



CAEL
Linking Learning and Work

Promoting College and Career Success: *Portfolio Assessment for Student Veterans*



2014

Council for Adult and Experiential Learning

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Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Active service members and veterans are pursuing postsecondary degrees in record numbers today, due in large part to the GI Bill education benefits that can cover much or all of the cost. An important tool for helping service members and veterans succeed in postsecondary education is prior learning assessment, or PLA.

PLA is a process that includes a formal review of an individual's learning outside of the traditional classroom in order to award the individual college-level credit, advanced program standing, or other formal recognition of his or her learning. This review may include administering examinations, reviewing course content, or assessing learning portfolios assembled by the student. An individual working toward a degree can potentially save both time and money through PLA. In addition, CAEL's 2010 multi-institutional study, *Fueling the Race to Postsecondary Success*, found that students with PLA credits have greater persistence and shorter times to degrees than students without PLA credits. It also showed that students who earn credit through PLA are two-and-a-half times more likely to graduate than students without such credit.¹

Many veterans have participated in extensive and rigorous military training programs through which they have acquired significant college-level learning.

They have also acquired learning in more informal ways from their military experiences. For these reasons, they especially stand to benefit from PLA. Several tools for assessing veterans' prior learning already exist. One of the most commonly used is military transcript review. The American Council on Education (ACE) Military Evaluations Program evaluates formal military training and occupations in terms of academic credit. ACE publishes the *Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services*, which provides the results of these evaluations and recommendations for the award of academic credit, guidelines that are used by many colleges and universities.

Veterans may also demonstrate that they have acquired college-level learning by taking examinations that test their knowledge of content taught in postsecondary courses. These exams include challenge exams developed by the college or university that the student is attending as well as standardized exams such as the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), DSST, and Excelsior College Examinations/UEXcel.

Portfolio assessment is an especially useful PLA method for veterans who find that credit recommendations and standardized exams do not adequately capture all of their college-level learning. At some colleges and universities, students have the option to develop portfolios to document this learning. Portfolios generally include a written narrative and supporting documentation. The narrative explains the student's learning and how it is aligned with college-level course content. The supporting documentation may include work samples, certificates and certifications, or letters from employers that support the student's narrative explanation. Portfolios are assessed by faculty. CAEL has established quality standards for this review that are in use at many institutions. The portfolio process allows military and veteran students to earn credit for more varied types of learning and experience than other academic credit options.

CAEL recently interviewed veterans who incorporated portfolio assessment into their education plans to learn more about them and their experiences. Several themes emerged in these interviews:

- **Student veterans who earned college credit through portfolio assessment were able to save time and money while completing their degrees.** Saving time is an important consideration for many veterans who are using Montgomery or Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits, which cover only up to 36 months of tuition and fees. Military and veteran students who are not using federal

education benefits (e.g., if their benefits are exhausted or if they only qualify for partial benefits) can save money on tuition, since the costs for PLA are typically lower than for taking the corresponding course.

- **Portfolio assessment is an important complement to other PLA methods, such as military transcript review.** Many of the veterans CAEL interviewed shared that they had decided to pursue portfolio assessment because they believed that their transfer credits did not adequately reflect the full extent of their learning. Several also noted that they were able to earn credit toward their majors through portfolio assessment, whereas their transfer credits had counted primarily as electives. (Note: institutional policies vary as to how PLA credits can be applied to a degree program. Some institutions permit PLA credits to count only for general education or electives, while others permit them to be applied also to major requirements.)
- **Student veterans find the portfolio assessment process challenging and academically rigorous.** The student veterans that we interviewed consistently said that assembling

portfolios was time-consuming, but worth the effort. Several interviewees explained that they had access to faculty members or advisors on campus who helped them as they developed their portfolios. Students also said that the process helped them improve academic skills such as writing.

- **Portfolio assessment helps student veterans get ahead in their careers.** All of the interviewees had chosen to pursue postsecondary degrees because they believed that doing so would enable them to get ahead in their careers. They emphasized that portfolio assessment helped them to achieve this goal by saving them time, enabling them to advance their careers more quickly. For several, portfolio assessment also provided them with an opportunity to earn credit for introductory classes, allowing them to enroll in more advanced classes that prepared them for the workforce.

