

Advancing Adult Learners to Completion: The Power of Credit for Prior Learning in HBCUs

April 14, 2025

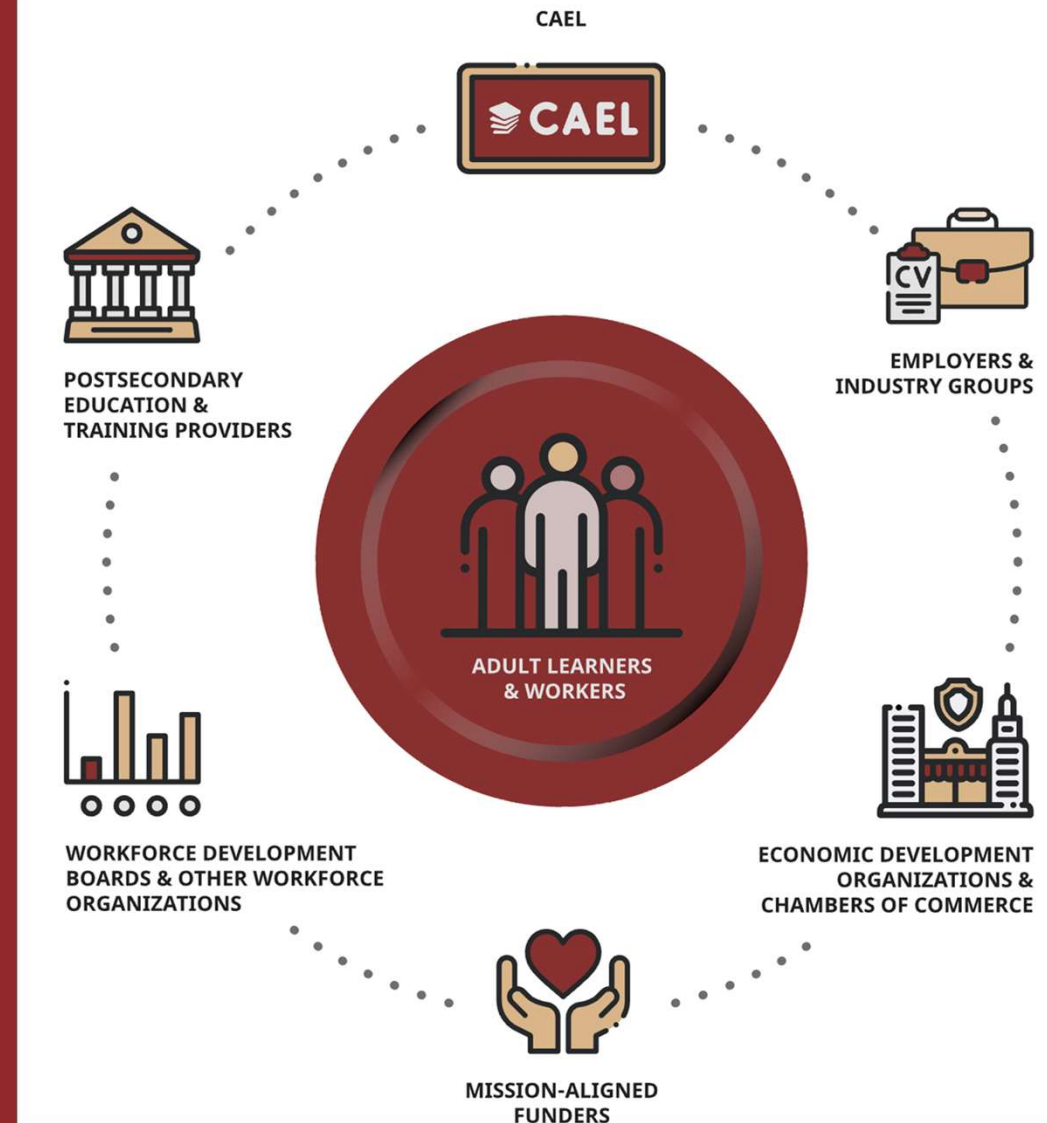


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About CAEL

CAEL helps organizations succeed by providing expertise, resources, and solutions that effectively support adult learners as they navigate on- and off-ramps between education and employment.

We partner with entities across the adult learner ecosystem to help create actionable career pathways along the journey of lifelong learning and meaningful work.



Opening Remarks from Jasmine Haywood, Ph.D. Strategy Director, Lumina Foundation



About the North Carolina HBCU ALI



- **Overview**

- Launched in **2021** as part of Lumina's HBCU portfolio and its Student Success portfolio for 4 year institutions

- **Goal**

- Support institutional sustainability and student success, particularly for adult students.

