



# Prior Learning Assessment at MSU Denver

Allison Lemmertz, Assistant Registrar for Prior Learning Assessment

# Importance of PLA and Impact on Students

- Gives student opportunity to save money while gaining college credit
- Offers students a faster path to graduation
- PLA increases students' odds of degree completion
- Students feel more sense of connection with the institution

***49% of PLA adult students completed their postsecondary degree or certificate compared to only 27% of non-PLA adult students.- CAEL, 2020***

# What Types of Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) are Accepted at MSU Denver?

- Credit by exam
- Portfolio Review
- CLEP/DSST
- Military Credit
- ACE guide recommendations
- Work-based learning
- Industry Certifications
- Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate exams



# MSU Denver's PLA Team



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# How do students connect to PLA opportunities at MSU Denver?

- Catalog
- Website
- Academic Advisor
- Department/Program chair
- Recruiter/Admissions
- Faculty
- Registrar
- Open House/resource fairs

# MSU Denver's PLA Catalog and Webpages

- <https://www.msudenver.edu/registrar/prior-learning-assessment/>  
-Office of the Registrar webpage
- <https://catalog.msudenver.edu/content.php?catoid=43&navoid=3174#clep>  
-Undergraduate Catalog → Alternative Credit Options/PLA

# EDS 2680 – Portfolio Development Workshop

Self-paced course designed to assist students in preparing a portfolio for Prior Learning Assessment. Each student will identify a specific MSU Denver course for which they will draft a portfolio, using the assignments for this course to construct a portfolio. The portfolio will address the student's prior mastery of the content and learning outcomes for their individually-chosen MSU Denver course.

Through completion of 8 assignments, students learn to:

- 1) Identify and reflect on what they have learned through experience
- 2) Identify how they have applied what they have learned
- 3) Articulate and document their learning for others with MSU course learning objectives as a guide

# PLA and the Transfer Student

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- MSU transfers in all PLA credit that was granted at other Colorado institutions.
- It's important to consider what prior learning a transfer student may have when they arrive at MSU Denver





# So what's next for PLA at MSU Denver?

We recently launched a PLA Steering Committee, with a goal of enhancing, educating, and envisioning what PLA can and should be at MSU Denver.

*“PLA’s full potential will never be realized as long as it remains a niche practice. Postsecondary institutions should consider promoting PLA just as earnestly as they promote their degree programs, particularly to adult students who can benefit the most, including low-income adult students, adult students of color, and other student groups whose completion rates are low.”*

• - CAEL, 2020

# Focus Elements of MSU Denver's PLA Steering Committee

- Gather and track PLA data
- Explore the student inquiry experience
- Review the student assessment experience
- Expand marketing efforts
- Consider faculty experience



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