Crafting Institutional Policy

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Overview

• Common Implementation Concerns
• Implementation Checklist
• Best Practices: Elements of an Effective PLA Program
• Inter-Institutional Cooperation
Common Implementation Concerns

Research has found:

- PLA offerings are **inconsistent** across departments.
- PLA credit often officially available, but **not advocated or promoted**.
- **Consistency and transferability** of PLA credits is a concern.
- Institutional administrators see considerable potential or future demand for PLA, but many **have no plans to expand** their offerings.
- Staff and faculty are **unaware or cautious** of PLA implementation.
Common Implementation Concerns

• Not enough colleges are granting credit for prior learning
• Even when they do, marketing to students is weak
• Adult learners are not aware of PLA so they often repeat what they already know
• Need for consistent application of standards
• Careful consideration of unique PLA policies and practices
• Developing on-campus advocates
What can we do? - Implementation Checklists

- Academic Policies
- Non-Academic Policies
- Outreach and Awareness
- Promotion and Marketing
- Advising
- Professional Development
- Process Development
- Integrating PLA
- Local Business Partnerships
Elements of an Effective PLA Program
Policies and Procedures

- Consider all relevant impacts on campus
- Policy document draws from existing academic policy
- Developed by a group from across the campus
Infrastructure

- Map out process
- Administrative structure, staffing, and rules to guide students through PLA
- Rules and guides to support faculty and staff
- Professional development
- Includes organization and business model
Academic Criteria

- Derived from course learning outcomes
- Written and shared prior to student’s participation
- Criteria should invite multiple forms of demonstration of learning
Faculty Involvement

- Academic quality depends on faculty SMEs
- Training in PLA *generally* and portfolio assessment *in particular*
- Beyond portfolio, determine use of other assessments:
  - standardized tests
  - challenge/departmental exams
  - reviewing certifications and training
Student Support

- Clear and consistent information easily accessible to students
  - Policy information
  - Procedure and guides
  - Integration into degree
  - Expectations
- Advisors and other intake staff should use the same information
- Screening tools help advisors assist students in determining the best forms of PLA for them
Oversight and Research

- Quality assurance
- Data
  - Identifies impact of PLA on student outcomes
  - Identifies areas for professional development and program revision
- Maintenance, growth, and review of program
Inter-Institutional Cooperation

- Efficiency and Confidence
- Specific subjects:
  - Transcription
  - Transfer
  - Data collection
  - Sharing resources and capacity
Discussion and Questions

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