** Earn College**

**Credit through**

**Challenge Examinations**

If you have acquired skills or training outside a traditional academic environment, you could be eligible to earn up to 30 college credit hours.



**Application Packet**

**Credit for Prior Learning**

To recognize learning that a person acquired outside a traditional academic environment,

Arkansas Tech University-Ozark Campus relies on the following process to ensure practices are consistent with academic integrity and responsive to nontraditional learners. Such learning may be derived from multiple means including but not limited to: various life and work experiences, employer training programs, independent study, non-credit courses, non-college courses, or seminars, non-credit apprenticeship, or vocational or otherwise certification programs, or volunteer or community service experience. Some of this learning may be equivalent to college level learning.

The term “prior learning assessment” is the process by which an individual’s experiential and extra-institutional learning is assessed and evaluated for purposes of granting college credit. Supporting documentation that demonstrates learning outcomes, competencies, and professional skills gained through prior learning must be submitted.

**Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)**

In certain instances, a student who has been accepted into a degree program may present evidence that would suggest that he or she may be eligible to receive credit for a course or courses either through aggregate educational experience or through some combination of occupational experiences.

Credit for prior learning offers students the opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge they have gained through life experiences and apply this knowledge towards credit in a certificate or degree program. In such cases, application for Prior Learning may be made.

**Eligibility**

A student must be matriculated in an Arkansas Tech-Ozark certificate or associate degree seeking program to be eligible to apply for prior learning credit. During any semester of attendance at the Ozark Campus, application can be made for prior learning and, if approved, it will be posted during the second (or successive) semester of attendance. (Attendance should be consecutive semesters.)

Not all programs provide the prior learning credit option; students should consult with the Office of Academic Affairs or program chairs for eligible programs and the process used for application.

**Number of Credits**

Students may be awarded a maximum of 30 semester credit hours for prior learning not to exceed 50% of the technical coursework required for a technical certificate or associate degree.

No more than a combined total of 30 semester hours of correspondence, extension, military service, credit by examination, or prior learning credit may be applied as credit towards a degree.

Prior learning credit will be awarded for specific courses and will satisfy degree requirements the same as if earned by normal participation in the course. Neutral grades of Credit or No Credit shall be utilized. Conventional letter grades shall not be used.

**Evaluation Method**

Arkansas Tech-Ozark offers PLAC for specific courses through institutionally prepared challenge examination to demonstrate mastery of the subject matter and/or skills. The examination will be thorough and in keeping with established goals and objectives of the course(s) and the overall program. Prior learning must match existing courses using the course description and course outcomes for guidance. Specific courses and exam proficiency shall be determined by program chair and approved by curriculum committee through a recommendation by the CAO.

The program chair offering the prior learning course(s) will assign a faculty member who will discuss the subject area to be tested with the student and administer the test. The challenge examination will be comprehensive in nature.

If a student passes a challenge exam, program chair or faculty member will record the score and recommend credit be awarded. Academic Affairs PLA representative will approve or disapprove the granting of credit for prior learning credit based on the score of the exam and recommendation of the program chair.

**Awarding Credit**

PLAC(s) granted through challenge examinations shall be recorded with a grade of “CR” (Credit) with full course credit entered on the student’s permanent academic record indicating successful completion and will satisfy degree requirements the same as if earned by normal participation in the course.

PLAC(s) attempted through challenge examinations but not granted shall be recorded with a grade of “NC” (No Credit) on the student’s permanent academic record indicating the attempt with no credit granted.

Since a traditional grade (A-F) is not entered, the PLAC is not calculated into the student’s grade point average (GPA).

If student does not pass the challenge exam, he or she will be ineligible to attempt another exam in that course and must successfully complete the course as needed to fulfill program requirements.

A student who has previously attempted or withdrawn from a course, regardless of the grade received, may not request credit by challenge exam in that course.

Credit granted through challenge examination must be applicable to the program in which the student is matriculated.

Students may not apply for prior learning credit after graduation.

**Application**

An application form must be completed and approved to sit for a challenge exam. Once the form has been completed and signed by the student, it must be signed by the appropriate program chairperson then taken to an Academic Affairs PLA representative to complete and approve.

If the request is approved, the student must go to the Office of Student Accounts to pay the fees. Student must present proof of payment (request form marked paid or receipt of payment) to program chair or faculty who will administer the exam. Student shall then be able to sit for the challenge exam.

**Transferability**

While Arkansas Tech-Ozark has determined prior learning credit awarded to be of adequate quality, comparability, and applicability to award equivalent credit, transfer of credit to other institutions is not guaranteed. Receiving institutions determine transferability of prior learning credit to their institution.

**Fees**

A fee per semester credit hour requested will be charged and is non-refundable. For a challenge examination, the fee will be $85 per credit hour.

Financial Aid will not cover fees for course credit awarded through Prior Learning Assessment.

