPL is for them. They have shared on evaluations, “I could not have graduated as quickly as I did without having my military credits transferred in” and “I’m grateful that PSU used my military experience to help me move forward as a civilian.” Also: “I worked so hard in the military and it’s great to see the university recognizing our hard work.” Finally, a story about one student whom CPL helped to graduate: This was a student who had come to us as a non-traditional transfer student and who had studied very hard to earn his degree, often taking above a full-time credit load each term while working 25 hours a week in the Veteran Certification unit and managing to get mostly A grades. It turned out that, even with superb academic planning from advisors, this student was going to be 4 credits shy of his general electives in his senior year. He was worried that he’d have to take an entire extra term of courses to fit those 4 credits into his schedule. In reviewing his file, it turned out that the Joint Services Transcripts (JST) he had submitted at the time of admission to PSU were incomplete-- as there was some credit pending at the time of issue. He was able to submit an updated copy of the JST, which contained enough credit to cover the missing electives and allow him to graduate on time. Without that military CPL he would have had to delay graduation at a minimum, as well as take some extraneous courses to remain full-time for his living stipend with the VA in that extra term of study.

Prior Experiential Learning/Prior Learning

Blue Mountain Community College – videos

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yBtjVfht2zCeEaiy4Jys3nknXro0wEnN/view>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jYN6eHSPmd21SvwahaWdNx6KCH4EH86r/view>

Chemeketa Community College's Director of Academic Initiatives worked with a student who was an adult in custody and a participant in the College Inside program to assess credit for training received while in custody. The student received training for a Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor and a Certified Recovery Mentor. These experiences enabled the student to receive credit for courses within the Human Services program.

Central Oregon Community College’s Small Business Development Center runs an Early Child Care Business Accelerator Program to address shortages of quality child care in Central Oregon. The program runs on a cohort model, and the current version is offered 4 times per year, both in English and Spanish, at no charge to participants. Upon successful completion of the course and meeting program requirements, graduates are eligible to receive a \$5,000 grant to apply toward their business. A proposal was made to evaluate the learning outcomes of this program and map to existing COCC courses in business and early childhood education to determine whether it’s appropriate to award credit for college-level learning. Students completing the program have now been approved for the award of 3 credits for ED 261, Early Childhood Education Practicum. Additionally, students were introduced to the idea of CLEP testing, with several students testing in Spanish and earning an additional 12 credits in World Languages. Both the testing fees and the fees associated with the transcription of ED 261 were paid using grant funds. While many of these students initially joined the free program to receive some skills and obtain the \$5,000 business grant, they are walking away with so much more. These students are amazed that they already have 15 credits they can apply toward a certificate or degree, and that they are in fact “college students”. Several had declared their intent to pursue a degree in Early Childhood Education as a result.

Portland Community College’s Project Coordinator partnered with their Education Department to support 11 students in a program designed to increase the number of BIPOC educators in Oregon to earn credit for their previous work in educational settings.

Umpqua Community College has an instructor who accessed CPL to translate training he received in corrections to credit towards a degree.

Eastern Oregon University student who is a native of rural Georgia joined the Army at age 32, moved to Oregon, and adopted Portland as his home. When he decided to take advantage of the Credit for Prior Learning program, he had plenty of experience that translated into credit hours. “Eastern Oregon University is already affordable, which really appealed to me.” But they also recognize a person has a lot of past experiences and give you credit for it. There was nothing difficult about getting credit for my life experiences, the process was made very easy for me.” Students from all walks of life can apply what they learn from life and work towards a degree.

Prior Learning Assessments (PLAs) e.g., portfolios

Southwestern Oregon Community College worked with a student who has been attending Southwestern on and off for over a decade and was able to graduate in spring 2023 thanks to, in part, CPL by portfolio for WR 121. The student took WR 121 early in their college career when it was a 3-credit course. After stopping out multiple times due to academic suspension, financial aid suspension, student loan default, and being sent to collections, the student returned to college and was very successful. When they applied for graduation in January 2023, they were told they were one writing credit short of earning their degree. The student was able to create a writing portfolio and submit that to a writing faculty member for evaluation to earn that last credit. The student walked in the graduation ceremony in spring and starts classes at a university (with a substantial scholarship) this fall.

