

How To Build a Case for CPL on Your Campus

What does it take to create a credit for prior learning program that is comprehensive and accessible?

Meeting the needs of adult learners through a CPL program requires institutional commitment and a sound strategy. Ultimately, you will need to secure the cooperation and involvement from a wide range of players within your institution: marketing, enrollment, advising, registrar, program deans, faculty, assessors, and administrative staff. Here's how to get started in building campuswide buy-in.

STEP 1:

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Think through the value proposition of CPL, consider your institution's strategic priorities, and collect data to support your case.

- ◆ Listen to how your leadership describes your institution's goals and mission (such as enrollment, student success, and equity) and customize your business case to those strategic priorities.
- ◆ Articulate why CPL is important for your adult learners and your institution and should be a key component of your adult learner programming.
- ◆ Gather data — turn to the 2020 CAEL-WICHE research findings, survey your adult learners to gauge how much they would value having more CPL opportunities, get an inventory of existing CPL practices across the institution, and in departments where CPL already is used the most, collect data showing its impact on students.

STEP 2:

FIND ALLIES

Recruit some colleagues to work together to build institutional support for CPL.

- ◆ Present your case to internal groups such as the faculty senate, enrollment management team, and department deans. Be prepared to address common misperceptions (such as lost tuition revenue, lack of academic rigor in the assessment process, or credit being awarded for experience listed on a resume).
- ◆ Identify internal champions who want to help build support for CPL, and listen to those who are on the fence.
- ◆ Convene a CPL working group. Your dream team should represent different parts of the institution who can work together to create an action plan for your CPL planning and design process and identify the resources needed for implementation.

STEP 3:

ENGAGE YOUR LEADERSHIP

With support at the top, you will have more options for CPL program design and implementation.

- ◆ Work with your team to find ways to engage with the leadership at your institution and present the larger business case (and connection to the leadership's priorities), data on current usage and impact, and a proposal for needed improvements and the resources to make it happen.
- ◆ If institutional leaders truly believe that CPL will provide real, tangible value to the institution, they need to make an investment that matches that value.

GET A HEAD START

If your leadership already endorses CPL, start by requesting their support for a CPL working group that can help execute this plan. If not, these steps are designed to help you build internal buy-in for CPL, especially from your leadership.

Why Credit for Prior Learning Is a Good Investment — and the Right Thing To Do for Adult Learners

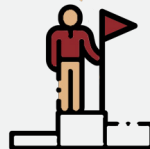
Credit for prior learning. Prior learning assessment. Recognition of prior learning. Whatever you call it, **valuing and awarding credit for what a student has learned outside the traditional academic environment** is an important and powerful tool to support adult learners. The academic argument for CPL is grounded in andragogical principles in that **experience is the basis for new learning**. An adult learner program needs to value that learning and **help the student make important connections** between learning and work.

How CPL Helps Students



CPL SAVES STUDENTS TIME AND MONEY

On average, adult degree earners with 12 or more CPL credits saved 9 to 14 months earning it. Adult students who earned CPL saved \$1,500 to \$10,200 in tuition dollars.



MORE ADULTS GRADUATE AND KEY GROUPS BENEFIT

Overall, adults who earn credit for prior learning are 17% more likely to graduate than adults who do not. The CPL completion benefit is 25% for adults at community colleges, 24% for Hispanic adults, 13% for Black adults, and 19% for Pell Grant recipients.



CPL EMPOWERS ADULT STUDENTS BY VALIDATING THEM AS LEARNERS

The CPL process of reflecting on past learning is often a positive experience that improves adult learners' confidence in themselves as learners.

How CPL Helps Postsecondary Institutions



CPL IS A PROVEN TOOL FOR BOOSTING STUDENTS' CHANCES OF COMPLETING A DEGREE

Adult students who earn CPL credits are 17 percent more likely to complete, compared to those without CPL.



STUDENTS WHO EARN CPL CREDITS ARE MORE LIKELY TO ENROLL IN MORE CREDITS

Adult learners who earn CPL end up taking an average of 17 more course credits from their institution compared to students without it.



CPL HAS A POWERFUL INFLUENCE ON A PROSPECTIVE STUDENT'S CHOICE OF COLLEGE

Among students who identify themselves as "likely to enroll," an opportunity to receive credit for prior learning strongly influences their decision about where to attend college.

ARE YOU READY TO BE A CPL CHAMPION FOR YOUR INSTITUTION?

www.cael.org.