

# SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

Transforming Minds.  
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## **Prior Learning Assessment – Experiential Learning Credit Handbook**

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*This Handbook contains the policies and practices for recognizing and awarding credit for learning that occurs outside of the traditional classroom.*

**Update: March 2015**

# Prior Learning Assessment

## Experiential Learning Credit Handbook

### Introduction

Southeastern recognizes that learning occurs within numerous settings throughout our lives. Some learning is situated in classrooms where teachers systematically lead students through scheduled lessons. Other learning transpires in settings with less formal guidelines. Much learning, however, transpires outside of formal classroom settings. At times, we drive the process by seeking information out of curiosity and wonderment. Often a problem or challenge confronts us and the solution carries higher stakes. Learning rarely limits itself to single events and isolated settings, but builds upon previous lessons in an ever-deepening and broadening accumulation of experience-based wisdom. The faculty of Southeastern take pleasure in working with students to recognize college-level learning that is both verifiable and applicable to their university educational goals. University faculty use several widely-recognized processes collectively called Prior Learning Assessment (PLA), the results of which are called Experiential Learning Credit (ELC).

Universities usually classify learning that occurs outside of traditional classrooms by its verification or documentation methods. Some internationally-renowned agencies are devoted solely to exploring and verifying learning processes employed by corporations and military training, titled Sponsored Professional Training (SPT). An example of this is the American Council on Education (ACE), whose guides have for many years quantified training received by service members and corporate employees. Other organizations provide standardized exams, such as the College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) and College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) services and the Department of Defense's Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES). All of these agencies utilize academically qualified faculty to evaluate the training and establish thresholds that students must reach to receive credit recommendations.

Southeastern's own administration and faculty have established guidelines and processes for other forms of situational learning where nationally-recognized agencies have not performed evaluations. Faculty have created standing Departmental Exams that are available depending on the subject and students' preparation levels. When other documentation and verification procedures are not appropriate or present, faculty may review students' descriptions of accumulated knowledge and competencies on particular subjects through Individualized Learning Assessment Essays.

As one can expect, the University must monitor the awarding of credit for learning that occurs outside of the classroom setting perhaps even more carefully than within classes because its faculty are

not present to directly guide or observe the learning process. In fact, the learning often takes place in a number of locations over many years. This places heavy responsibility upon students who request the credit to describe the learning obtained and competencies acquired, and to provide supporting documentation. However, Southeastern supports awarding experientially-based learning credit and provides this Handbook to guide students, academic advisors, and faculty evaluators through the process.

## Operating Principles

The awarding of credit by universities is the very core of what they do. As such, the policies governing these procedures are carefully crafted and monitored, since a weakness in any part of the process could overshadow the whole institution. Southeastern takes these policies extremely seriously and follows them closely.

### **Best Practices**

The Council on Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) has been recognized for almost 40 years as the leader in setting industry-wide standards, and is referenced by all major accrediting associations. In its most recent publication on the topic, “Assessing Learning: Standards, Principles, & Procedures,” the authors renew CAEL’s Ten Quality Assurance Principles.

1. Credit or its equivalent should be awarded only for learning, and not for experience. Merely having experiences cannot be translated into credit any more than showing up to class and not doing any work is worth a college degree.
2. Assessment should be based on standards and criteria for the level of acceptable learning that has been officially approved. Southeastern awards credit based on the guidelines in this Handbook, not based upon arrangements or relationships between students and faculty outside of this manual.
3. Assessment should be treated as an integral part of learning, not separate from it, and should be based on an understanding of learning processes. Students are an active participant in the process. Students fully understand why they do or do not receive the credit awards they requested, and actually learn throughout the learning clarification and request process.
4. The determination of credit awards and competence levels must be made by appropriate subject matter and academic or credentialing experts. Faculty with appropriate academic credentials make credit recommendations.