Eastern Oregon University students participating in the Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning stated, “The returning student and APEL programs at EOU have made my long-deferred goal of finishing my degree much more realistic. When I stopped attending EOU in 1995 to focus on raising my family, I always planned that I would go back to school. EOU’s quick returning student process allowed me to step back into taking classes. Working with my advisor, I realized that my real-life experiences over the last 20 years could help me earn credits toward a degree. Returning to college at a later stage in life is definitely not easy, but with the help and support of my advisors, my goal is a realistic and achievable one.”

Western Oregon University worked with two students who completed portfolios for the award of credit by portfolio assessment. The students provided video testimonials about their experience with the program. These videos include some background on the experiences of each student as well as the impact the opportunity to earn credit through portfolio assessment has had on them.

Kyle: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXo88ezn794>

Jennie: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vqkx8Rl_ZJQ

FUNDING TO SUPPORT EXPANSION

US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY COLLEGES GRANT ROUND 1 – 2021-2024

In 2021 Mt. Hood Community College as the lead for a consortium of nine Oregon Community Colleges, was awarded \$5 million for a US Department of Labor Strengthening Community Colleges Grant.¹³ The goal of this consortium project is to accelerate learning pathways focusing on systemic changes to allow members to collaborate around their shared program areas and strengthen the career pathways of Advanced Manufacturing and Cyber Security. One of the acceleration strategies is the expansion of CPL. Specifically, the consortium is working to increase the number of Advanced Manufacturing programs offering CPL, encouraging colleges to enhance CPL offerings and align credit transfer policies to increase the number of students who attain a

¹³ US Department of Labor Strengthening Community Colleges Round 1 Grants (2021)
<https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/skillstraining/SCC-Overview-and-Abstracts-rev.pdf>

credential and entry-level employment. Some of these colleges leveraged their Future Ready Oregon projects to expand CPL in these fields. A summary of the progress in expanding CPL under this grant is included here.

Advanced Manufacturing

Four of the eight participating Advanced Manufacturing programs reported awarding 5 courses as credit for prior learning in the past year.

Clackamas: Worked with its institutional research office to determine which courses had been awarded for CPL.

Lane: Has a CPL option in its CNC-CPC program and uses Prior Learning Assessments to award CPL.

Mt Hood: Uses Prior Learning Assessments to award CPL in its Mechatronics program (MEC 110).

Portland: The Machine Manufacturing department added a CPL option/course challenge option for two courses: MCH 120 and MHC 130. The faculty developed the assessment process for the CPL option. Also reported five credentials in its Machine Manufacturing Pathway in which a formalized CPL option has been developed.

Cybersecurity

Two of the four participating Cybersecurity programs reported awarding a total of 20 courses for CPL in the past year.

Chemeketa: Worked closely with the Veteran's Certifying Official to help students with course substitutions for military training activities. They are also working with the Last Mile Foundation which pays for industry exams for certifications that result in Credit for Prior Certification for CIS 140. They have reviewed their courses in Cybersecurity and mapped these to industry certifications that they can use to crosswalk and award CPL in the future.

Klamath: Awarded 17 courses in Cybersecurity as CPL for Industry Certifications.

FUTURE READY OREGON

In the 2022 legislative session, the Oregon Legislature passed Senate Bill 1545, codified in Oregon Revised Statute 660.300¹⁴, also known as Future Ready Oregon. The legislation allocated \$10 million in one-time funding for the purpose of “Increasing opportunities for students from priority populations to receive academic credit for prior experience or skills gained outside of traditional higher education institutions, with such academic credit counting toward a certificate or credential that provides a pathway to employment or career advancement.”¹⁵ In 2022-23 Future Ready Oregon supported existing and emerging credit for prior learning (CPL) programs at 19 of Oregon’s public higher education institutions (14 community colleges, and 5 universities). The \$10 million in grant funding was spent to improve or increase assessment capacity for CPL, provide training for faculty and staff to increase capacity for offering CPL, and create strategies and mechanisms to recruit people from priority populations to participate in CPL.