**Process**

1. Student should meet with the Academic Affairs PLA representative to discuss the possibility of earning Prior Learning Credit.
2. An application form must be completed and approved to sit for a challenge exam with program faculty. Once the form as been completed, it must be signed by the appropriate program chairperson and then by the Chief Academic Officer.
3. If the request is approved, the student must go to the Office of Student Accounts to pay the fees. Student must present proof of payment (request form marked paid or receipt of payment) to program chair or faculty who will administer the exam. Student shall then be able to sit for the challenge exam.
4. This exam will be thorough and in keeping with established goals and objectives of the course(s) and the overall program. Theoretical knowledge will be tested by faculty recommendation through common acceptable measures (i.e., paper and pencil, computerized, etc.) with the possibility of a skills component. Both written and skills testing are encouraged to ensure “course rigor” is maintained and achieved.
5. Program faculty will administer the exam.
6. The examination will be graded by the faculty involved in its design. If the student earns a score of 70% or better, program faculty will forward supporting documents to the Chief Academic Officer requesting that credit for the course be granted. The Chief Academic Officer will approve or deny credit and forward to the Associate Registrar and credit or no credit will be transcripted
7. A student may request credit for as many examinations in any one semester as approved by the Chief Academic Officer. The total amount of credit or the number of courses “challenged” will be prescribed specifically for that student based on previous experiential learning, workplace experience, certifications earned, etc.

**List of Approved Prior Challenge Examination Credit**

Current approved challenge examinations are listed below and on the Arkansas Tech University–Ozark Campus website. Additional examinations may be added if approved through the program chair and approved by curriculum committee as recommended by the CAO.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Challenge Exams** | **Equivalent Course Credit** |
| Currently, no challenge exams exist for Arkansas Tech-Ozark Campus, however, the following challenge exams exist on the Russellville Campus that will apply to certain degree programs on the Ozark Campus. Please note the cost of the exams will differ from the Ozark Campus costs. | |
| Computer Science | COMS 1003 Introduction to Computer Based Systems (will substitute for BST 1303 Introduction to Computers |
| Health Information Management (cost of $##) | AHS 2013 Medical Terminology (will substitute for HSCI 1113 Medical Terminology) |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

** Application for**

**Prior Learning Assessment Credit**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | |  | | | | |  |  |
| *(Last Name)* |  | *(First Name)* |  | *(Middle)* | | |  | *(Student T#)* |
|  |  |  |  |  | | |  |  |
| *(Street Address)* |  | *(City)* |  | *(State)* | | |  | *(Zip Code)* |
|  |  | | | |  |  | | |
| *(ATUOC Student Email)* |  | | | |  | *(Phone)* | | |

***I request permission to take a Challenge exam to earn credit for the courses listed below. I understand there is a fee of $85 per semester credit hour.***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
| *(Student Signature)* |  | *(Date)* |

***Student Accounts’ use only***

*Fees paid: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*(Use Fee Code F826)*

*Cashier initials: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

**\_\_\_\_\_ Course credit may not be granted.**

**\_\_\_\_\_ I recommend course credit for the following be granted:**

*Course or PLA has not been attempted. Assoc. Registrar signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *(Course Number)* |  | *(Course Title)* |  | ***Grade to post:*** |  | ***Fee $*** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *(Course Number)* |  | *(Course Title)* |  | ***Grade to post:*** |  | ***Fee $*** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *(Course Number)* |  | *(Course Title)* |  | ***Grade to post:*** |  | ***Fee $*** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *(Course Number)* |  | *(Course Title)* |  | ***Grade to post:*** |  | ***Fee $*** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *(Course Number)* |  | *(Course Title)* |  | ***Grade to post:*** |  | ***Fee $*** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *(Course Number)* |  | *(Course Title)* |  | ***Grade to post:*** |  | ***Fee $*** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | ***Total Fees*** |  | $ |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Request Approved:** | | |
|  | | |
| ***(Signature, Academic Affairs PLA Representative)*** |  | ***(Date)*** |
|  |  |  |

***REGISTRAR CHECKLIST (for office use only)***

*1. Admitted and attending ATU-OC \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Credit approved\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*2. Applied for PLA credit \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 5. Fees paid \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*3. Eval completed by PLA Rep \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 6. Credit posted \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

**Student Understanding and Agreement**

I have read the Application for Prior Learning Assessment Credit information and understand the requirements such as eligibility, number of credits, evaluation method, awarding credit, application, transferability, and fees.

I understand I must submit this completed request, pay any necessary fees, and provide appropriate documentation in order to petition for credit.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1. | Prior learning evaluation is not available for all programs or courses. |
|  | 2. | Credit awarded for PLA will NOT be added to my Tech grade point average. |
|  | 3. | PLA credit granted will remain a permanent part of my academic record/transcript. |
|  | 6. | Once PLA credit is granted, it is irreversible and will remain a permanent part of my academic record/transcript. |
|  | 4. | For purposes of degree requirements, I must follow the provisions of the Tech catalog in effect at the time of enrollment or a subsequent Tech catalog. |
|  | 5. | All credits granted apply to the major I declared. If I change my major, the PLA credit awarded may not apply to the new major requirements. |
|  |  |  |
|  | 7. | PLA credit is not eligible for financial aid. |
|  | 8. | Being granted PLA credit does not change the dates/terms of attendance and does not restore eligibility for student financial aid, scholarships, or other programs. |
|  | 9. | ATU-OC cannot guarantee the transfer of any PLAC to another college or university. |
|  | 10. | Paying a fee is not purchasing credit. |
|  | 11. | Fees are not refundable. |
|  | 12. | I may not apply for PLAC after graduation. |

**By completing and signing this form, I am requesting that any PLA credit earned be applied to my permanent academic record at Arkansas Tech University-Ozark Campus.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***(Last Name)*** |  | ***(First Name)*** |  | *(****Middle)*** | |  | ***(Student T#)*** |
|  |  | |  |  | | | |
| ***(ATUOC Student Email)*** |  | |  | | ***(Phone)*** | | |