The experiences of the seven veterans who are profiled in this publication show how providing military and veteran students with opportunities to earn academic credit through portfolio assessment can help them successfully earn degrees and achieve their career goals.

What is PLA?

Prior learning is a term educators use to describe learning that a person acquires outside a traditional academic environment. This learning may have been acquired through work experience, employer training programs, independent study, non-credit courses, volunteer or community service, travel, or non-college courses or seminars.

Prior learning assessment (PLA) is the process by which an individual's experiential learning is assessed and evaluated for purposes of granting college credit, certification, or advanced standing toward further education or training. There are four generally accepted approaches to PLA and, when properly conducted, all ensure academic

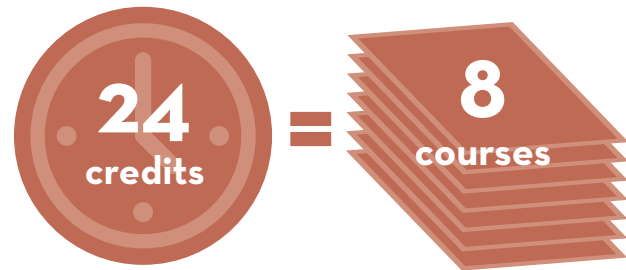
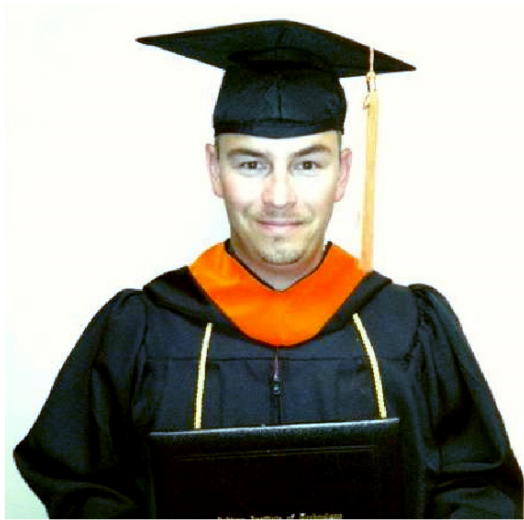
quality: (1) national standardized exams in specified disciplines, e.g., Advanced Placement (AP) exams, College Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests, Excelsior College exams, DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST); (2) college faculty-developed challenge exams for local courses; (3) evaluated non-college programs, e.g., National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS) or American Council on Education (ACE) evaluations of corporate training and military training; and (4) individualized assessments, particularly portfolio-based assessments, such as those conducted by CAEL's LearningCounts.org and by some individual colleges.



A Veteran's Skills in Safety Engineering: Jason Wolfe

Jason's Portfolio Credits

Credit hours awarded after portfolio review:



Specific learning from military experience:

Safety Engineering

Jason Wolfe joined the U.S. Navy right out of high school at age 18. He worked as an Aviation Boatswain Mate (ABE), launching aircraft on ship flight decks. After his military discharge in 2001, he found himself working for \$10 or \$12 an hour in the construction industry. Rather than stick with a dead-end job, Jason decided to use the GI Bill to go to college and expand his opportunities.

Over the next 10 years Jason was “in and out” of school, enrolling and dropping out as responsibilities at home and work took precedence. Even so, he found other ways to develop and evolve professionally, making his way to a career pathway in engineering. “After the construction thing didn’t work for me, I was able to work my way into a medical facility nearby. I enjoyed the things I did there, and it looked like a career I’d like to pursue,” he explains.

By 2011, as his GI Bill benefits ran out, Jason decided it was time to finish his education. His manager at work also encouraged him to get his degree, and his employer was willing to pay 80% of his tuition. Jason learned from his advisor at Indiana Tech that he could use CAEL’s prior learning assessment service, LearningCounts.org, to get credit towards both an A.A. and a B.A. in Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering.

