

**The Department of Education's**  
***Experimental Sites Initiative***  
**Prior Learning Assessment**  
**February 2015**

# Agenda

---

1

- The Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Experiment

2

- Reporting

3

- The Process To Get Started

# Responsibilities of Institutional Offices

---



**Administrative Capability**  
**668.16(b)(1) and (4)**

# Prior Learning Assessment

---

## Objective

- To learn how allowing the costs of prior learning assessments to be included in cost of attendance (COA) may influence students' educational costs and time to degree

# Prior Learning Assessment

---

## Requirements to Participate

- Must include the cost of prior learning assessment in students' cost of attendance.
- Must provide academic credit when a student successfully demonstrates prior learning through an assessment

# Prior Learning Assessment

## Current Rules

- Costs for prior learning assessments may not be included in COA
- Time and effort spent preparing for prior learning assessments may not be included in a student's enrollment status

## Experiment

- COA can include reasonable costs incurred by the student for assessments of prior learning
- Federal Pell Grant enrollment status may include up to three credit hours associated with a student's efforts to prepare materials for a prior learning assessment
  - Example: Preparing for a portfolio assessment

# Prior Learning Assessment

---

## Reasonable Costs

- May include in a student's COA reasonable costs for the assessment of the student's prior learning
- May not include fees charged by the institution per clock or credit hour that will apply toward completion of the student's academic program.

# Prior Learning Assessment

## Eligible Assessments

- Examples:
  - Tests provided by institution or an outside entity (e.g. CLEP, challenge exams, etc.)
  - Portfolio assessments
- May not include costs for transcript evaluations or placement testing

# Prior Learning Assessment

---

## Credit Hours for Pell Eligibility

- May include up to 3 credit hours for time spent by the student preparing any materials required to demonstrate the learning that will be assessed.
- Each credit hour must reasonably approximate no less than 3 hours per week of preparation

# Prior Learning Assessment

---

## Credit Hours for Pell Eligibility

- May not include time for test preparation or taking a test of prior learning
- May not add clock hours to a student's program for PLA preparation

# Prior Learning Assessment

## Waivers

Law/Regulation	Description
HEA Section 472	Establishes types of expenses that may be considered when determining a student's financial need
34 CFR 668.2	General Definitions – definition of enrollment status
34 CFR 600.2	Definition of “credit hour”
34 CFR 668.10(f)	Prohibition on the use of Title IV funds for PLA in direct assessment programs

# Reporting

---

Examples of reporting requirements include:

- Number of students
- Enrollment status
- Types and amounts of grant and loan assistance received
- Grade Point Average (GPA) and other reflections of academic performance
- Narrative description and evaluation of the implementation of the experiment

# Invitation to Participate

---

We accepted ED's Invitation



How do we get started?



Who can answer our questions?

# Invitation to Participate

---

We are pleased to inform you that your institution has been selected to participate in one or more of the upcoming academic program experiments under the Experimental Sites Initiative (ESI). We ask that, no later than **March 1, 2015**, you indicate whether your institution accepts this invitation to participate in the experiments. You do this by printing a copy of this two-page memo and placing an 'X' next to the experiment(s) in which your institution wishes to participate. You may choose to participate in an experiment even if your original letter of interest did not include that experiment. If you no longer wish to participate in any of the experiments, simply place an 'X' next to the "None" line.

Experiments:

\_\_\_\_\_ Prior Learning Assessment

\_\_\_\_\_ Competency-Based Education

\_\_\_\_\_ Limited Direct Assessment

\_\_\_\_\_ None. We do not wish to participate

# Invitation to Participate

---

Please provide the following information and signatures for the financial aid administrator and an academic official.

Institution's Name and OPEID:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ OPEID \_\_\_\_\_

Financial Aid Administrator:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Official:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

# Program Participation Agreement



FSA sends the school the Amendment to the PPA  
School signs and returns via courier service



FSA sends the school a countersigned amendment to the PPA

- School keeps copy

# ESI Website

---

<https://experimentalsites.ed.gov>



# Participation Checklist

---

Activity	Action
Return “ <b>Invitation to Participate</b> ” Letter to ESI Team	
Sign and return <b>amended PPA</b>	
Access and review <b>ESI Website</b> , use Action Plan(s)	
Prepare for <b>Evaluation</b>	

# Contact Information

---

Anne Tuccillo

[Anne.Tuccillo@ed.gov](mailto:Anne.Tuccillo@ed.gov)

202 377 4378

or

[ExperimentalSites@ed.gov](mailto:ExperimentalSites@ed.gov)



# Questions and Answers