- **Grantees**

- 5 4-year colleges and universities in North Carolina
 - Elizabeth City State University (Elizabeth City, North Carolina)
 - Fayetteville State University (Fayetteville, North Carolina)
 - Johnson C. Smith University (Charlotte, North Carolina)
 - Shaw University (Raleigh, North Carolina)
 - Winston-Salem State University (Winston-Salem, North Carolina)



- **Partners**

- Center for Postsecondary Innovation at the University of South Alabama (CIPE - learning and TA partner)
- Frederick D. Patterson Research Institute (FDPRI – evaluation partner)
- Media Partner

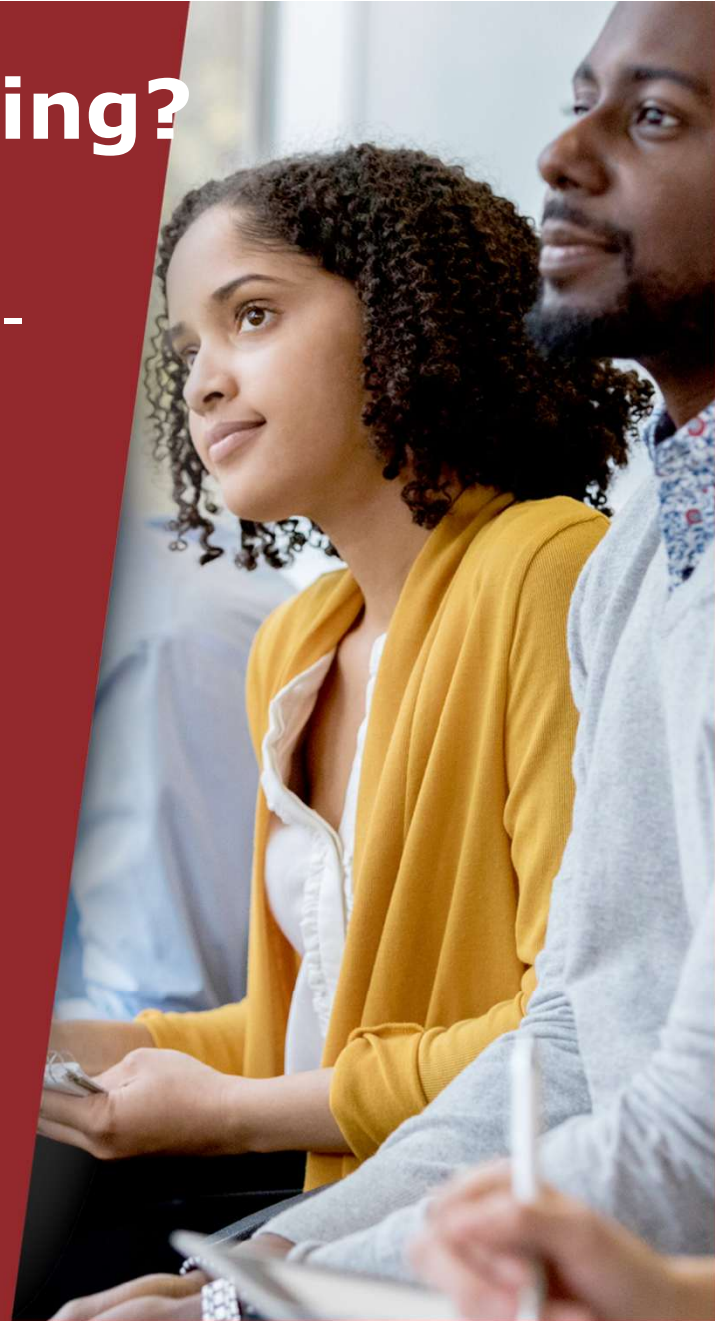
Our Conversation Today

- Overview of Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)
- Panel Discussion with HBCU CPL Implementers

What is Credit for Prior Learning?

A set of **well-established, researched, and validated methods** for assessing non-collegiate learning for college credit.

A process that allows learners to demonstrate knowledge and skill in a particular field or fields and have that learning evaluated for college credit.



Credit For Prior Learning



CPL provides an opportunity for adult students to receive institutional recognition in the form of course credit for skills and knowledge gained through formal and informal training and career expertise.



On average, students earning CPL (non-military) are 30% more likely to complete.

- 32% for Hispanics
- 28% for Blacks
- 36% for Community College students
- 33% for Pell recipients
- Complete faster
- Earn more residential credit (17.6 credits/roughly 1 semester)

Source: *The PLA Boost: Results from a 72-Institution Targeted Study of Prior Learning Assessment and Adult Student Outcomes* (www.cael.org/pla-impact)

CPL Saves Adult Students Time and Money...