Jason earned 24 credits, the equivalent of eight college-level courses, through portfolio assessment. For each class for which he earned

credit, he wrote a five- to ten-page paper and attached additional evidence such as supporting documentation, certificates he had earned, and reference letters from peers. Each paper demonstrated his grasp of the subject matter, its theoretical principles, and how he applied those principles to resolving real-life engineering issues.

His portfolios included Jason’s recent experiences and his military training. For instance, in his portfolio for his safety engineering course he described the training in personal protection equipment and fire fighting he received during basic training and as a safety observer aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt.

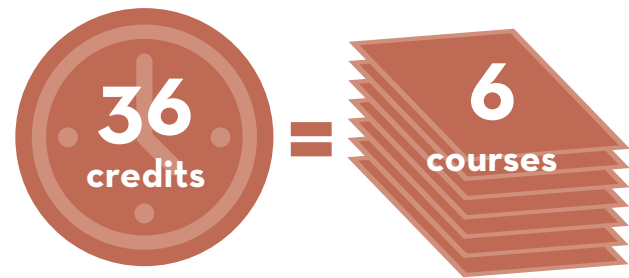
Jason felt great when he got the 24 credits for his portfolios. “As soon as I got that done I graduated with my associate [degree],” he explains. “And then two months later I was walking for my bachelor’s degree. So it really boosted my time frame.” He “absolutely” recommends that other veterans use portfolio assessment to earn college credit.

Jason expects that his degree will accelerate his career and give him an added boost at his current job. He was recently promoted to new product introduction engineer at Paragon Medical, and now oversees new product development activities. When asked what his manager thinks about his accomplishments, Jason laughs and says: “I actually encouraged him to go back to school, too, because he didn’t have his degree, either.”



Kurt's Portfolio Credits

Credit hours awarded after portfolio review:



Specific learning from military & work experience:

Information Technology

For most of Kurt Schroeder's life, he explained, "school was not a high priority." After graduating from high school, Kurt decided not to attend college and instead joined the Air Force. During his 21-year military career as an aircraft armament systems specialist, Kurt completed numerous training courses through the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF). While stationed in the Sacramento area, Kurt took a class or two at American River College, but was sent to Germany before he could make much progress toward a degree.

During the last five years of his Air Force career, Kurt began to work in information technology (IT) and discovered that he really enjoyed it. He got his start in the field when he co-wrote an equipment-tracking program for his unit. Kurt built on this success, taking on responsibilities such as managing the network for his unit, installing computers and software, and manning the help desk.

After he retired from the Air Force in 1999, Kurt decided to pursue a career in the IT field. Knowing that credentials would help him find a job with a civilian employer, Kurt earned certifications from Microsoft and Cisco. With these credentials, Kurt worked as a systems administrator for a small furniture company, then taught computer classes at a school for adult learners, and then was employed as an equipment installer at a telecommunications company.

Kurt finally reached a point where he wanted more. He recalls, "I got tired of being told after 10 years in the IT field that I can't move into management because I don't have a degree." He decided that it was time to make education a priority and to use his veterans education benefits to pursue a degree.

Kurt enrolled at Capella University in 2008 and chose information technology as his major. After a review of his previous transcripts, he earned 40.5 transfer credits based on the training he had completed at CCAF, plus 4.5 credits for his work at American River College.

Kurt consequently started college with a large number of credits, but he also wanted to pursue portfolio assessment to earn credit for learning that he had acquired while working in the IT field and that wasn't reflected on his military transcript. Portfolio assessment enabled Kurt to earn a total of 36 credits in 6 courses for his major, such as network security and architecture, introduction to internet working, and network administration. For each course, Kurt submitted a portfolio together with documentation of his learning, including certificates and references from former supervisors.

Kurt believes that the credit he earned through portfolio assessment was well worth the effort. He explains: "With PLA, I can earn credit for what I already know and pay a quarter

of what I would have to pay if I took a class. To me, that's a no-brainer. It made economic sense." Kurt points out that students can also learn a lot from the process of putting together a portfolio: "There's no downside to doing it. Even if you don't pass, you'll learn how to write a better paper."