¹⁴ Oregon Revised Statute 660.300 - Future Ready Oregon [0028SS \(oregonlegislature.gov\)](https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/2022/0028SS.html)

¹⁵ Oregon Revised Statute 660.300 - Future Ready Oregon [0028SS \(oregonlegislature.gov\)](https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/2022/0028SS.html)

These activities support the goals of ORS 350.110 by building capacity to increase CPL and reduce barriers to Oregonians seeking and receiving CPL. In the long term, the activities implemented under this grant program should also improve prior learning assessment practices in Oregon's public institutions and increase the number of students receiving CPL. Finally, the Future Ready Oregon funding supported increasing the capacity and knowledge of faculty and staff in awarding CPL. Through the reporting process for the grant, the HECC staff identified best practices, shared resources, and convened institutions working on similar project goals. This work supported the ongoing collaboration across institutions and promoted the alignment of policies and practices.

The examples below demonstrate how the Future Ready Oregon CPL Grantees exemplified the Guiding Principles, Strategies, and Goals of Future Ready Oregon.

Guiding Principles

- Recruitment, retention, and career advancement
 - Klamath Community College's Marketing and Outreach Department created materials for use in print, online, and through social media. Marketing efforts included CPL-focused branded items, billboard advertising, newspaper advertisements, social media posts, trucking signage, and yard signs. Additionally, we are focusing on our community engagement efforts through the Klamath Falls Downtown Association's (KFDA) Third Thursday events where we have been able to engage with the public through conversations and branded materials directing back to CPL opportunities at KCC.
 - Portland State University is using Lightcast to provide information that will allow PSU to recruit adult learners from priority populations and to grow in areas with strong labor market indicators. In addition to the Credit Predictor Pro, our soon-to-be hired Alternative Credentials and Assessment Coordinator will create data infrastructure so we can evaluate the impact of CPL on retention, graduation, and other outcomes.

- Equitable prosperity and upward economic mobility
 - Oregon Tech's dedicated CPL webpage provides the necessary information on criteria, process, and assessment tools for prospective adult students. To present the economic benefits of a university degree, it was necessary to demonstrate a realistic expectation of the outcome of earning a degree. Using current labor market data, Oregon Tech highlights opportunities for professional advancement presented through achieving an Oregon Tech degree. The data procured using the grant funds is region specific, allowing students interested in a specific major to explore employment opportunities in regions of their choice. The data presented are actual data on position titles, desired skillsets, number of positions, and salaries collected from the publicly available data and/or advertisements. The information is presented in widgets specific to each degree program on its webpage. The out-of-state regions in the widgets are selected to represent those from which Oregon Tech students have historically come. Having the data from advertised positions provides realistic expectations of potential earning in the disciplines and the regions an applicant is interested in.

- Engagement with employers, education and training providers, and community-based organizations
 - Klamath Community College has offered multiple trainings for faculty, staff, employers, and several advisory committees with workforce partners regarding CPL. All KCC student advisors were trained on the administrative processes, forms, and resources, and curriculum maps are available to advise students and encourage students to seek out opportunities to receive CPL credit (thus minimizing or removing potential cost barriers for program participants).

- All materials for the Portland State University Human Services program will be produced in English and Spanish, as our other successful undergraduate programs in the School of Social Work, CYFS and BSW, currently attract 40% BIPOC students, largely Latinx students. We anticipate a similar student group for the Human Services program, and we will also follow the advice of indigenous leaders who have suggested we recruit American Indian/Native American/Indigenous students by forming a specific indigenous cohort within the online Human Services program.