5. Credit or other credentialing should be appropriate to the context in which it is awarded and accepted. Southeastern awards credit for prior learning that is applicable and usable towards students' degrees or academic programs.
6. If awards are for credit, transcript entries should clearly describe what learning is being recognized and should be monitored to avoid giving credit twice for the same learning. Experiential Learning Credit is transcribed as Prior Learning Assessment, showing the appropriate SEU course coding, course title, credit amount, and a grade of "CR" for credit. Credit is not awarded twice for the same learning. ELC credit will not replace previously earned Southeastern credits or passing grades. ELC credit will not raise or lower students' grade point averages.
7. Policies, procedures, and criteria applied to assessment should be fully disclosed and prominently available for all parties involved in the assessment process. This is addressed via this Handbook.
8. Fees charged for assessment should be based on the services performed in the process and not determined by the amount of credit awarded. Students do not pay for Specialized Professional Training or credits received in transfer from other educational institutions. Students pay a Learning Essay Assessment Fee prior to the awarding of credit based on the amount of credit submitted for assessment, not upon the credits awarded. Learning Essay credits cannot be applied to financial aid awards or used for financial aid purposes.
9. All personnel involved in the assessment of learning should pursue and receive adequate training and continued professional development for the functions they perform. Training is required for all faculty assessors and those involved in serving ELC students.
10. Assessment programs should be regularly monitored, reviewed, evaluated, and revised as needed to reflect changes in the needs being served, the purposes being met, and the state of the assessment arts. The awarding of all credit falls under the Provost and the academic affairs offices in coordination with the respective academic deans. As such, it is evaluated regularly.

### **Recognition and Limitations**

There are several aspects of credit by experiential learning that should be understood.

1. Credit for prior learning is recorded and recognized differently than classroom-based credits.
  - a. Prior Learning Assessment credit will be marked separately on the SEU transcript.
  - b. ELC carries a grade of Passing, which is defined as equivalent to at least a "C" grade.

- c. ELC is not officially awarded until students have an official Southeastern transcript record (following their initial Add/Drop period).
  - d. ELC does not apply towards the residency requirements for graduation. (25% of the degree must be earned through SEU courses.)
2. Students are limited to 45 total semester credits by experiential learning.
3. The policies and practices in this Handbook are applicable to only Southeastern University. Experiential Learning Credit is usually not transferrable to other universities since each institution must establish their own assessment processes. Students planning to transfer to other educational institutions should verify that institution's policies and practices.
4. The effectiveness of the experiential learning assessment process depends heavily on the nature of the course under consideration. Some courses possess a large portion of detailed cognitive-based material that is difficult to learn outside of actual college classes. Other courses are more skills-based and may be easier to both master and document in non-classroom settings. Introductory and foundational courses often cover a great breadth of material without going into significant depth on individual topics. These courses present a challenge to students seeking ELC who have narrow knowledge on portions of a discipline, but lack overall general knowledge in the complete field. Students may find that they are good candidates for more specific, narrower focused courses while lacking the breadth demanded by more general, broader courses.
5. Southeastern desires to recognize college-level learning whenever warranted. Academic Advisors seek to the best of their abilities to communicate clearly to inquiring students the process to follow and approximate times involved. However, until the assessment process is complete, no promises can or will be given regarding the amount of credit that will be awarded.
6. Appeals of credit awards can be made following the regular appeal process, which begins with communication with the faculty assessor, the college dean, the registrar, and finally the Provost. The decision of the Provost is final in regards to credit awards.
7. Learning Essays require faculty to individually assess the depth and breadth of learning acquired by students, and thus students pay \$75 per credit submitted for evaluation, regardless of how much credit is awarded.
8. A maximum of 45 semester hours of credit may be earned through any combination of AP, CLEP, IB, Military or other such examinations or ELC credits that are deemed acceptable by the Office of the Registrar.

9. What is college-level learning? A quick review of definitions and pertinent literature states that it is critical to determine for the awarding of credit, but does not give a measurable criteria so students know when they have crossed from “non-college level learning” to “college-level learning.” However, the following guidelines should prove helpful to students as they measure and present their own prior learning.