Kurt graduated from Capella in June 2013 and is now employed as a network and service

operations manager. The position includes some of the managerial responsibilities Kurt wanted, and, he says, "I'm moving in the direction I was expecting to move in." Kurt is thinking about pursuing an MBA with an emphasis on IT. If he does, he hopes to be able to earn more credit through portfolio assessment: "When I start my master's, if PLA is available, I'm going to use it."

Translating Military Leadership to the Business World: "Dennis"

Dennis's Portfolio Credits

Credit hours awarded after portfolio review:



Specific learning from military experience:

Human Resources, Business Administration, and Leadership

After graduating high school in 1990, "Dennis"² briefly attended Buffalo State University before dropping out. Since he was mechanically inclined and fascinated by aircraft, he decided to join the military, which led to a 22-year career in the Air Force and the Air Force Reserves. "I had a few unique leadership roles and deployments all over the world," he explains. Dennis worked in management positions as an aircraft maintenance superintendent and a quality assurance superintendent, and rose in rank to first sergeant.

Despite frequent deployments, Dennis still found time for his education, attending night classes at SUNY-Buffalo for general education classes that complemented his technical and experiential training in the military. He also earned two associate degrees from the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF).

Four years ago, Dennis reassessed his career and decided to make some changes. He knew that at age 56 he would need to retire from the

military and lose his position, so Dennis decided to get serious about his bachelor's degree. He began taking courses at UNC-Greensboro, maintaining a 4.0 GPA while employed full-time as a regional manager at a federal agency. He then enrolled the University of Maryland University College (UMUC), which offers online courses and a highly flexible schedule that allows him to take condensed classes (8 weeks versus the traditional 16) year-round.

UMUC accepted approximately 50 of Dennis's credit hours from his classes at Buffalo State College, SUNY-Buffalo, CCAF, and UNC-Greensboro. In addition, Dennis enrolled in EXCL 301, an experiential learning class. In addition to the three credits for taking the course itself, EXCL 301 allows students to use portfolio assessments to earn up to 18 additional credits. Dennis developed a learning portfolio to earn 15 credits in human resources, business management, and leadership.

Dennis found the process to be rigorous, in that solid evidence needed to be presented in the portfolio. Dennis explains: "For the portfolio for HRM 300, the paper that I wrote was about 45 pages long, and I submitted probably 30 to 40 pieces of objective evidence. They emphasize that you can write a 300 page portfolio, but if you don't have any evidence that you've done this stuff, you aren't going to get the credit." UMUC assigned a professor to evaluate Dennis's portfolios, and he met with this professor weekly by phone. "You'd do conferences every week, Q&A with the professor and other students," he said. "It runs just like any other online class I've taken, except I've never written that much for any single class in my life."

Although EXCL 301 was writing-intensive and time-consuming, Dennis feels it was a good value: EXCL 301 cost \$1,700, considerably less than enrolling in four individual courses. And in Dennis's opinion, the rigor and high standards are as important as the credit hours earned and money saved. "Even though it was a really hard class, I am glad it was structured that way, because I need the degree to mean something to the rest of the world, not just to me." Portfolio assessment, he explains, "accelerates [your education] but not in a way that jeopardizes your future opportunities."

The portfolio process also helped Dennis identify the extent of his skills and knowledge. Reviewing the syllabi and constructing the portfolio revealed "things I learned along the way but wasn't able to articulate." The ability to articulate his knowledge is something that will be helpful in his future career, when he will have to translate his skills and accomplishments from "military language to what we call it in the commercial market." Dennis's goal, once he receives his bachelor's degree in business administration from UMUC, is to get his juris doctorate (JD) or an MBA.

Applying Theory to Practice: Jeff Jennings



Jeff's Portfolio Credits

Credit hours awarded after portfolio review:



Specific learning from military & work experience:
Business and Communications

When Jeff Jennings graduated from high school in 1982, he knew he wasn't ready for college. Jeff decided to pursue a personnel and human resources career within the Air Force. "I couldn't have picked a better [career] path," Jeff explains. "I planned to join up for four years, but it turned into 24."

