What is Prior Learning?

Prior Learning Assessment, or experiential learning, is a systematic process for evaluating and credentialing learning gained in a variety of contexts.

These contexts include both formal and non-formal learning experiences that take place in work settings, through military training, in the community, through independent study and through certification by professional organizations.

Implementing this systematic process of evaluation is one of the ways in which a college or university demonstrates its support of lifelong learning and acknowledgement of previous learning.
Eligibility and Expenses

- All degree seeking ODU students are eligible to enter the Prior Learning Process.
- Students can earn a maximum of 60 experiential credits as an undergraduate and six as a graduate student.
- Credit earned through Prior Learning Assessment options do not count as resident credit at Old Dominion University, thus, these credits do not apply to the minimum residency requirement of 25 percent of the total number of credits required for the degree or the credit hours required for graduation with honors or distinction.

- Training fees are billed to students at 20% of tuition costs.
- Exams are billed to students at 30% of tuition costs.
- Evaluation of a portfolio is billed to students at 50% of tuition costs.

Prior Learning is an out of pocket expense. No financial aid may be used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2023 – 2024 Fees per credit hour</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio Development:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad: $196.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate: $299.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Departmental Exam:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad: $117.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate: $179.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Evaluation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad: $78.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate: $119.80</td>
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</tbody>
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Assessment Methods

Prior Learning utilizes three main assessment methods:

- Departmental Exams
- Portfolio Development
- Training Evaluation
If you have knowledge and competencies that match a specific course description, you might opt to take a Departmental Exam, which means you take a comprehensive exam for a course without actually taking the class. The office of Prior Learning Assessment arranges for departmental exams, but, please keep in mind that the exams are issued only upon approval of the academic department. Other assessment methods may be more appropriate for some courses.
Portfolio Development

A portfolio is an organized collection of essays and documentation demonstrating your learning through work and life experiences. Through the portfolio, you show that the knowledge you have gained through experience is equivalent to courses at Old Dominion University. A portfolio may contain several subject areas, for example, organizational psychology, public speaking and information systems management. Each course equivalent is referred to as a section and is evaluated by a faculty expert in that field.

Good candidates for portfolio development are:

- Returning adult students with significant work experience
- Employed at least 5-7 years in a particular field, with increasing responsibilities
- Highly organized; effective speakers, writers
- Highly motivated; will work independently to complete a project
- Able to reflect on their work and training experiences
- With departmental approval, you may opt to develop a portfolio for one or more courses. If you have significant work experience related to your academic major without having completed a formal training program that can be evaluated, a portfolio might be a good option for you.
Training Evaluation

- Evaluation of workplace training is one way for you to obtain academic credit through Prior Learning. In general, the more related your training is to your intended major or degree program, credit awarded through the training evaluation option is more likely to be beneficial to you.

- Each training experience must be comparable in scope and depth to a college-level course and be at least 35 hours in duration.

- Examples of workplace training include professional development courses, and company lead coursework.
Process Steps

1. Contact the Prior Learning Office expressing interest in challenging a course
2. Submit a resume and cover letter to Prior Learning
3. Receive approval to challenge
4. Billing is submitted to the Office of Finance
5. Student completes challenge work
6. Credit is awarded if the challenge is successful
To Summarize

- All degree seeking ODU students are eligible to enter the Prior Learning Process.
- Students can earn a maximum of 60 experiential credits as an undergraduate and six as a graduate student.
- Expenses are all out of pocket—no financial aid may be used.
- XP credit does not count towards institutional credit.
- XP credit does not count towards the University writing requirement.
- There are three main assessment methods: departmental exam, portfolio development, and training evaluation.
- After a successful challenge, “XP” credit is awarded and displays on the student’s transcript. XP credit does not impact the student’s GPA.
- The student is responsible for fees regardless of the challenge results.
THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

odu.edu/priorlearning – priorlearning@odu.edu