

PHASE III

Credit for Prior Learning Final Report



Prepared by TPMA on behalf of the Indiana Commission for Higher Education

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The Phase III Credit for Prior Learning Project included three statewide task forces of members from each public higher education institution in Indiana along with key stakeholder partners including Indiana Chamber of Commerce, Division of Workforce Development, and local Workforce Development key administrators. They researched, developed, and sustained the impactful work documented in this report, on top of their day-to-day roles and responsibilities beginning in June 2023 through November 2023.

Ball State University

- Amy Barsha, Assistant Vice Provost for Lifetime Learning
- Alexander Kluber, Director of Institutional Research
- Emma Legg, Director of Governmental Affairs
- Anand R. Marri, Interim Provost and Executive VP for Academic Affairs
- Jim McAtee, Assistant Vice President and Executive Director for Career and Professional Development
- Drew Miller, Registrar
- Erin Mason, Registrar

Indiana State University

- April Hay, Registrar
- Linda Ferguson, Associate Director, Institutional Research
- Patty McClintock, Director, Intuition Research
- Diann McKee, Senior Vice President
- Christopher Olsen, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost
- Laura Vanatti, Associate Registrar
- Kelly Woods-Johnson, Director of Assessment and Program Effectiveness

Indiana University

- Carolyn Gentle-Genitty, Assistant Vice President for University Academic Policy
- Andrea Ingle, Interim Director, Compliance and Reporting
- Jeff Johnston, Registrar
- Adam Maksl, Manager of eLearning Innovation
- Zach Smith Howard, Assistant Director for State Relations
- Jeff Weber, Assistant Director for Academic Policy and Programs

Indiana University Bloomington

- Rahul Shrivastav, Provost and Executive Vice President

Indiana University Kokomo

- Scott Jones, Executive Vice Chancellor
- Julie Saam, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
- Michael Tulley, Emeritus Professor of Education

Ivy Tech Community College

- Molly Dodge, Senior Vice President, Workforce and Careers
- Shakira Grubbs, Enrollment Strategy
- Kathy Huffman, Assistant Vice President for Operations and Outcomes
- Tim Kish, Senior Data Strategist
- Drew Lurker, College Registrar
- Dean McCurdy, Provost & Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs
- Rachel Stuffle, Director of Public Affairs
- Mike Thombleson, Coordinator IDEC E3

Purdue University & Purdue University West Lafayette

- Molly Amstutz, Director, IDA+A and Chief Data Officer
- Keith Gehres, Assistant Vice Provost and University Registrar
- Catherine Golden, Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives
- Alecia Nafziger, Director, Government Relations and Fiscal Policy Analysis

Purdue University Global

- Jon Harbor, Provost
- Ron Maggitt, Senior Articulation Analyst
- Allegra Fowler, Registrar/Prior Learning

Purdue University Northwest

- Chris Holford, Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs
- Gillian Leonard, Director of Compliance and Data Governance
- Becky Stankowski, Associate Chancellor for Academic Affairs
- Jennifer Williams, Registrar

Purdue University Fort Wayne

- Carl Drummond, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

University of Southern Indiana

- Julie McCullough, Interim Associate Provost
- Gregory Johnson, Interim Chief Data Officer
- Michael Dixon, Dean, School of Graduate Studies
- Wes Durham, Director of Bachelor of Professional Studies
- Sandy Frank, Registrar
- Joel Matherly, Director, Veteran Military and Family Resource Center
- Tracy Sinn, Assistant Registrar
- Aaron Trump, Vice President for Government Affairs and General Counsel

Vincennes University

- Alex Sievers, Director of Military and Veteran Support Services
- Amy Coots, Assistant Registrar
- Jennifer Holscher, Director of Institutional Research
- Rick Kribs, Assistant Provost for Curriculum and Instruction
- Rebecca Little, Registrar
- Matthew Schwartz, Assistant Vice President, Outreach and Engagement
- Stephanie Stemle, Assistant Vice President Strategic Initiatives
- Laura Treanor, Provost

Ascend Indiana

- Erica Medina, Manager of Talent Partnerships

Center for Workforce Innovations

- Kathy Neary, Strategic Innovation Officer
- Andrea Proulx Buinicki, Vice President, Workforce Initiatives

Community Alliance of the Far Eastside

- Jamarro Johnson, Director of Youth and Family Services

EmployIndy

- Kristen Barry, Vice President, Research and Strategy
- Kevin Duffy, Senior Director External Affairs