Although Jeff had hated high school and didn't plan to take college courses after he joined up, his first supervisor in the Air Force advised him that he needed to enroll in the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) in order to move up the ranks. Jeff enrolled in classes without much enthusiasm. "It was just a box to check," he says, a way to earn a promotion. Jeff attended CCAF off and on for 17 years, eventually earning his associate

degree in 2001. He then attempted to enroll in a BA program at a local university, but was told they would only take 20 of his 64 credits from CCAF. "It was a huge turnoff," Jeff explains. Feeling frustrated, he decided to give up on school for a while.

Jeff retired from the military in 2007 as a senior master sergeant. Afterwards he worked for two years as human resources manager at Lowe's, and then took a civilian job with the Air Force. Many of his new coworkers were working towards their college degrees, and they told him about the portfolio learning assessment (PLA) program at Barry University. Jeff also discovered that new benefits included in the Post 9/11 GI Bill made it much more affordable for him to attend college. Meanwhile, his wife was work-

ing towards her BA, and his kids were preparing to graduate from high school and head to college as well. Surrounded by people who were working towards their degrees and motivated by financial benefits and the opportunity to receive credit through PLA, he realized “there was no reason not to go back” to school.

Jeff enrolled in the business administration program at Barry University in Florida in October 2012. After speaking with his academic advisor, Jeff decided to create a portfolio that he could use for credit for both his business administration and communications courses. The portfolio included both his military transcripts and a 29-page “autobiography” describing the learning from his experiences in the Air Force and how he applied theoretical concepts in business and communications to real-world situations. For example, Jeff’s last military assignment was with the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute. Jeff volunteered for training in morale and discrimination management, and went to Kuwait to assess an army unit suffering from morale problems. “We went to one motor pool where all the guys were white, and they had shade and water. And then we went across the base to another motor pool, where all the soldiers were African American and they had no shade and no water.” Suspecting that the morale

problem could be rooted in racial discrimination, Jeff and his team used their training to get a clearer assessment of the situation. “We mingled, talked with the soldiers,” to get some ideas for what questions to ask, and then “surveyed the soldiers, did focus groups, and facilitated meetings” to round out their assessment. His team analyzed their data and then submitted a report with recommendations to the general in charge of the unit. Jeff’s portfolio described how he applied the theoretical principles of business administration and communications to assessing, analyzing, and resolving administrative problems within the military.

Jeff was thrilled when he received 30 credit hours for his portfolio. Jeff will graduate with a bachelor of science degree in business administration in May 2014, and plans to immediately enroll in MA program in business administration that June. Although he won’t get an automatic raise or promotion when he graduates, he anticipates the “good feeling” he will get from having his degree. He also appreciates education in ways he didn’t when he was younger. “Now that I’m retired I am more interested in learning and different approaches—I look forward to going to class.” His advice to other vets considering going back to college: “Don’t think about it, just do it.”

From Instructor to Student: Jeffrey “Chip” Dodson

Teaching, leading, and learning have all been a part of Jeffrey “Chip” Dodson’s life. Right after graduating from high school in New Jersey, Chip enlisted in the Air Force and served for twenty-nine years.

During this time, he held a number of leadership positions. As a law enforcement specialist, he was able to “lead investigations and conduct security details for Air Force One,” serving three different presidents, while earning his first associate degree in criminal justice. As the commandant of the Airman Leadership School, Chip oversaw the program that airman had to complete in order to become noncommissioned officers. Chip served as a professional military education instructor,

and during that time he received his associate degree in instructor of technology and military science. He then attained another associate degree in human resource management when he became first sergeant. In addition to the teaching and leading he engaged in throughout his military service, Chip also took additional courses, volunteered in any way he could, and always encouraged the other troops to go back to college and get degrees. This is, in part, what motivated Chip to finally decide to go back to school for his bachelor’s degree.

Chip enrolled at Azusa Pacific University in 2011, and he soon learned that the institution would accept credit for his military training

and experience as well as his Air Force credits, which saved him a year of college. He was also encouraged to look into portfolio assessment. His advisors suggested that his experience as a professional military educator could allow him to demonstrate what he has learned in teaching theory, lesson presentation, theory of instructional scaffolding, and lesson plan creation.

