Context, Context, Context

- Mission and Institutional history
- Target population
- Existing Policies
- Accreditation concerns
- Culture and Capacity
- Competing demands; meeting goals for enrollment or persistence or graduation
Do students understand PLA?

What terms do you use?

- PLA
- Portfolio
- Testing
Create a shared Mental Model

- Common language
- Consistent policies & processes
- Focus on shared values
ACE 2012 Survey

Learner confusion about options, processes & points of contact

Need for more easily accessible policies & practices

Lack of awareness resulted in low demand and perception of low need

Information sharing gaps across employers, colleges and students
The Bell Curve of Leader Buy-in

- If I ignore it, maybe it will go away.
- No way—this will never work!!
- This is BS... I'm doing it My Way!
- I'll try it a while... but I have my doubts.
- It's about time—what took so long?
- I've been doing this stuff all along!

X
Institutional Staff and Faculty Buy-In

Implement the 4 E’s

**Engage** Challenge assumptions and promote new perspectives

**Evaluate** Assess fitness and offer solutions

**Equip** Implement and support services

**Empower** Promote use and espouse value
Map the Process
Process Mapping

• Review existing PLA processes
• Build a draft PLA Relationship Map
• Identify disconnects/barriers in current process
• Convert PLA Process Map into Action Plan
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase I</th>
<th>Phase II</th>
<th>III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student</strong></td>
<td><strong>Inquires about experiential learning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sets up appropriate testing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enrollment Services/Advisor</strong></td>
<td><strong>Refers student to handbook &amp; faculty advisor</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dept. Chair/Faculty Member</strong></td>
<td><strong>Preliminary assessment &amp; guidance</strong></td>
<td><strong>Meets with student to assess request</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Testing Center</strong></td>
<td><strong>Requests documentation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Local testing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Registrar</strong></td>
<td><strong>Administers testing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Local test</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Standardized Test Scores, e.g. CLEP</strong></td>
<td><strong>Standardized test Scores reported</strong></td>
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</table>
Be Aware of Handoffs

• Does every person know the information they need to help students with PLA?
• How is information about a student transferred to the next person?
  • *Will anyone notice when the student steps into the black hole?*
• How do you track that each part of the process has successfully occurred?
Ensure Quality
New CAEL Standards for Assessing Learning

“Institutions proactively provide guidance and support for learners’ full engagement in the assessment process.”

Students receive the practice and feedback they need to successfully receive credit for portfolios.
Faculty Assessor Training promotes

- Confidence in assessment and evaluation of student learning
- Effective Assessment on tasks and performance
- Process consistency and inter-rater reliability
- Determination of effective PLA options (e.g., Challenge Exams, Standardized Exams, Portfolios, etc.)
Build it and students will come?

• Do you have their attention?
• What tools can you use to get your message in front of them?
Creating your institutional funnel

• Understand how to design your content

• Create a method to move students through each stage of the process
PLA Accelerator

• Promotes Prior Learning Assessment at your institution
• Engages and empowers students
• Leads to more effective advisor sessions

— all supporting adult student success.
Adaptivity

A successful and sustainable adaptive plan

1. **Explores** uncertainties
2. **Connects** short-term targets to long-term goals over time
3. **Commits** to short-term actions while keeping options open
4. Continuously **monitors** the higher education arena, taking actions when necessary
What type of support do your students need from you?

- Active enculturation of PLA into your policies, academic process, and planning

- Assistance with degree-planning - Where does PLA fit? What courses are best satisfied with PLA? (Not all are good fits)

- Securing updated syllabi with well-articulated outcomes
Questions?