\$1,500 to \$10,200

Estimated adult student **savings** through CPL, depending on sector

Nine to 14 months

Estimated adult student **time savings** in earning degrees, with 12 or more CPL credits

...But Institutions Also Benefit

17.6 more credits

Institutions also benefited from CPL — on average, CPL students took 17.6 more course credits than non-CPL students

Supports enrollment

84% of likely enrollees say that CPL offerings would influence their choice of college or university



HBCU CPL Implementers Panel



Dr. Kokila Ravi
Atlanta Metropolitan
State College



Dr. Rolanda Harris
Delaware State
University



Dr. Farrah Ward
Elizabeth City State
University



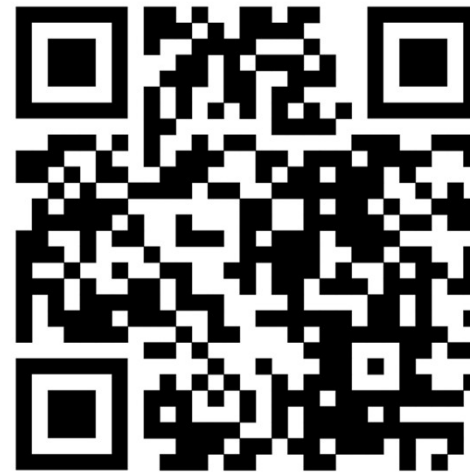
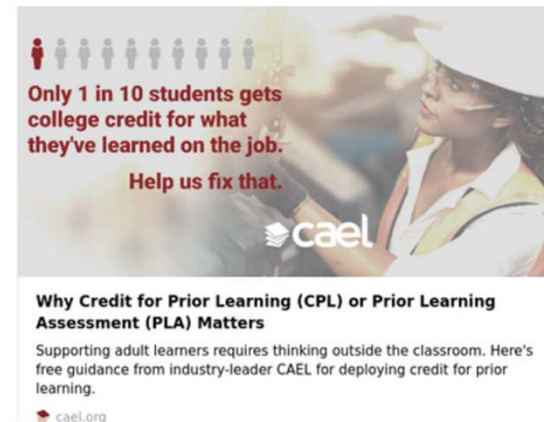
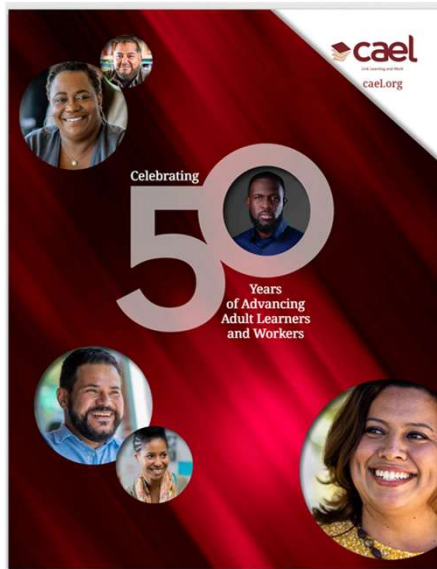
Dr. Nicole Westrick
Morgan State
University