Chip completed an eighteen-month PLA portfolio course that was broken up into five units, covering areas such as how to compile a portfolio, formatting and content, and how to write an experiential learning essay. Chip's portfolio included his résumé, an autobiography, military transcripts, all prior certifications and trainings, forms for his technical experience, and two experiential learning essays.

The first time Chip submitted his portfolio he did not earn credit. "It was not easy at first. The entire process took around four to six months, and I felt really discouraged afterwards." Nonetheless, he did not let this setback discourage him completely. He sought out advisors at Azusa, received feedback and made changes, he re-submitted his portfolio. He ultimately earned six credits, three for English composition and three for a social science course.

Chip felt "elation and relief" when he found out he had earned credit through PLA. His only regret was that he wished he had utilized the portfolio assessments with other classes as well. "That's where the counseling is key. I really don't think I had enough confidence entering the process. I wish I had believed more in myself."

Learning from the World: Ryan Burkart

Ryan Burkart has always loved learning, a passion reflected in both his military and civilian careers. Ryan shipped out to Marine boot camp on August 28, 2001, just a few months after his high school graduation and two weeks before the September 11th attacks reshaped the role of the American military. After basic training, Ryan deployed to northern Africa. Ryan loved the opportunity to learn about a part of the world very different from the small town in northern Kentucky where he had grown up.

Chip's Portfolio Credits

Credit hours awarded after portfolio review:



Specific learning from military & work experience:
English and Social Science

In December 2012, Chip proudly graduated summa cum laude, with a degree in organizational leadership. He currently lives in Temecula, California and works at a four year Air Force junior ROTC program teaching high school students communication and interviewing skills, career and college advising, and leadership theory.

Chip does not think he would be where he is today if it were not for PLA portfolio assessment and frequently recommends PLA to other veterans. His advice for other veterans is to utilize it right away, because "It saves you time and money. Simple as that. And it is better you at least try and if you cannot earn credit the first time, go back, get feedback, and try again. Chip believes it is "worth the work. The process is very fair. It reinforces the notion that this is something you really work for to earn. I am very blessed to have been given the opportunity to use this."



Ryan's Portfolio Credits

Credit hours awarded after portfolio review:



Specific learning from military and work experience:

Business Writing

at a brokerage house. He later found another job as an event manager at a convention center, but the long hours were not compatible with his desire to start a family. Ryan decided that pursuing postsecondary education was the best way for him to get started in a rewarding career, and, he notes, "The GI Bill left me with no excuses for not going back to school."

He enrolled at Northern Kentucky University (NKU), where the university's faculty and staff encouraged Ryan to figure out how he can turn what he learned from his military experience into academic credit. NKU reviewed Ryan's military transcript using American Council on Education (ACE) credit recommendations and accepted 30 credits toward graduation.

Faculty also encouraged Ryan to pursue PLA portfolio credit. He enrolled in a "Learning Through Military Leadership" course, which was designed to assist students in creating portfolios that drew on their military experience in order to earn academic credit for leadership. Since Ryan already had earned several credits related to his leadership experiences, the course's professor suggested that he use the portfolio assistance offered in the class to put together a portfolio for business writing credit.

Ryan's portfolio for business writing credit contained examples of reports and other materials that he had written in previous military and civilian jobs. For security reasons, Ryan submitted mock versions of the security reports and

logistical plans that he had written while serving in the Marine Corps. The process of developing his portfolio took Ryan about 10-12 hours over the course of two months. He says that he could have finished it even more quickly had he not been working full-time and enrolled in several other classes while working on his portfolio.

Four weeks after he submitted his portfolio, Ryan learned that he had earned three credit hours that would count toward his major. Ryan says that he would "absolutely recommend PLA, especially to a fellow veteran. It went a lot smoother than I thought it would and the process was a lot less complicated than I thought it was going to be." Ryan said that the portfolio process offered him a chance to reflect on the experience and opportunities he'd gained through military service, which, he says, "gave me a boost when I needed it right before graduation."