College-level learning involves:

- a. The level of learning normally found in college. Thus, finding credit courses on the topic you studied or in your field of training at regionally-accredited colleges is a positive indicator. Colleges and universities usually list appropriate courses for college-level learning under Course Descriptions in their academic catalogs.
- b. Broad application and transferability. College-level learning has broad application outside its immediate context. What are NOT college-level would be skills and knowledge of such a narrow focus that they did not train you to conduct related operations outside the given arena. Example: house painting. Although painting a house is important and requires high skills, those precise skills have little applicability outside merely painting another house. House painting, in itself, is not a college-level skill. However, there are many skills, theory, negotiations, business practices, time management competencies, and other dynamics that might be initially learned through one event and advanced through multiple applications of paint on numerous edifices. The credit, however, would not be granted for house painting.
- c. Have a knowledge base. College-level learning must have a body of knowledge upon which the discipline is based and developed. A list of “What is Right and Wrong” within the discipline should be able to be defined and be defensible to those outside the discipline. Example: A good demonstration of this occurs the first few weeks of most college courses where faculty introduce terms, expressions, and principles associated with the subject. This knowledge base is critical and must be mastered in order to understand the discipline and become competent in the field. Students must demonstrate that they have acquired this knowledge base and are competent in the field equivalent to those who have completed the actual course.
- d. Have a balance between theory and practice. Students must understand why they are proficient, and that involves understanding the theory underlying the discipline. Example: Individuals who are good at public speaking but have never investigated why they are successful and influential communicators, may still be good public speakers but

cannot receive credit for public speaking because they have not connected communication theory to its practice.

- e. Be current. Some fields develop and change quickly, constantly redefining itself within society. Since the university awards credit in today's environment, the knowledge and skills must be applicable in today's settings. Example: individuals who were proficient years ago in computer programming, but have not maintained their skills for today's software and hardware, could not receive credit recognition. Credit cannot be awarded for learning that is no longer applicable.

### Types of Experiential Learning Credit

Credit that is awarded based on learning that occurred outside the traditional, accredited college classroom can be divided into two primary categories, and several sub-categories, as outlined below.

#### Evaluation External to Southeastern

- Standardized Exams
  - Advanced Placement (AP)
  - College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
  - Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES)
  - International Baccalaureate (IB)
- American Council on Education (ACE)
  - Military Recommendations
  - Nonmilitary Organization Recommendations
  - National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS)
- Articulation Agreements \*

#### Evaluation Internal to Southeastern

- Articulation Agreements \*
- Departmental Exams (DE)
- Specialized Professional Training (SPT)
- Learning Essays (LE)

\* Involves both external and internal processes

#### Evaluation External to Southeastern

##### Standardized Exams

Standardized exams are offered by testing agencies to large groups of individuals whose scores are compared together (standardized) and reported in a format comparable to each other. The tests themselves are constructed or certified by faculty qualified in the particular discipline. The following tests are accepted as indicated by the University.

- Advanced Placement (AP). Southeastern University awards college credit to students who participated in the Advanced Placement program in high school. Most courses receive college credit based on credit recommendations of the College Board for their Advance Placement (AP) exams, for exam scores of at a "3." Details can be found at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). No grade or

quality points are assigned for awarded credit. Applicants must submit original AP scores to the Office of the Registrar for evaluation.

<http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/public/courses/index.html>

- College-Level Examination Program (CLEP). Southeastern accepts the credit recommendation of the College Board for their College-Level Examination Program. <http://clep.collegeboard.org/>
- Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES). Southeastern accepts the credit recommendation of the Department of Defense for their Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support. [http://www.dantes.doded.mil/DANTES\\_Homepage.html](http://www.dantes.doded.mil/DANTES_Homepage.html)
- International Baccalaureate (IB). Southeastern recognizes the International Baccalaureate Diploma. Students who have earned a score of four or better in the higher level and standard level examinations may qualify for credit for subjects taken. Without the earned diploma, a score of five is required and credit is only given for higher level examinations. No grade or quality points are assigned for awarded credit. <http://www.ibo.org/general/who.cfm>
- National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS; formerly National PONSI). Southeastern accepts the recommendations of the Board of Regents for the University of the State of New York's National College Credit Recommendation Service. [http://www.nationalccrs.org/students/information\\_for\\_course\\_participants.html](http://www.nationalccrs.org/students/information_for_course_participants.html)

### **American Council on Education – Military Service Evaluation (ACE)**

The American Council on Education (ACE) provides a collaborative link between the U. S. Department of Defense and higher education through the review of military training and experiences for the awarding of equivalent college credits for members of the Armed Forces. Southeastern accepts the recommendation of the American Council on Education for their military credit recommendations. The University accepts the ACE-endorsed AARTS and SMART transcripts as an accurate record of ACE credit recommendations.