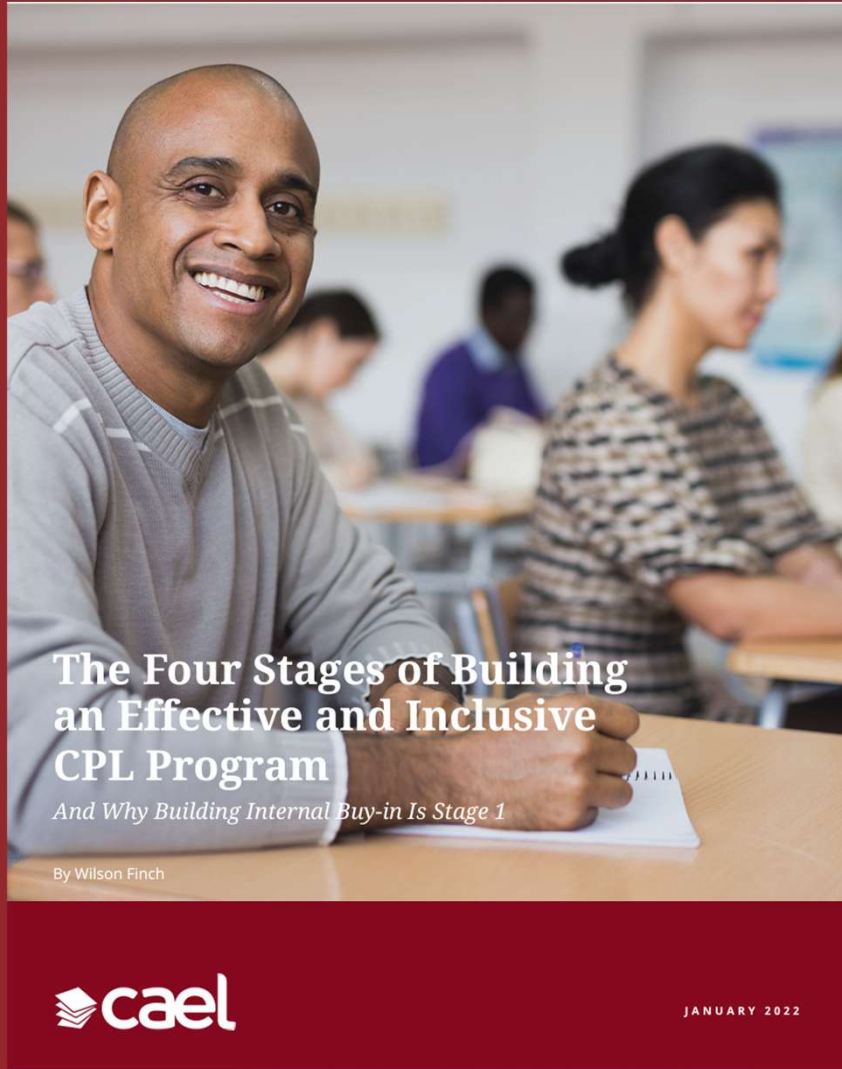
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Resources



<https://www.cael.org/lp/cpl-pla>



Bonus Slides

CAEL Resources:

**50 Years of
Recognizing All
Learning**



Member Resources

CAEL offers a Quick Start Kit to help members be more effective and impactful in their CPL implementation.

This toolkit includes:

- sample policies and process maps,
- talking points to help make the CPL case at your institution,
- marketing materials,
- microcourses and on-demand webinars,
- discounted professional development opportunities,
- key research and articles,
- and other resources.

CAEL members *are* also resources who share their CPL approaches, innovations, and evidence of effective practice with the larger CAEL community through CAEL's newsletter, webinars, and conference sessions. One example is [this effort](#) led by CAEL members to address CPL transfer credit issues.

Technical Assistance

CAEL has created both customized technical assistance and professional development offerings to support credit for prior learning institutional policy development and implementation.

- CPL Fundamentals and Benefits
- [From the Ground Up: Building the Foundations of a CPL Program](#)
- [Assessing Prior Learning for Institutional-based Assessments](#)
- Process Mapping Workshop
- CPL and the Military-Connected Student: Assessing Military Prior Learning for Academic Credit
- Crosswalking Employer Training to College Credit Workshop
 - Remote and in-person models are offered, with a mix of proctored and full instructor-led formats; Self-paced, hybrid, and fully synchronous options are also available

Check out our free publicly available toolkit below!



<https://www.cael.org/lp/cpl-pla>

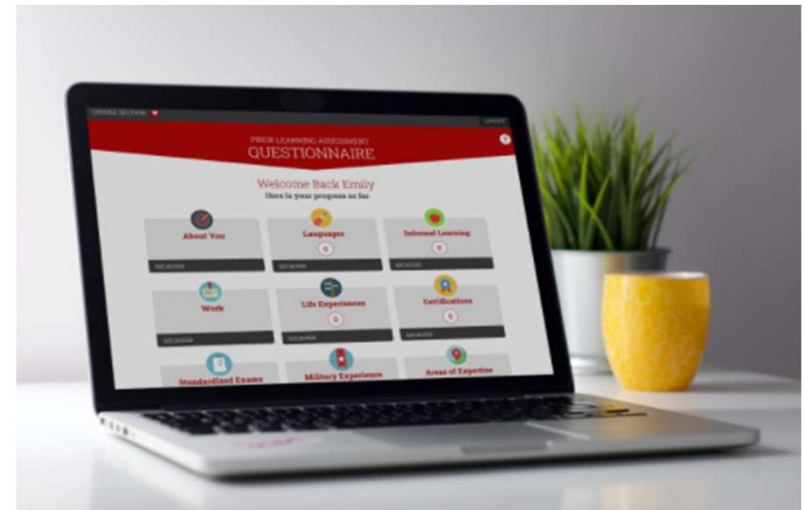
Technology Platforms

For decades, colleges and universities used a combination of spreadsheets and emails to track the progress and success of their CPL programs, with varied success. CAEL launched the Credit Predictor Pro, an online platform that makes the CPL process more efficient. The Credit Predictor Pro platform guides students through the process of documenting their work and learning experiences prior to -- or in between -- their college years and automatically recommends appropriate PLA/CPL options based on the institution's PLA/CPL policies and offerings.