Strategies

- Ground decisions in racial justice and focus on serving Priority Populations
 - At Southern Oregon University, we have new internal webpage that is specifically designed to explain CPL on our campus and how students can access it. We have also expanded our external marketing of CPL with three different marketing campaigns -- two of which were aimed at a specific major and one that was a generalized CPL awareness raising campaign. We have created a Moodle course that will be a training tool and support system for students wishing to pursue CPL. We have developed CPL portfolio processes specifically for priority populations.
 - Columbia Gorge Community College added Ethnic Studies 201, Introduction to Native American Studies and Ethnic Studies 203, Introduction to Chicane/Latine Studies: Making Culture as well. These courses can be used to fulfill part of the general education requirement and are designed to serve under-represented communities in the college's service area. Ethnic Studies 203 was the result of a focus group of Hispanic community members. It provides a Credit for Prior Learning pathway for community members to earn credit through a recognition of the knowledge gained through community involvement; cultural activities; preservation of foodways knowledge; spoken language; and religious/secular celebrations. Ethnic Studies 201 focuses on Tribal ways of knowing and validates knowledge of first foods; indigenous languages; Tribal traditions; storytelling, and other Tribal practices. Specifically designed to take advantage of the Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio process.
 - Priority populations for Columbia Gorge Community College CPL recruitment and marketing efforts were identified as veterans, Hispanic-identifying students, and Native American students. CPL funds allowed CGCC to develop knowledge and infrastructure for recruitment and marketing. With the CPL funds, CGCC hired Weinstein Marketing Group to research the community's perceptions on the barriers for starting, returning or completing their degree or certificate. The research team conducted focus groups targeting veterans, Native American and Spanish speaking populations. With the community feedback, we are developing messaging to target specific communities to better explain CPL. CGCC is using this feedback internally at CGCC to ensure appropriate student supports are institutionalized. Redesigning and relocation of testing services was begun through this grant, to support the recruitment of non-traditional students who may be taking advantage of CPL challenge exams, CLEP testing, and other proctored prior learning activities.
 - Eastern Oregon University created materials in Spanish to help reach our regional Hispanic communities who tend to have higher levels of work experience before attending college than many of our traditional student recruits.
 - Central Oregon Community College held a half-day Green Zone training during this grant period with the goal of educating COCC faculty, staff and students on the military-connected student experience. The workshop was well attended, and CPL was presented as one of the many military benefits from both the standpoint of the military student and the institution. This training led to internal discussions about how COCC can better demonstrate the value of military experience in the classroom.
 - At Linn Benton Community College, CPL staff collaborated with the Veteran Services team, and are reexamining the JSTs of the current Veteran students to maximize their EL and military training to course credit. We've onboarded the ACE Military Guide to assist us in this endeavor and establish a

baseline of course equivalencies, emphasizing a more automated and streamlined approach. The CPL team has also developed relationships with Linn and Benton County Army National Guards and local ROTC programs and is planning site visits. We plan to engage our stopped-out Veterans and adult students in a “Come Back” recruitment communication introducing CPL as a vehicle to return and complete their degree. We are discussing specific Student Employment opportunities on-campus for these more mature and work-experienced students and the possibility of childcare support with our Early Childhood Development Center.

- Leverage existing success and do things differently
 - At Oregon Coast Community College CPL opportunities were expanded with additions of accepted third party exams, challenge exams, and credit for licensure. The list of AP and IB options was revised adding some options. OCCC now accepts 16 CLEP exams with eight still under review. OCCC now accepts 13 DSST exams with 11 still under review. One challenge exam for medical terminology was added and three others are in development (public speaking, technical writing, and welding.) We added math CPL for several ALEKS math courses, and if a GED student scores above 175 on the math exam. Nursing created a CPL-based path for LPNs into the second year. There was significant work done to improve the clarity of policies and procedures. The CPL Team was committed to minimizing bureaucracy, leveraging existing processes, and promoting transparency. Revised board policy and administrative procedures are expected to assist faculty, and students understand the value and practice of awarding CPL. Existing processes are under revision to be inclusive of CPL evaluation and transcription. Forms to be used by students were reviewed and revisions, or new forms, have been proposed. A comprehensive website for CPL has been drafted and additional information added to existing pages and program information. The course review and development process now include a question about the inclusion of CPL options.
 - While Columbia Gorge Community College ostensibly allowed students to challenge courses, there was no systematic approach and the concept was moribund. In the wake of a professional development workshop on preparing challenge examinations (the workshop had the highest number of attendees of a professional development series), faculty worked to develop challenge examinations. Students now have access to challenge examinations for forty-one (41) CGCC courses; the list of the courses appears on the CPL website (<https://www.cgcc.edu/CPL>). Under the auspices of the CPL Taskforce, CGCC has a system in place for administering the challenge examinations, assessing them, and transcribing courses for students who are successful at challenging one.
 - At Western Oregon University faculty steering committees were convened in each of the programs participating in the pilot project to determine criteria for student eligibility for credit for prior learning by portfolio assessment. These steering committees identified courses and developed criteria based on the course goals or course learning outcomes. A Community of Learning, Inquiry, and Practice (CLIP) was rolled out by the Associate Provost in collaboration with the Center for Academic Innovation. All faculty who participated in the pilot project were provided training and support in quality assurance for credit for prior learning by portfolio assessment. Participating faculty participated in readings and activities to locate adopted course goals, review, and further unpack them (into objectives, for example), and develop an appropriate rubric for use in evaluating portfolios relative to the realization of the course goals. These criteria informed the development of guidelines for students to (1) determine if they would be eligible to have their portfolio reviewed by the faculty within that program as advising materials and (2) develop a portfolio to showcase their realization of the course goals for the consideration of the program faculty.
- Focus on employer and job seeker needs