Veterans who have successfully completed courses in the military service training program may submit a record of the courses to the Registrar for review. The amount of credit granted will not exceed that recommended by the American Council on Education in the *“Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Forces.”* No credit is awarded for technical or vocational training that is not considered college-level. No grade or quality points are assigned for awarded credit. A grade of “CR” is recorded. Students must submit a transcript available from the military. AARTS Transcripts are for Army and Army National Guard personnel and reservists. Request transcripts from <http://aarts.army.mil/>.

SMART transcripts are for Navy and Marine Corp personnel. Request transcripts from

<https://www.navycollege.navy.mil/transcript.html>.

The American Council on Education also provides credit recommendations for participating organizations, including corporations, professional and volunteer associations, schools, training suppliers, labor unions, and government agencies. The University accepts the ACE recommendations on a case-by-case basis depending on the credit's applicability to students' degree programs. Students should work closely with their academic advisor, department chair, and college dean for specific experiences and courses. <http://www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=CCRS>

On an ongoing basis, Southeastern faculty work closely with major employers to evaluate the nature and level of their training programs and their equivalency to credit courses. Students should work closely with their academic advisor, department chair, and college dean for training that has been evaluated.

### **Articulation Agreements**

Southeastern University has established several articulation agreements with other educational institutions that meet the standards established by its accrediting associations. The University does not have a standard agreement since all institutions have unique characteristics and change over time. However, the accrediting association is very clear that students' learning experiences must be equivalent regardless of where or how the credits were earned. Thus, course content, instructor qualifications, grade determination, and even recordkeeping all contribute to the university's ability to form relationships. A list of current articulation agreements is maintained by the Registrar.

### **Evaluation Internal to Southeastern**

**Articulation Agreements** – as explained above, Articulation Agreements utilize both external and internal processes.

### **Departmental Exams**

Credit by Assessment through Departmental Exams is a means to gain credit for courses offered at Southeastern University by demonstrating knowledge of the course content. Students enrolled at Southeastern University who wish to attempt credit by examination or other appropriate assessments, or to challenge a course in which they are enrolled, may submit a request to the Department Chair or Dean of the College that offers the course for the opportunity to demonstrate competency in the usual material covered in the course. The Department Chair and/or Dean of the college will determine if a test is appropriate. The testing instrument will become part of the student's academic record.

If the Departmental Exam request is approved, the student arranges the testing date with the department, college, or Registrar's Office, depending on the established examination process for that test. Testing dates usually occur one or two times a semester. The Departmental Exam Fee must be paid prior to test administration, and the payment receipt and student identification must be presented at the time of the exam. The equivalent minimum grade of "C" is required on the exam, and if obtained, a grade of "CR" will be recorded on the student's academic record for the subject tested.

### **Sponsored Professional Training (SPT)**

Sponsored Professional Training recognizes that students are often in non-collegiate professional educational settings that contain college-level training and instruction that is applicable and transferrable to other settings. Usually there is a certificate, record, or transcript maintained to document the length of the experience, but not necessarily the content learned. Although no standard definition of time in relationship to credit can be provided, it is expected that the time should at least approximate the time required in a college class. Unless the training has been evaluated by the American Council on Education or similar organization, the responsibility is given to the student to provide the requisite documentation and information listed below. In some situations, individual departments or colleges have investigated the training programs of particular businesses and have established SPT equivalencies. Students should work closely with their academic advisor, department chair, and college dean for training that has been evaluated. Students should realize that not all training can be documented as meeting the Good Practices requirements, listed above.

1. Evidence of successful training completion, such as transcript, certificate, employee training record, signed letter on corporate letterhead with appropriate contact information
2. Course or training information, including length of contact hours, syllabus, course description, training agenda, training manual, instructor or supervisor contact information.
3. Written explanation as to what college-level material or competencies were acquired, how the learning already has been applied in their professional or personal lives, and how the learning may possibly be used in future situations.

### **Learning Essay – Individualized Learning Assessment**

At times, the previous learning accumulated by students does not match the certification processes, described above. For some learning there may not be a standardized exam covering the topic, it was not delivered through the military or an ACE approved outlet, or the knowledge or skill is not easily tested through a departmental exam, or the learning was acquired over a period of time in several settings. In these situations, students must explain and document their experiences, and

describe the learning they obtained. The Learning Essay (LE) process helps students identify the course for which they are requesting credit, describe and document the experiential setting, and detail the learning and skills obtained.

