



Credit for Prior Learning **PORTFOLIO REVIEW HANDBOOK**



Central Maine Community College, 1250 Turner Street, Auburn, Maine 04210. Visit us on the web at: www.cmcc.edu.
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Prior Learning Assessment: Portfolio Review

The practice of awarding credit for college-level prior learning is based upon the belief that the education which builds on, interprets, and incorporates past and present knowledge is the education that is most meaningful to the student. At Central Maine Community College, we value the college-level knowledge students may have acquired through past work, independent reading and study, training programs or in-service courses, volunteer service or other experiences. CMCC offers a portfolio review process by which prior learning can be analyzed, articulated, documented, and assessed for credit.

Portfolio Review is only one way for students to obtain credit based on prior learning. Prior to pursuing to the Portfolio Review option, students should consider other options available to them, including credit through national and/or department examinations (CLEP, DSST, and Challenge Exams), as well as military or proficiency credits for non-accredited training.

A portfolio in terms of prior learning is a presentation of evidence by the student and reviewed by a faculty member under the direction of the Office of Academic Affairs. The award of prior learning portfolio credit is dependent on relevancy to courses in the student's CMCC degree program; including general education, major and elective courses.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for prior learning by Portfolio Review at CMCC, a student must;

- be matriculated into a degree program at CMCC
- show proof of college-level writing by credit or assessment

POLICIES

1. Applicants may submit a portfolio for review after they have met the Eligibility Requirements above.
2. CM may award credit through the portfolio review process for a regularly established catalog course in the student's degree program when the student demonstrates that learning gained through work and/or other experience is equivalent to the learning objectives outlined in the current, official CMCC syllabus for that course.
3. The student who wishes an assessment of prior learning for credit through portfolio review will prepare a well-documented portfolio, detailing learning objectives for which they are requesting credit through work and/or life experience.
4. The College will assess a non-refundable review fee of \$100 for each specific catalog course of prior learning credit through portfolio review. Payment to the Business Office is required at the submission of the portfolio. Payment of the fee does not guarantee that credit will be awarded.
5. The Department Chair and/or faculty member in the appropriate discipline will evaluate the portfolio and make the initial decision about awarding the requested course credit.
6. Grades will not be assigned for credit awarded through portfolio review. A portfolio is reviewed on a Pass/Fail basis.
7. Credit awarded through portfolio review...
 - does not meet requirements for residency credit.
 - will not satisfy credit load requirements for veteran benefits funding or other similar third party financial assistance programs.
 - will not be awarded for courses that are prerequisites of courses already completed.
 - may not transfer to another institution. Students are encouraged to review the transfer policy with the specific college or university to which they are interested in transferring.

APPLICATION & ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES/PROCEDURES for PORTFOLIO REVIEW

1. Set up a meeting with the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs to determine if her/his knowledge and experience seems appropriate for consideration in putting together a prior learning portfolio for review, and to obtain the syllabus for the targeted course.
2. The student has three ways to produce a portfolio – written, structured interview, and video submission. Portfolio is submitted to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.
3. Deadlines for Portfolio Submission:
 - October 1** – Portfolios submitted by this deadline will be reviewed before the start of the Spring semester.
 - March 1** – Portfolios submitted by this deadline will be reviewed before the start of the Fall semester.
4. An *Application for Prior Learning Credit* form (found on the CMCC website, Credit for Prior Learning page) is needed. This form should accompany the portfolio submitted to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. The non-refundable \$100 review fee (paid at the Business Office) is needed for each catalog course for which the student is seeking credit.
5. Once submitted to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, the portfolio and materials are forwarded to the appropriate faculty evaluator within the department in which the course is taught.
6. Evaluation is completed and credit awarded/denied within 30 days. The portfolio will be reviewed carefully and the faculty evaluator will determine if:
 - a. Credit is awarded. If credit for portfolio is awarded, the student is notified of the decision by Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and course equivalency credit is applied to the student's transcript by the Registrar's Office.
 - b. More documentation is needed for evaluation. If more documentation is needed, the student is notified via email by the by Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Upon receipt of necessary additional documentation, credit is granted or denied, and the student is notified of the decision. If additional documentation is not received within 30 days, credit is denied.
 - c. Credit is denied. If credit for portfolio is denied, the student is notified of the decision and reason(s) for denial. Appeals may be addressed to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. One revision is allowed within 30 days of denial. If the revision is denied, the student did not sufficiently describe/demonstrate/gather evidence for a majority of the course learning outcomes and no further appeal or revision is allowed.

THE PORTFOLIO

Each portfolio will be unique, reflecting the competencies, knowledge, and experience particular to each applicant. If written, the portfolio will be double-spaced, typed and presented in a professional manner. Portfolio(s) should be submitted electronically, in PDF format, to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs by the application deadlines mentioned in Item 3 on page 2 of this Handbook.

The portfolio will consist of the following:

1. Scanned completed *Application for Prior Learning Credit* form indicating fee is paid
2. Title page
3. Table of Contents
4. Resume
5. A brief autobiography that discusses the student's career and educational history, and any other experiences that will be the basis for her/his request for credit, and the student's academic/career goals
6. The student's most recent CM transcript
7. For each course for which credit is requested:
 - a. Current official CMCC course syllabus
 - b. A narrative which analyzes and articulates what was learned, how it was learned, how the knowledge has been used, and specifically, how this knowledge relates to learning objectives listed in the course syllabus
 - c. Appropriate documentation (certificates, work samples, job descriptions, letters, awards, licenses, or any other documents appropriate to the targeted course)

WHAT ARE YOUR CHANCES OF EARNING CREDIT by PORTFOLIO REVIEW?

If the student makes a reasonable and accurate selection as to the course description to challenge for credit, and has the appropriate background and knowledge as well as the skills to articulate that background and knowledge, the student should be able to earn credit. While no two prior learning candidates are exactly alike, those who succeed usually have the following elements in common:

- They have a realistic view of their knowledge
- They follow the instructions carefully
- They challenge a course that is appropriate to their knowledge and skills
- They submit a well-organized portfolio that pays attention to details
- They seek assistance from the Department Chair and CMCC's Writing Center

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions about credit for prior learning or the portfolio review process, contact the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Additional information can be viewed on the College's website, Credit for Prior Learning page.