Independent Colleges of Indiana

- Jodie Ferise, Vice President and General Counsel

Indiana Association for Adult and Continuing Education

- Matt Brown
- Jenn Wigginton, Executive Director

Indiana Chamber of Commerce

- Todd Hurst, Executive Director, Institute of Workforce Excellence
- Natalie Wenzler, Director of Partnerships and Training

Indiana Commission for Higher Education

- Jessica Barrett, Director of Academic Affairs and Transfer
- Jose Medina, Director of Business and Community Engagement on the Adult Strategy
- Alex Parkison, Director for Research and Analytics
- Alison Partee, Director of User Experience
- Ken Sauer, Senior Associate Commissioner and Chief Academic Officer
- Jillian Scholten, Director of Academic Affairs and Talent Credentialing
- Stacy Townsley, Associate Commissioner for Adult Strategy

Indiana Department of Workforce Development

- Leslie Crist, Associate Chief of Workforce Programs
- Jerry Haffner, Division Director, Adult Education
- Beth Meguschar, Associate Chief Operating Officer - Workforce Education and Training
- Marilyn Pitzulo, Associate Chief for Workforce Strategy
- Pam Warner, Director of Career Exploration and Advising

Indiana Governor's Workforce Cabinet

- Matt Butler, Senior Policy Advisor for Education & Workforce

INvets

- Katelyn Colclazier, Vice President

South Bend Regional Chamber

- Kate Lee, Executive Director, Education and Workforce

Southern Indiana Works

- Tony Waterson, President and CEO

Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)

- Allymyr Atrero, Director, Initiatives
- Beth Doyle, Senior Vice President, Initiatives and Solutions
- Wilson Finch, Vice President, Initiatives
- Kristen Himmerick, Vice President, Solutions
- Becky Klein-Collins, Vice President, Research and Impact
- Alicia Myrick, Director, Initiatives

TPMA

- Nioka Clark, Senior Advisor, Engagement & Innovation
- Kelly Friend, Senior Manager
- Derek Redelman, Senior Director, Education and Workforce Strategy
- Kelsey Simpson, Consultant
- Vicki Thompson, Senior Advisor, Education and Workforce Strategy
- Brenda Vogley, Senior Project Manager

Independent Consultants

- Dawn Busick, Contracted Project Strategic Advisor
- Dallas Kratzer, Kratzer Consulting LLC

Task force project members from across the state participated in multiple surveys, focus groups, and multiple task force meetings representing each of their respective institutions or organizations. They shared credit for prior learning experiences, perspectives, and recommendations. Their voices were essential to the project initiative leadership team in fully developing the first Indiana Credit for Prior Learning Model Policy Guidance.

Thank you to the Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE) for granting TPMA the opportunity to lead this project initiative. The combined products of this work – advancing and expanding credit for prior learning in Indiana since 2020 – has helped lay the groundwork for needed systemic change and for building the capacity of institutions to enhance access to postsecondary education for adult learners. We are especially grateful for our partnerships with Dawn Busick, Contract Strategic Advisor Consultant, Dallas Kratzer, Kratzer Consulting, LLC and the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) team members whose expertise and support were invaluable to this work.

Executive Summary

This report reflects the work performed in the Phase III Indiana Credit for Prior Learning Project (CPL) initiative, key takeaways and recommendations for further consideration and or actionable initiatives for the Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE) in growing the new statewide CPL program initiative.

The Indiana CPL initiative has been implemented in phases to explore and research ways that will provide the best designed CPL program to meet Indiana's higher education needs for adult learners. The work these past six months is a continuation of previous projects where a variety of credit for prior learning program scans from around the nation and within Indiana's very own public institutions was conducted. From this previous work, the Phase III project focused on four areas of recommended further work from the [2021 Policy Recommendations Report](#).

For years, many Indiana public institutions have supported some form of credit for prior learning practices, and some have implemented specific institutional based policies and procedures for their CPL programs. [CHE Hoosier Opportunities and Possibilities through Education \(HOPE\) Agenda](#) endeavors for Indiana to become a top 10 state in the utilization of credit for prior learning. CHE recognizes the strong need for utilization and expansion of CPL across all Indiana public higher education institutions and aims to be a statewide framework for improving CPL services, transferability, standards, and partnerships.

This report begins by briefly outlining the previous Indiana CPL statewide work initiatives that have supported CHE up to adopting the first ever statewide CPL Model Policy Guidance. The report also outlines Phase III project recommendations for future program work to be given further consideration as the CPL Programs are being implemented across the state.