**Learning Essay Principles.** Along with the Best Practices listed above, the following principles govern the Learning Essay – Individualized Learning Assessment process.

1. Southeastern grants credit for specific courses. It is students' responsibility to match their experiences and learning to college-level courses. The process should begin with Southeastern's catalog. In the event the learning does not match any of the courses in our catalog, other regionally accredited colleges and universities can be utilized. However, since Southeastern faculty must evaluate the Essay, they can only evaluate courses from disciplines in which they have academic qualifications.
2. Time and learning are related. Although the amount of time students are involved in their learning experiences cannot be directly connected to the amount of credit awarded, it is recognized that learning requires both time and involvement. For this reason, accumulated applicable learning experiences of less than one year are not sufficient support for experiential learning credit. Evaluators also understand that long periods of experience do not necessarily directly relate to deeper learning and more credit.
3. Breadth and depth of involvement are required. The level of the course for which students request credit determines the level of learning that they must demonstrate. In some situations, introductory courses are more challenging for credit awards since they usually require a broad degree of knowledge and skill compared to upper level courses that are more specific and detailed. Participation in multiple areas of an organization with various authority levels usually involves more learning and results in more credit recognition. Students who have worked their way up through the ranks of a company to top leadership are often candidates for more credit than those hired directly to the top leadership.
4. Documentation of experiences is required. This is often the most problematic portion of the Essay. Individuals whose experiences have occurred over many years in several settings, especially internationally, often have difficulty locating those who can document their learning experiences. Only in extreme circumstances can family members provide documentation. Those who document experiences must have personally witness the person's work. The documenter must have been in a position to evaluate their effectiveness. Thus, direct supervisors are most often used to document learning experiences. For instance, senior pastors usually can't provide documentation for church school teachers unless they personally regularly monitored their

classes. Children also cannot easily document the effectiveness of their teachers. Direct supervisors and fellow teachers with significant knowledge and interaction with a person's classes would be best.

5. Partial credit sometimes counts. At times, a person may have limited experience, problems documenting all of their experiences, or not need full credit in a course. Although most of Southeastern's courses carry three credits, less credit at times is awarded. Students should only request credit that is applicable towards graduation. Faculty can award less credit than is requested if the Learning Essay does not support full credit or the academic advisor certifies that the student requires less credit.
6. Learning Essays are not graded. Faculty must, however, be assured that a student with the indicated learning would have earned at least a "C" grade in the course. Courses are recorded on the transcript with a grade of "CR" for credit.
7. Learning Essay Assessment Fees are charged. These are to cover the assessment process and not the credit awarded, since the assessment must be completed regardless of how much credit is recommended and whether or not the process results in a credit award. The Fee is based on the number of credits submitted for evaluation by the student and is charged at the time of submission. Payment must be satisfactorily addressed prior to the assessment process.
8. Each Learning Essay must stand on its own. Courses should not reference other Essays or refer the evaluator to other courses. Students who plan to submit multiple Learning Essays should consider initially working on one Essay and receiving the credit assessment. This ensures accurate interpretation of the guidelines and the most efficient use of time.
9. Learning Essays are official academic submitted assignments. They therefore are governed by the University's plagiarism and academic honesty guidelines. Evidence of purposefully submitting inaccurate information will result in non-awarding of credit, forfeiture of the Learning Essay Fee, and possible dismissal from the University.

### **Learning Essay Sections.**

Learning Essays must contain the following sections. The indicated page lengths are expectation guidelines. Significantly less or more pages usually indicate a misunderstanding of section guidelines, students' insufficient experience or knowledge of the academic field, or a lack of focus on the learning acquired.

**Cover Sheet.** (1 page) The cover sheet must include the following information: Student Name, ID Number, Major Program, Date of Creation, Subject of Learning Essay.

**Section 1: Expanded Resume.** (2-3 pages) Students should use a commonly accepted resume format with emphasis upon the settings supporting the learning experiences. This is very important to assist the evaluator in understanding the amount of time and various settings during which the learning occurred. Although this section probably will include more locations than referenced in Section 3 Learning Experiences, all the references in Section 3 must be included in this section.