After graduation, Ryan put his degree in organizational leadership to work at the small pharmaceutical company where he worked while attending classes. "They took a chance on me; I'm the only one there without a degree," he explains. "But they knew I was working on one when they hired me, and they liked my military background." Ryan hopes one day to own his own business. He is grateful for the perspective his organizational leadership degree will give him: "It's really helped me hone my military skills to be applicable to the civilian world."



Doug's Portfolio Credits

Credit hours awarded after portfolio review:



Specific learning from military and work experience:

Interpersonal communication, intercultural communication, and others

Doug Hurd's path to a diploma was far from traditional, but his dedication to education paid off when he received a bachelor of arts degree in human services in April 2013 at the age of 60. By then, Doug had been retired from the Army for 20 years, but had continued to use the skills and training he acquired there as a military leadership teacher in Minnesota.

Doug joined up less than a year after graduating high school. The military wasn't his first choice; however, in high school "even on my best day, I was an average student," and his counselor told him he wasn't "college material." Discouraged, Doug enrolled at a small private college and made a "feeble, half-hearted attempt" at higher education, but dropped out after one semester. After a brief stint working for a moving company, Doug decided to enlist.

In his 22 years in the Army, Doug advanced to positions of leadership in an artillery unit, from cannoner to senior cannon platoon sergeant and first sergeant. He was an Operations Non-commissioned officer (NCO) for a battalion, and Operations and Training NCO for a readiness group in Ft. Snelling, Minnesota, and did two tours as a drill sergeant. Meanwhile, Doug travelled the world, spending two tours in Germany and one in Panama. He also participated in Desert Storm.

Meanwhile, Doug tried to pursue a college degree, but the demands of active military service often interfered with his progress. Doug also lacked guidance. He explains: "Nobody sat down with me when I went to the education center and said: 'Okay, let's put together a degree plan for you, something that will work for you.'" By the time he retired, his military transcript was a "hodgepodge" of general education classes.

At retirement, Doug thought he would go back to school, but then an acquaintance who was starting a military education program in the public schools approached him about teaching. Since he only needed a high school degree to teach then, Doug accepted the position and gave up on college once again.

Then, in 2009, Doug was told that he needed to earn at least an associate degree, and preferably a bachelor's degree, in the next four or five years, or he would lose his teaching position. Doug enrolled at Inver Hills Community College that fall.

Enrolling at Inver Hills marked the first time Doug received any real guidance on achieving his educational goals, and it changed his outlook on getting a degree. "I was surprised when the first class I had to take was educational planning and assessment. One of the portions of that class if you're former military, is to go through

and get your ACE transcript [evaluation]. I didn't even know there was such a thing." He earned 41 credits based on the review of his military transcript. "I was blown away," he recalls.

Doug earned also earned 28 credits through portfolio assessments, writing portfolios for seven classes: Interpersonal communication, public speaking, effective communication and organizations, small group communication, intercultural communication, social problems and inequities, and family and society. For each portfolio, Doug drew on his extensive military experience

as part of the evidence of his mastery of the class material.

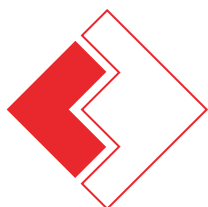
With the credit he earned through ACE and portfolio assessment, Doug was able to earn his bachelor's degree within five years.

Doug emphatically recommends portfolio assessment to other veterans. "I could not possibly give it a high enough recommendation for other service members," he says. "If I had known that this program existed, I would have done this much sooner."

Endnotes

1 *Klein-Collins, R. (2010, March). Fueling the race to postsecondary success: a 48-institution study of prior learning assessment and student outcomes. Chicago: CAEL.*

2 *A pseudonym is used for this veteran profile.*



CAEL

Linking Learning and Work

As a national leader, we strive to lead the evolving national discussion on unique challenges and opportunities linking adult learners and work. We advocate and innovate on behalf of all adult learners, regardless of their socio-economic circumstances, to increase access to education and economic security and to develop and provide effective services and tools. We work to enhance our thought leadership role through our research and work with adult learners, postsecondary education institutions, employers and government.

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