The most common recommendations to the project leadership team were that CHE continues to work on specific guidance/guidelines in support of program implementation, program data collection and reporting, and consistent program marketing resources. Many of the institutions are seeking financial resources from the state that will aid them in program implementation and sustainability.

As detailed in the Comprehensive Listing of Recommendations later in this report, and to summarize, the most common recommendations made to the project leadership team were:

- Policy and Guidance
- Program Implementation
- Data Collection and Reporting
- Clearinghouse 2.0

Project History and Introduction

The report serves as the continuation of a body of work that began in 2020 to explore and benchmark Indiana's public institutions' CPL opportunities and programs. The following is a summary of outcomes from previous projects, which then lead to the Phase III CPL Project Initiative and its outcomes. The report closes with recommendations for CHE to consider for additional CPL work and a focus on the student sample target population chosen for CPL program implementation: Military Credit for Prior Learning.

CPL Phase I

Phase I began in 2020 with formalized occupational crosswalks of specific hard and soft skills sets aligned to educational supportive pathways. In partnership with CHE, TPMA, and Ivy Tech Community College, this Phase I project developed ten occupational crosswalks from declining occupations to sustaining and in demand occupations for adult learners who were being displaced. The project also allowed for some initial professional development provided to 45 key faculty and staff from Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University in how to develop future occupational crosswalks.

CPL Phase II

In partnership with CHE, the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, all public institutions, as well as TPMA and Council for Adult Experiential Learning (CAEL), Phase II built on the work from Phase I. Phase II included: Statewide Credit for Prior Learning Task Force, Professional Development, Marketing Plan & Digital Tool Kit, and Employer Engagement.

At the conclusion of the Phase II in December 2021, TPMA issued a project report that included the following recommendations:

- Retain the statewide task force to gain additional institutional and partner agency stakeholder acceptance of the CPL statewide program design, policies, and program implementation.
- Have CHE serve as the administrative entity for the Clearinghouse and CPL program resources.
- Engage further work groups in support of program design, development, and implementation needs outlined within the report recommendations.
- Seek a bi-annual budget request necessary to implement new program tools, staffing, and marketing resources.
- Further develop and identify programs that are directly connected to the benefits of the CPL program offerings that will reduce work effort duplication, such as the current work Indiana is implementing with Credential Engine and the new Career Explorer system.

Upon completion of this extensive 18-month project of research, identifying Indiana's own best practices and reviewing the above recommendations, CHE formalized a CPL model program initiative with the engagement of many practitioners statewide.

CPL Phase III

The Phase III project goal included four specific task areas: Development of a statewide model policy guidance, strategies to develop a new Clearinghouse 2.0 platform, development of best methods for data collection in support of the program, and additional ongoing technical assistance and professional development in growing a CPL statewide program initiative.

Through the work of this project, an initial first draft CPL model policy guidance was developed and vetted prior to submission to the Indiana Commission for Higher Education for adoption. Upon the completion of the multiple task force meetings, the project allowed for a half day in-person CPL collaboration event where all institutions and stakeholders came together to provide a final vetting of the model policy guidance, and to share key project insights and outcomes on the data collection objectives and clearinghouse 2.0 strategies. This event also served to support focused discussions around program implementation and program expansion.

The final draft Credit for Prior Learning Model Policy was presented to the full Commission on November 9, 2023. It was at this meeting that the Commission approved a Resolution to Adopt the Indiana Credit for Prior Learning Model Policy Guidance. It is fully expected the policy will undergo modifications as needed during CPL program implementation begins in 2024.



CPL Phase III Project Outcomes Task 1 through 4

Task 1: Model Policy Development Task Force

Purpose

The Model Policy Development Task Force was convened with the primary objective of collaborating with CHE and its project leadership team – consisting of TPMA as the project manager, Kratzer Consulting LLC, and Counsel for Adult Experiential Learning (CAEL) – to advance the comprehensive integration of CPL policies and practices initiatives across the state of Indiana into one State Model Policy Guidance. The task force members reviewed Indiana’s current CPL policy environment as well as state model policy guidance across the nation. These task force conversations enabled systems-level leaders to support the design of one model policy guidance at the state level that elevates CPL as a tool for higher education achievement.