**Section 2: Course Request.** (1 page) Use the Learning Essay Course Request included at end of this Handbook.

**Section 3: Learning Experiences.** (3 pages approximately) This section allows students to describe in detail the settings in which their learning occurred. Students should include the approximate dates, levels of involvement and leadership experienced, responsibilities, and any awards or recognitions received. Do not explain WHAT was learned, just WHERE and WHEN the learning events occurred. Key words: "I did..." or "I was responsible for..." Students often find it easier to present this section using a date-based outline format rather than narrative. Each Learning Experience setting should match an entry in the overall Section 1: Expanded Resume timeline.

**Section 4: Learning Principles.** (3 pages approximately) This section allows students to describe the key factors, principles, and practices they learned that made them successful in the field covered by this course. This is the heart of the Learning Essay describing what was learned and how well that learning was put into practice. A good approach is to determine five to seven critically important principles for the field and to describe in individual paragraphs how you successfully applied those principles. HINT: If you were teaching others this subject, what five to seven principles or key issues would you include? HINT: Textbooks on the course subject always include these principles and competencies. Your faculty evaluator will be expecting you to be conversant with these points. HINT: Just because the student has been successful in a particular subject does not mean credit will be awarded – students must understand WHY they were successful. This section is where the Why is explained.

**Section 5: Learning Resources.** (1-2 pages) This is an expanded bibliography listing the sources of information that proved valuable to you as you learned and mastered the subject. Include books, recordings, periodicals, internet sources, and people that helped you develop the Principles detailed in Section 4: Learning Principles. Each entry should be in proper bibliographic format with a brief explanation as to its specific contribution to you and your success.

HINT: A specific bibliographic style is not required, but the document must be consistent and accurate.

HINT: Some courses are much more sensitive to current theory or practice than others – this section should reflect students’ understanding of current knowledge, theory, and practices in the selected discipline.

**Section 6: Experience Documentation.** (variable depending on experiences referenced) This section includes documentation, such as signed letters from employers, certificates, awards, performance evaluations, photographs, charts and flyers that support your experiences.

NOTES:

- All sections of the Essay must be complete prior to submittal. Do not insert notes that other documentation will be sent under a separate submittal.
- One document can certify several Learning Essays. In these cases, each learning experience must be specifically referenced and the document can be copied for each Essay.
- Copies of certificates, awards, and evaluations are satisfactory. Do not include original documents. Southeastern is not responsible for any materials that are included in an Essay.
- Video and audio recordings can be included. If any online links are provided, verify that they are active address links prior to Essay submittal.
- Other documentation not covered above should be cleared by your advisor or Learning Essay coordinator.
- Learning Essays are retained by the University following established guidelines for student coursework.

References:

1. CAEL 2010 Study of Prior Learning Assessment and Adult Student Outcomes, funded by the Lumina Foundation for Education, [http://www.cael.org/pdfs/PLA\\_Executive-Summary](http://www.cael.org/pdfs/PLA_Executive-Summary)

**1. What is the limit for Experiential Learning Credit?**

- The maximum number of credits that Southeastern awards for Experimental Learning is 45 semester credits.

**2. What portions of my degree can be satisfied by Experiential Learning Credits?**

- Credit awards can be recognized for any undergraduate degree requirements as long as the learning matches the course requirements. Accreditation standards do not allow Experiential Learning Credit for graduate-level programs. Because of specific knowledge and skill requirements for some courses, or because of program accreditation requirements, some courses may not be eligible for Experiential Learning Credit.

**3. When will I need to write a Learning Essay to request Experiential Learning Credit?**

- Students should complete Departmental Exams or submit Learning Essays early in their education to ensure they do not take actual courses that could have been satisfied by ELC. Additionally, students must clarify the ELC awards in sufficient time to enroll in the actual course should they not receive credit recognition. Credit is not considered earned until the assessment process is completed and posted to the student's transcript.

**4. What is the cost for Experiential Learning Credit? When are Learning Essay Fees due? What are my options for paying the Fees?**

- The Assessment Fee for both Departmental Exams and Learning Essays are \$75/credit requested. Payment is due prior to taking the Departmental Exam or submitting the Learning Essay, and can be paid to Southeastern's cashier or placed on the student's account.

**5. Does Financial Aid cover Experiential Learning Credit costs?**

- No, because students do not register for any credits involved in Prior Learning Assessment options. In many ways, Experiential Learning Credit is treated similarly to transfer credit and cannot be considered towards financial aid awards.