- Columbia Gorge Community College CTE faculty participated in the “Crosswalk” day-long workshop. They were enthusiastic regarding the opportunities it presented to them in terms of collaborating with local business partners in creating Crosswalks that would align private training and certificates with CGCC courses—thus shortening the time to certificate/degree for students.
- Require meaningful and inclusive collaboration
 - Columbia Gorge Community College convened the Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) Task Force; its members included the Registrar, the Director of Curriculum and Academic Assessment, Grant Accounting Coordinator, CTE Program Director, Nursing Program Director, Dean of Academic Pathways, Instructional Services Administrative Assistant and the CPL Program Manager (the vice president for instruction and the vice president for student services were ex-officio members). At bi-weekly meetings, the Task Force reviewed all existing CGCC CPL practices—which were minimal at best. The Task Force streamlined the process for students seeking credit for AP, CLEP, and IB through the elimination of an associated fee and the creation of tables that showed the CGCC course equivalencies for AP, CLEP, and IB. This made the process more transparent for students and advisors alike.
 - At Eastern Oregon University we found that sometimes you find reluctance to "get on board" with CPL and the backing of upper administration is needed to break through those barriers. EOU formed an integrated team to lower barriers towards offering and accepting CPL at multiple levels including making its role much more prominent across university operations.
 - Chemeketa Community College has had a cross-functional CPL Team for several years. Led by the



Photo Credit: Chemeketa Community College

Director of Academic Initiatives, the expanded CPL Team includes individuals from Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, and Business Services. The team met once a month instead of once a year to discuss activities under the CPL grant. The team plans to continue meeting at least once a term to continue reviewing practices and making recommendations about CPL procedures.

- Implement assessment, accountability, and continuous improvement
 - At Southern Oregon University, we worked closely with our Center for Advancement of Teaching and Learning to develop a workshop that aided faculty in learning about portfolio-based CPL processes. This workshop was offered multiple times during the year and will be available for future years. We also registered multiple faculty members in a CAEL workshop on CPL development. We have staffed a new position for a CPL coordinator whose role will be to onboard new faculty and new advisors in the pathways that utilize CPL for students. We funded the attendance at CAEL's conference for five SOU faculty and staff in 2022 and for six SOU faculty and staff in 2023.
 - At Linn Benton Community College, the CPL team performed a campus-wide “What do we know about CPL” analysis to garner a baseline, the internal mindset around CPL, and to ascertain the best

next steps in expanding current CPL opportunities and building new pathways. We hosted a series of collaborative conversations focused on the institutional benefits of CPL, identifying intersections with different departments/programs, examining possible impacts (+/-), and how we promote, assess, and evaluate CPL, now and in the future. We've intentionally sought diverse perspectives on the future of CPL and its strategic implementation, with a keen focus on identifying and overcoming obstacles and developing practices, policies, and procedures. The result of this mindfulness, though a slower grassroots approach, has propelled institutional buy-in, support, and procured alignments. It also helped determine the most needed training and tools and where to start.

