PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT (PLA)

Bay Path University recognizes the professional, academic, and personal experiences that adult learners bring with them to the classroom environment. Because we value and want to affirm the various ways that adults learn, the University offers Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) to undergraduate adult students. Detailed guidelines for Prior Learning Assessment are available in the PLA Handbook. There are three types of PLA opportunities available: CLEP exams, Computer Challenge Exams, and portfolio claims for credit.

Bay Path's claim for credit process begins by taking an online class, PLA 250 Prior Learning Assessment, which meets the standards of the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). In PLA 250 Prior Learning Assessment, students will identify, categorize, and organize learned knowledge and skills. Students will learn how to prepare a portfolio that aligns this knowledge with college level courses; Bay Path University uses a course equivalency system as the basis for all claims for credit. These guidelines are identified in the course.

The portfolio is both a process and a product. The awareness of individual achievement and the potential of receiving college credit can be motivating. As a product, the portfolio is a compilation of documents which include a resume, an autobiographical narrative, written claims for credit, and other required supporting documentation. The process of creating and submitting a portfolio is taught in the PLA course. Upon successful completion of the prior learning course (achieving a grade of C- or better and the submission of a portfolio consisting of one completed claim for credit), the student's portfolio will be submitted for assessment. This first portfolio submission will be assessed at no additional charge to the student. (There are fees associated with the assessment and transcription of any additional prior learning credits.) If a student chooses to pursue additional claims, a final portfolio submission, consisting of any additional claims, will be due at least four (4) months prior to the anticipated date of graduation. As a guideline, students with less than six months until graduation may not be good candidates for this process. The University has set a limit of 36 credits which can be accumulated through this process. It is possible that some programs may not be able to accommodate any prior learning credits. Exclusions may apply for the writing of claims in certain degree programs.