

## Credit by Portfolio Assessment

# Individual Assessment — Portfolio Guidelines

### Introduction

South Central College (SCC) recognizes the liberating effects of lifelong intellectual, professional, and personal learning. We understand that learners in higher education come with many experiences from varied backgrounds. Therefore, we created guidelines, standards, and procedures that enable students to enrich or accelerate their programs of study by eliminating duplication of learners' educational efforts through the awarding of credit for prior learning.

These portfolio guidelines are intended to provide a foundation for the experiential learning process, with an emphasis on learning outcomes and competencies that the learner will document in each portfolio.

### The Portfolio Defined

A portfolio is a compilation of information presented by the learner to equate experiential learning to a specific college course(s) for a specified number of semester credit hours.

Minimum requirements for the content of a portfolio:

- Cover page
- Table of contents
- Executive summary
- Chronological autobiography
- Current resume
- Course competencies matrix`
- Learning narrative
- Documentation
- Appendices
- Evaluator response form(s)

### Portfolio Components in Detail

Each of these items must be in each portfolio submitted and in this sequence.

- i. **Cover page:** The cover page will include your name, SCC student I.D. number, address, daytime phone number, e-mail address, program, term, course code & number, course name, credit hours and faculty evaluator.
- ii. **Table of contents:** The table of contents includes the portfolio page numbers, an itemized list of documents properly cataloged, and noted.

## Credit by Portfolio Assessment

- iii. **Executive summary:** This one-page summary should justify your request for CPL and reference the documentation you will be providing to substantiate your CPL. The summary should be succinct, it should clearly indicate the links between your experience, the learning, and the course learning outcomes.
- iv. **Chronological autobiography:** The autobiography is a complete picture of the learner-who you are, what you have done, what you know, and what you want to accomplish. To demonstrate why you have selected a specific course for CPL, prepare a chronological autobiographical essay based on your life experiences using your resume as a guide. Relate the relevant experiences to the course in a general explanation (Specifics will be included in the Course Competencies Matrix). The autobiography introduces you to the faculty evaluator and helps him/her understand the context of your learning for the particular course you are requesting. This should include your educational and career goals. More importantly, it is intended to help you reflect on how experiences from different times in your life may have come together for a common goal. In summary, the essay should be two-four pages and summarize the significant learning experiences in your life; define your personal, education, and career goals; and describe how your experiences will validate your knowledge of the course content and meet the course outcomes being petitioned for credit.
- v. **Current resume:** The current resume should include education, work and volunteer experiences. Detail significant activities, exact dates, accomplishments in the workplace, and other non-work related learning.
- vi. **Course competencies matrix:** The Course Competencies Matrix is a worksheet to organize, categorize and reflect on your life experiences as they directly relate to the course and the specific course objectives. Your completed document must address the learning outcomes of the course for which credit is being requested. For each course objective, complete a course competencies matrix using a chronological outline of your applicable life experiences. The categories listed on the worksheet include employment, workshops, volunteer activities, military experience, credentials, self-directed study, non-credit courses, travel and other items. Other items might include personal crisis (e.g., death or divorce), health (e.g., disability or illness), relationships (e.g., parenting or elder care), and many more. For each category under each learning outcome, list what you have done, indicate how much time was involved, and describe the activities. Each learning outcome that you justify must refer to documentation you have provided. Explain what you have learned using action verbs (i.e. differentiate, compare, contrast, list, calculate, solve, construct, organize, etc.). Note: if you do not have valid documentation you will be unable to use the experience. Your Matrix must tie the experience to a specific learning objective and you must be able to indicate how it enabled you to achieve the learning outcomes.
- vii. **Learning narrative:** From the information and supporting documentation on your Course Competencies Matrix, you will develop an essay to summarize the learning from your experiences based on the course description and competencies. This narrative is a detailed explanation of how your activities and the resulting competencies were achieved.

1. Use the course outcomes to guide your discussion of your accomplishments.

## Credit by Portfolio Assessment

2. Pull in details from the related Course Competencies Matrix; explain where, why, and what experiences were involved.
3. For a course that includes a substantial amount of theory, demonstrate that you have the appropriate balance of theory and application.
4. The learning narrative will incorporate terminology appropriate to the course and examples of applications of the concepts as demonstrated through your accomplishments.

Consider the learning narrative as an open-book take-home test. Make sure it is clear, concise, and free of errors in sentence structure, grammar, and spelling. It needs to demonstrate college-level writing and critical thinking. The narrative may be three-ten pages in length, depending on the course.

- viii. **Documentation:** Provide verification (evidence) for each learning experience and competency specific to the course. The evidence can take several forms:
- Certificates of completion for training courses, workshops, etc.
  - Performance evaluations
  - Technical or professional writing written by you
  - Programs from performances
  - Job Description
  - Explanation of your rank or classification in a job
  - Products designed or produced by you
  - Work projects
  - Membership in professional organizations
  - Membership requirements for certain organizations
  - Licenses/diplomas
  - Third-party verification of your work (co-workers, news clippings)
  - Military records
  - Annotated bibliography of books read
  - Travel documents/mementos
  - Notes taken in class

*Note: When submitting your portfolio, it is important that documentation be specific to the course description and learning outcomes used in your portfolio.*

- ix. **Appendices:** Documentation of additional materials:
1. Transcript
  2. Transfer Equivalencies (if applicable)
- x. **CPL Evaluation Response form(s):** Include one form for each course. The portfolio is reviewed by a faculty evaluator who determines whether there is sufficient explanation and documentation to assess learning and award credit.

## **Credit by Portfolio Assessment**

### **Academic Honesty**

Plagiarism, falsification, or misrepresentation are unacceptable and will result in disqualification of the portfolio.

### **The Completed Portfolio**

Before submitting your portfolio, it is recommended that you make a copy for your own records.