Goals

- Expand partners that comprise our workforce system
 - Blue Mountain Community College took steps to intentionally strengthen partnerships. Outside meetings included an introductory meeting with two staff from the Eastern Oregon Workforce Board (future meeting with more staff to be scheduled in October). Two meetings occurred with our local Director of Migratory Education and assessment director, and two other staff members to specifically cover CPL opportunities at BMCC. There was a great interest in the CLEP exams for earning credit and a potential small cohort of students starting January 2024 (TBD) to earn Spanish credit.

CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The current Credit for Prior Learning Standards¹⁶ were developed in the fall of 2013 by the Credit for Prior Learning Advisory Committee. These standards were later revised in 2017 to incorporate feedback from Oregon's higher education institutions. This review and revision included an alignment with the 2010 accreditation standards from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). Specifically, the Standards were revised to align with the NWCCU standard limiting some CPL credits to 25% of the total credits needed to fulfill degree requirements.

In 2020 NWCCU revised their Accreditation Standards¹⁷ and removed the 25% cap on credit for prior learning (CPL), putting the CPL Standards in misalignment with the NWCCU Standards. In addition, the revised NWCCU Standards lift the restriction that limits CPL to undergraduate credit and the CPL Advisory Committee will need to determine if that change should also be reflected in the CPL Standards. Finally, additional recommendations for revision have been identified as institutions are implementing Future Ready Oregon CPL grants and as the Strengthening Community Colleges Consortium reviews and makes recommendations for alignment of institutional credit for prior learning policies.

As specified in ORS 350.110 the Credit for Prior Learning Advisory Committee¹⁸ is appointed by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to address issues like those identified above. In early 2023 HECC staff gathered nominations from the specific groups required in ORS 350.110

- Public Universities
- Community Colleges
- Independent Not-for-Profit Institutions
- Student of a Two-Year or Four-Year Institution
- Labor

¹⁶ Oregon Credit for Prior Learning Standards, 2017 Revision [2017-CPL-Standards-2017-Final.pdf](https://www.oregon.gov/HigherEducation/Policy-Collaboration/Documents/Transfer-Credit/2017-CPL-Standards-2017-Final.pdf) (oregon.gov)

¹⁷ Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, 2020 Regional Accreditation Standards - <https://nwccu.org/accreditation/standards-policies/standards/>

¹⁸ HECC Credit for Prior Learning Advisory Committee Members - https://www.oregon.gov/highered/policy-collaboration/Documents/Transfer-Credit/2023_CPL_Advisory_Committee_Members.pdf

- For-Profit Institutions
- Business Community
- Other Members Knowledgeable or Interested in CPL

The initial list of nominees was approved by the HECC on February 9, 2023. Since then, there has been additional interest in this work and members have been added to the ORS 350.110 membership category of “other members” The Advisory Committee is working to revise the Standards, seeking feedback and working together to incorporate broad feedback and input from institutions and partners across higher education.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

COMPLETE REVISIONS OF THE CPL STANDARDS

As noted above, in 2023 the Credit for Prior Learning Advisory Committee worked to update Oregon’s CPL standards to align with the NWCCU standards that were adopted in 2020. As the Advisory Committee worked through the language in the Standards they identified the HECC’s lack of authority to impose state-wide standards, as HECC coordinates funding and policy for postsecondary education and training and convenes partners across the public and private higher education arena. Therefore, HECC’s work to expand and standardize CPL practices will become guidance to colleges and universities once adopted by the Commission. The Advisory Committee will continue its work to revise the Standards, engage partners for feedback, and present recommendations for adoption by the HECC Commission in early 2024.