- **Credit Predictor Pro**

CAEL has also created a simplified but customized version of this tool, Credit Predictor Standard, which is available free of charge to institutional members.

- **Credit Predictor Standard**

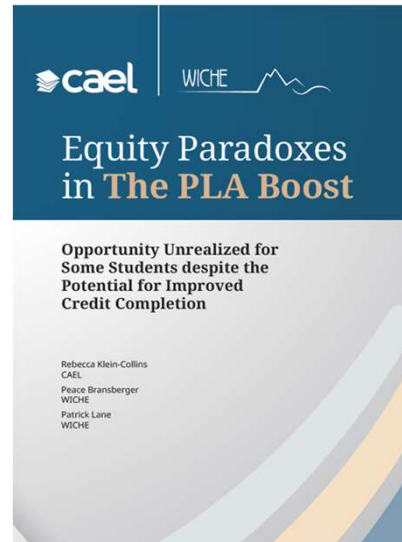


Research

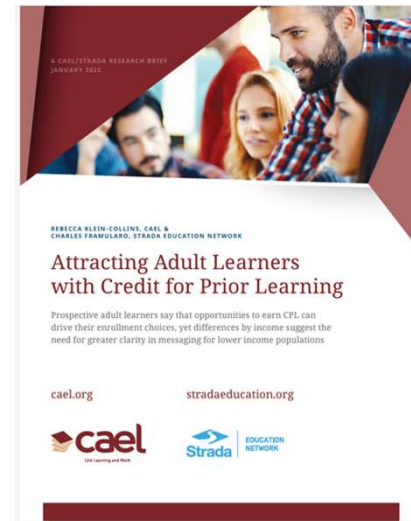
Since 2010, CAEL has led the field in examining CPL impact, practice, policy, and equity. Key recent research reports, in partnership with WICHE, include:



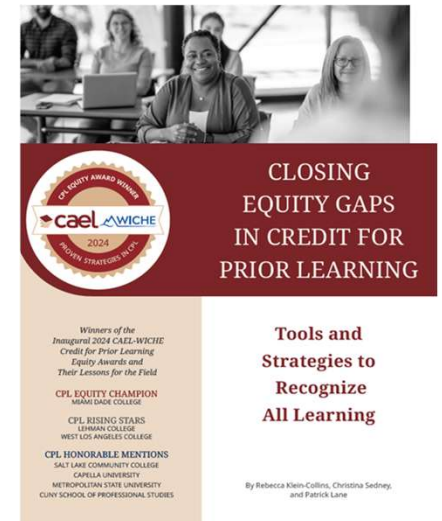
[The PLA Boost](#) (2020)



[Equity Paradox](#) (2021)



[Attracting Adult Learners with Credit for Prior Learning](#) (2022)



[CPL Equity Awards Brief](#) (2024)

Policy

CAEL's policy and advocacy work supports the expansion of CPL. In addition, CAEL's policy leadership has supported efforts by state legislatures or higher education systems to develop comprehensive CPL policies, approaches, and guidance. See two examples of our policy collaborations below.

- [Delaware](#)
- [Indiana](#)



CPL Provider Network

The CPL Provider Network allows adult learners to efficiently navigate postsecondary institutions that offer credit for prior learning. Given CPL's proven ability to advance student and institutional success, the CPL Provider Network is an invaluable resource, creating a free, one-stop connection to postsecondary institutions where the prior learning experiences of adult learners can be recognized.



<https://www.cael.org/cpl-search-network-landing-page>



For more information, contact:

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amyrick@cael.org

Recognizing that adult learners are the backbone of the U.S. economy, CAEL helps forge a clear, viable connection between education and career success, providing solutions that promote sustainable and equitable economic growth. CAEL opens doors to opportunity in collaboration with workforce and economic developers; postsecondary educators; employers and industry groups; and foundations and other mission-aligned organizations. By engaging with these stakeholders, CAEL fosters a culture of innovative, lifelong learning that helps individuals and their communities thrive. A national membership organization established in 1974, CAEL is Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workplace™ certified and is a part of Strada Collaborative, a mission-driven nonprofit. Learn more at cael.org and stradacollaborative.org.

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