

GUIDE TO CREDIT BY PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY

**Student/Advisor Guide
2016**

WHAT IS PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT?

Fairfield University recognizes that adults may obtain college-level learning outside of classroom settings through vocational experience. Such learning can take place as a result of direct experience in which knowledge is acquired, training courses offered by employers or other organizations, and/or in depth study of a particular work-related subject. The knowledge obtained may be validated, and credit awarded, through CLEP examinations. However, these tests do not cover all areas of learning for which credit might be awarded. The portfolio process provides a means of assessing learning that cannot be evaluated through the use of standardized tests.

Credit can be granted for vocational learning that is documented and equivalent to college level learning. The portfolio assessment process offers the student the opportunity to review vocational experience in the context of an academic program.

ELIGIBILITY

Adults enrolled and matriculated in the Bachelor of Liberal Studies degree program at Fairfield University are eligible for the portfolio assessment process. This credit will be evaluated as transfer credit and may not exceed 30 credits. *Students must present portfolio requests to their BLS advisor at least 6 months prior to anticipated graduation date to allow sufficient time for review.*

PROCESS

- (1) **Student meets with an academic advisor to discuss his/her academic program and vocational experience.** This is an exploratory session in which the student and advisor review the degree plan and assess if the portfolio process is viable.
- (2) **Student reviews the Fairfield University catalog for course titles that relate to work experience.** This will enable the student and advisor to identify appropriate course work for evaluation. If the student's work experience does not match existing courses, but falls within a subject area in which courses are taught at the University, the experience as it relates to the area of knowledge must be described clearly.
- (3) **Student prepares one or more proposals requesting evaluation of work experience through portfolio process.** The proposal should include the following:

- (a) The **course description** for which equivalent knowledge is being presented in the request for credit.
- (b) The **source** or **conditions** under which learning took place: e.g., job, position, or approximate time frame in which learning was acquired.
- (c) The **content/topics of learning**. Address how your work experience matches the material covered in the course with particular attention to theoretical knowledge and broad based applications. *This should consist of a written narrative explaining the relationship. This narrative, including items (b) and (c), will be approximately 10 to 15 pages in length.*
- (d) **Activities** that relate to the learning. This may include some or all of the following:
- job tasks you perform(ed) which require the learning or understanding listed in course content;
 - duties and responsibilities of your position
 - identification of roles you perform in your work environment
 - description of colleagues/supervisors with whom you must interact, method and frequency of communication
 - supervisory tasks performed
 - agencies, publications, websites or organizations with whom you consult on a regular basis
 - training programs or other non-college based courses attended
- (e) **Documentation**: Identify by number attached documents which demonstrate learning which is claimed, such as:
- samples of work (presentations, published articles, etc)
 - resume
 - letters from colleagues/supervisors that attest to your knowledge of the subject
 - performance appraisal record
 - awards or membership in professional/honorary organizations
 - syllabus for training courses taken
 - job description
- (4) **Student meets with faculty member who will be evaluating portfolio to discuss what is to be included.**
- (5) **Student submits proposal to the Director of the BLS Program in the College of Arts and Sciences (Dr. Maggie Wills, mwills@fairfield.edu)** who will act as liaison with the appropriate academic department and forward the proposal to a faculty member.

- (6) Once the proposal is sent to a faculty member, he/she will contact the student if they need to provide additional documentation of learning experience as necessary.**
- (7) Faculty member approves or rejects work experience credit and notifies BLS Director.**
- (8) Credit by portfolio is recorded on the student's transcript as transfer credit. (No grade is awarded)**

NOTE: Copies of portfolio materials become the property of the College if credit is awarded. These are retained in our files to document the credit award.