ALIGN WITH COMPETENCY BASED EDUCATION AND CAREER PATHWAYS

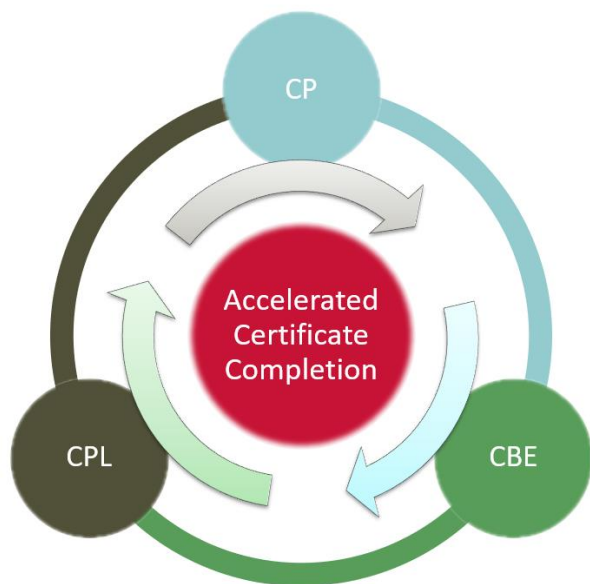
As noted above, Competency Based Education (CBE), Credit for Prior Learning (CPL), and short-term certificates can be used together to accelerate student progress toward credential attainment. However, CBE is sometimes confused with CPL. While CBE can enable students to demonstrate competency in an accelerated way utilizing a variety of assessment methods, CPL supports students in earning credit for what they already know¹⁹. Although these methods are different, CBE and CPL can complement each other. In most cases, institutions map CPL to an entire course and all the competencies in that course must be met for the student to earn the credit through CPL. Therefore, if the student has partial knowledge, they will not receive the CPL credit. However, if the institution also utilizes a CBE framework, CPL assessments can be developed to meet the requirements for specific competencies in the course and paired together, can accelerate student progress²⁰. As CBE and CPL expand, work should be done to implement the Oregon Workforce and Talent Development Board’s 2021 recommendation²¹ to create a shared language to better communicate competency, credentialing, and other hiring requirements of critical jobs.

¹⁹ Partners in a New Learning Model: Competency Based Education and Credit for Prior Learning [ED617339.pdf](#)

²⁰ Partners in a New Learning Model: Competency Based Education and Credit for Prior Learning [ED617339.pdf](#)

²¹ Oregon Workforce and Talent Development Board – Equitable Prosperity for All (2021) [Equitable-Prosperity-Task-Force-Whitepaper-June-2021.pdf \(oregon.gov\)](#)

To support increasing the knowledge about CBE and CPL, HECC staff develop a presentation on the alignment of CBE, CPL, and Career Pathways or short-term certificates. In 2023, HECC staff presented information on these programs and the possibilities of alignment at the Oregon Student Success and Retention Conference, the Oregon Association for Career and Technical Education Conference, and the Western Oregon University Credit for Prior Learning Summit. These presentations focused on how aligning these approaches can empower students as partners with faculty in planning to meet their education goals. By valuing previous experience and capacity for learning, students are actively engaged in co-creating their learning experience with instructors. The presentations were a starting point in the conversation among Oregon Institutions of Higher Education about the expansion and alignment of these programs. This conversation needs to be intentional and engage higher education leaders as we continue to



implement these strategies. To further the goal of intentional alignment CPL, CBE, and Career Pathways alignment will be included as a strategy in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) State Plan as a strategy to engage adults in successful progression and completion of certificates and degrees in the CTE career areas.

IMPLEMENT LESSONS LEARNED FROM FUTURE READY OREGON CAPACITY BUILDING

Future Ready Oregon has provided an unprecedented funding opportunity for colleges and universities to increase capacity for CPL. The strategies and activities undertaken by the 19 grantee institutions are detailed in Appendix A. While not yet reflected in the data, HECC does expect a significant expansion of capacity and student access to CPL over the next several years. However, there are some ongoing challenges in data collection and funding which could hamper this growth.