**6. Who evaluates Learning Essays?**

- Southeastern faculty. Thus, only course subjects and topics for which Southeastern faculty are qualified are available for Experiential Learning Credit.

**7. How do evaluators evaluate Learning Essays?**

- Faculty compare the breadth, depth, and extent of learning demonstrated in the Learning Essays to that level expected from students who took the equivalent course at another university. Faculty recognized that when they teach the actual course, they emphasize and test for specific details that students may not have acquired through their experiential learning. However, each course has generally accepted knowledge and competencies that are expected of all students, regardless of the educational institution.
- It is also understood that many subjects and fields of knowledge are constantly developing and advancing, so faculty must take into consideration students' level of knowledge of current trends and developments when evaluating ELC.

- Students who satisfactorily demonstrate that they have acquired these to at least a “C” level will receive a credit award and a grade of “CR” for credit.

**8. What office should I contact regarding Experiential Learning Credit?**

- Although the Registrar oversees the PLA process, students should initially contact their academic advisor and department to determine if their learning is a good candidate for experiential learning credit.

**9. How do I appeal the decision regarding Experiential Learning Credit awards?**

- Appeals are handled following the University’s normal appeal process.

**Specialized Professional Training –  
Faculty Credit Evaluation Report**

Faculty Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title/Position \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Discipline \_\_\_\_\_

Academic and Experiential Qualifications applicable to this evaluation:

Description of the Sponsored Professional Training setting reviewed:

Based on evaluation of the above-described SPT, I recommend the following credit recognition for students presenting the required training records and/or credentials:

Record or Credential:

Credit Recommendation:

Equivalent SEU Course (*if applicable*):

Recommended Next Review Date (mm/yyyy): \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Faculty Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Reviews	
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College Dean \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Provost \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Registrar \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

SPT Reference \_\_\_\_\_

**Specialized Professional Training –  
Student Credit Request**

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student ID** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email** \_\_\_\_\_ **Daytime Phone #** \_\_\_\_\_

**Major** \_\_\_\_\_ **Academic Advisor** \_\_\_\_\_

I request that Southeastern University evaluate for college credit the training and certifications, listed below. The materials contained in this request are accurate and true to the best of my knowledge, and I authorize Southeastern University to verify any details necessary in the evaluation process.

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

*Please complete the following questions:*

1. Who offered the training or issued the certificate you received (such as ACE, PONSI, NU Professor, State of FL, etc.)?
2. What type of training record or certificate were you issued? (*training records, transcripts, or certificates must be attached*):
3. How much credit are you requesting? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What college-level material or competencies did you acquire, how have you applied your learning in your professional or personal life, and how can the learning possibly be used in future situations? (*two to three paragraphs are expected in this section*)
5. What Southeastern University equivalent course(s) or SPT Reference applies to this SPT?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Approvals & Reviews**

Student's Advisor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Content Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

*(Signatures below indicate agreement that the content of the course listed is equivalent to college-level learning.)*

College Dean \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Registrar \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Learning Essay Cover Sheet

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Major \_\_\_\_\_ Academic Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

Southeastern equivalent course code/title \_\_\_\_\_ or

Other college course code/title/college name \_\_\_\_\_

Catalog course description (include web link):

Initial Request?  Rewrite?

Amount of credit requested \_\_\_\_\_ ; Assessment Fee: \_\_\_\_\_ credits @ \$\_\_\_\_\_/credit = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Assessment Fee Payment Option (please indicate payment choice):

Paid: (Cashier’s Notation \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_)

I authorize Southeastern University to place the full amount on my student account.

I request that Southeastern University evaluate for college credit the material listed in this Learning Essay. The materials contained in this request are accurate and true to the best of my knowledge at the time of submission, and I authorize Southeastern University to verify any details necessary in the evaluation process.

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

Essay Evaluation Results (office use only)

Content Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Credit Recommendation:

YES..... This Essay demonstrates that the student has sufficient knowledge and competencies to receive the requested credit

PARTIALLY YES... This Essay demonstrates that the student has sufficient knowledge and competencies to receive \_\_\_\_\_ credits.

NO..... This Essay does not demonstrate that the student has sufficient knowledge and competencies to receive credit in this course.

Comments or recommendations:

Reviews: College Dean \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Registrar \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_