



# Credit Predictor Pro: Using CPL To Take the 'Cost' out of Cost per Lead

## BACKGROUND

Thomas Edison State University (TESU) was founded in 1972 as a degree aggregator with a mission to help adult learners build a brighter future from their past learning, including credit for prior learning (CPL). CPL remains vital to TESU's impact, with the university annually awarding approximately 300,000 CPL credits. This number has consistently increased, even during enrollment declines, thanks to TESU's proactive evaluation and crosswalk of hundreds of CPL sources, including Professional Learning Reviews (PLRs) which assess prior learning at the program level with industry partners.

## CHALLENGES

While CPL significantly reduces time and money for students and boosts graduation rates for adult learners, the sheer volume of CPL options at TESU created complexity. Students often found it difficult to navigate the hundreds, if not thousands, of opportunities to convert prior learning into college credit. Even enrolled students sometimes overlooked CPL opportunities due to the detailed and nuanced documentation process, which requires precise information like start and end dates and verifiable completion documents.

## RISKS

The complexity of CPL intake posed a significant risk of missed opportunities for students to earn valuable credit, potentially deterring prospective adult learners or causing current students to graduate later or not at all. Furthermore, if CPL, a core mission of TESU, was not easily accessible, it could hinder the university's ability to attract and retain students, especially in a competitive higher education landscape.

## APPROACH

To address these challenges and mitigate risks, TESU sought a solution to simplify and streamline the CPL onboarding experience. In February 2024, TESU integrated CAEL's web-based solution, Credit Predictor Pro, into its suite of CPL resources.

Learn more at [cael.org](https://cael.org)



# 2000

Students engaged

# \$10

Credit Predictor  
Pro average cost

# 99%

Savings in cost per  
lead



## SOLUTION

Credit Predictor Pro was integrated directly with the TESU website, strengthening CPL as a recruiting asset in both form and function. The tool allows TESU to populate its myriad CPL options, enabling students to "self-select" appropriate prior learning pathways. This accessibility ensures students can easily explore and understand how their past experiences can translate into college credit, guiding them through the documentation process.

## SUCCESS

The implementation of Credit Predictor Pro has yielded significant success for TESU. Over 2,000 people have engaged with the tool in the 1.5 years since its adoption, demonstrating its effectiveness in attracting and guiding prospective and current students. From a lead generation perspective, the tool has been "phenomenal" for Dr. Jeffrey Harmon. Its fixed cost has resulted in an average cost per lead of under \$10, a remarkably efficient figure compared to other higher education lead generation campaigns that can exceed \$1,000 per lead. Beyond cost-efficiency, Credit Predictor Pro leads are highly qualified, providing a "gold mine of information for any recruiter" through its ability to capture details on languages, military training, professional and para-professional workplace training, and even skill extraction from uploaded resumes.



"From a purely value proposition perspective for lead gen, I think it's been phenomenal."

*Dr. Jeffrey Harmon  
Vice Provost for Strategic Initiatives  
& Institutional Effectiveness and  
Interim Dean  
Thomas Edison State University*



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; foundations and other mission-aligned organizations. By engaging with these stakeholders, we foster a culture of innovative, lifelong learning that helps individuals and their communities thrive. A national membership organization established in 1974, CAEL is a part of Strada Collaborative, a mission-driven nonprofit. Learn more at [cael.org](http://cael.org).