Improve Data Collection and Reporting

Data collection and reporting continue to be a challenge for many of Oregon’s community colleges. This creates a challenge in understanding the long-term impacts of CPL in these institutions. Local capacity for this work continues to be an issue. Other barriers to student-level data collection and submission include a lack of clarity about awarding procedures and a lack of technical resources to implement this data submission into regular data submission processes. Throughout the implementation of the Future Ready Oregon CPL program, discussions occurred about CPL data collection, especially at community colleges with no resolution. This must be a continuing conversation with clear action steps. If it is not addressed systemically we will only be able to measure the impact of CPL on educational attainment where the community colleges and universities have established data collection and reporting processes. To address this issue, the Credit for Prior Learning Advisory Committee will consider establishing a task force that includes community college academic, student services, and institutional research leaders to create an action plan for how to support improved data collection and engage with community colleges to identify strategies to support this work.

Seek Sustainable Funding

A challenge identified by Future Ready Oregon Grantees was the lack of ongoing or sustainable funding for implementing CPL. While Future Ready Oregon funding supported significant capacity building, there are ongoing funding challenges to ensure assessments remain current, ensure capacity to create new assessments,



and that students can access and pay for CPL as it is not financial aid eligible. For each award of CPL, faculty and/or staff must administer and evaluate whether the student in fact already possesses the learning outcomes as identified in the course they are challenging—even with CPL assessment strategies and criteria developed for the course. Sometimes the costs (not price) of assessment to the institution per person, per course are comparable to the tuition costs to the students to enroll in the same course, depending on how the assessment of prior learning is set up as well as how the student-service is organized to administer the process.

APPENDIX A

FUTURE READY OREGON CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES BY INSTITUTION

2022-23 Future Ready Oregon Grant Deliverable: Develop assessment criteria and practices to evaluate whether a student’s prior experience or skills count toward earning a certificate or credential recognized by a targeted industry sector.

Details	Assessment								
Institution	review existing practices	research best practices	develop CPL criteria, rubrics, tools	CAEL Membership	Expand CPL	focus on improving reporting	create or improve transparent CPL system for consistency	convene or expand cross-functional team	integrate into enrollment pathway
BMCC	x		x	x	x	x		x	
Clackamas	x			x			x		
Clatsop	x	x	x		x	x	x		x
Chemeketa	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CGCC	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
COCC	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
KCC	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	
Lane		x		x	x	x		x	
LBCC	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
OCCC	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
PCC	x	x	x		x		x	x	x
SOCC	x	x	x	x	x				
TBCC	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
UCC	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
EOU	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
OIT	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
PSU	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
SOU	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
WOU	x		x		x		x		

2022-23 Future Ready Oregon Grant Deliverable: Train staff to apply the assessment criteria and practices to award credit for prior experience and skills

Details	Staff Training					
	internal expertise to develop and deliver training	external expertise to develop and deliver training	training schedule for multiple staff/ faculty areas	training for external partners/ employers	purchase or create evaluation tools such as CAEL Credit Predictor	attend CAEL Conference
BMCC	x		x	x		x
Clackamas		x			x	x
Clatsop	x					
Chemeketa	x	x	x	x	x	x
CGCC	x	x	x	x	x	x
COCC	x	x	x	x	x	x
KCC	x		x	x		
Lane		x			x	x
LBCC	x	x	x	x	x	x
OCCC		x			x	x
PCC	x		x			x
SOCC		x			x	x
TBCC						
UCC	x	x			x	
EOU	x	x	x		x	x
OIT		x	x		x	x
PSU	x	x	x	x	x	x
SOU	x	x	x			x
WOU	x					

2022-23 Future Ready Oregon Grant Deliverable: Recruit and conduct outreach to priority populations.

Details	Recruitment					
Institution	create marketing and recruitment materials	translate materials into other languages	LMS shell for student submissions	Update or create content on institution's website	traditional marketing and social media	outreach to priority populations
BMCC	x	x	x	x	x	x
Clackamas	N/A					
Clatsop		x		x		x
Chemeketa	x	x	x	x	x	x
CGCC	x		x	x	x	x
COCC	x	x	x	x	x	x
KCC	x			x	x	x
Lane						
LBCC	x	x	x		x	x
OCCC	x	x		x	x	
PCC	x			x	x	x
SOCC				x		
TBCC	x	x	x	x		
UCC			x			
EOU	x	x	x	x	x	x
OIT	x	x	x	x	x	x
PSU	x	x	x	x	x	x
SOU	x		x	x	x	x
WOU	x					