Process

To fulfill this overarching mission, the Task Force executed a multifaceted approach. First, it conducted a rigorous examination of the extant state and institutional policies governing CPL programs, thereby ensuring a meticulous comprehension of the prevailing regulatory landscape. Subsequently, the Task Force embarked on a thorough review of national policies and best practices that were pertinent to both states and educational institutions, thereby leveraging a broader spectrum of knowledge.¹ Armed with this comprehensive understanding, the Task force developed a draft of Indiana’s model guidance as it relates to CPL. Additional work was done through three task force meetings:

Date

Purpose & Objectives

**Thursday,
June 29**

- Provide a Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) project overview
- Discuss Task force purpose and expectations
- Begin discussing model guidance examples across the nation
- Determine the path forward and next steps

**Tuesday,
July 18**

- Break out into groups to discuss the TN and CO examples, including what might/might not work in Indiana
- Break out into groups to discuss the ideal state for Indiana’s CPL model policy guidance
- Determine the path forward and next steps

**Wednesday,
August 16**

- Recap Subcommittee discussions
- Discuss specific components of model policy guidance

¹ Specifically, the Task force reviewed Delaware, Tennessee, and Colorado CPL policies.

The first task force meeting introduced project goals and was followed by a survey to gather additional feedback and insights, and to help determine next steps. The survey results underscored the key priorities for statewide CPL policy and guidance: ensuring equity and access, creating transparency, maintaining consistent quality, increasing awareness, and clarifying external policy concerns. Ideal CPL states are characterized by credential alignment, faculty involvement, and comprehensive learner support. Challenges that need to be addressed include standard adoption, resource limitations at regional institutions, and gaining faculty support. To guarantee successful CPL efforts, institutions require resources for marketing and awareness, state support for expanding various types of prior learning assessments, and funding for centralized administration that prioritizes marketing, internal skill development, and networked advising for learners ([see full survey results here](#)).

The second task force meeting enabled participants to interact more intentionally with national best practices in CPL, with particular focus on states like Colorado, Delaware, and Tennessee. Through breakout discussions, several key takeaways emerged: Breakout #1 discussed the pros and cons of adopting policies like those in Colorado and Tennessee, highlighting the tension between institutional buy-in and flexibility. Breakout #2 emphasized the importance of examining systems like Colorado and Tennessee, focusing on issues like transcript-building credit and the potential for contested no-cost credit in Colorado. Breakout #3 recognized that Indiana could learn from Vincennes University's successful CPL initiatives but also acknowledged challenges related to disseminating information across the state. And Breakout #4 pointed out the significance of considering CPL routes for post-traditional and adult learners, evaluating industry work credit, and addressing the complexities of portfolios, with a consensus on the importance of faculty and staff involvement.

Coming out of the second task force meeting, participants were asked to engage in a series of subcommittee discussions (each task force member was asked to participate in two subcommittee discussions) to develop core topic elements of a model policy guidance. These core topics were:

- Transcription, Transferability, and Data
- Program and Service Design
- Standards for Assessing Credit for Prior Learning and Quality Assurance
- Community, Workforce, and Employer Partnerships
- Value Statement

The discussion from these subcommittees is summarized here:

Value Statement

During the value statement share-out, key themes included emphasizing diversity and equity in CPL, demonstrating its broader benefits to the economy and public good, and ensuring academic rigor. The proposed value statement highlights valuing students and learners, consistency, and practicality in serving the community. The discussion considered defining equivalency and aligning with institutional missions while avoiding duplication. Serving the public good remained a central focus. The value statement aims to be inclusive and holistic, promoting equitable access to CPL opportunities.

Program and Service Design

Various aspects of the proposed policy were deliberated. Key points included aligning with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) for accreditation, making CPL accessible after admission, creating low-barrier pathways, ensuring transparent fee structures, and providing student-centered support services. There was a focus on equity, transparency, and the alignment of CPL with institutional credit. The group also discussed financial aspects, such as fees and the potential impact on first-generation students, and the importance of clarity in explanations provided to students. Additionally, the conversation touched on the need for standardized practices across credit and non-credit programs and proactive advising and faculty training.

Transcription, Transferability, and Data

The focus was on reviewing policies from various states. Three key areas were identified: data collection, transcription of credits, and transferability of CPL credits. The group emphasized the importance of having agreements among institutions to facilitate the recognition of CPL credits across Indiana institutions and the creation of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to benefit students. Cross-walking CPL to institutional courses for better transfer outcomes was discussed, with a preference for minimizing exceptions in policy. There was a consensus on building upon existing initiatives to promote transfer and the importance of third-party validation, with American Council on Education (ACE®) and similar organizations potentially playing a pivotal role in this process.

Standards for Assessing CPL and Quality Assurance

The emphasis was on ensuring robust evaluation of all CPL assessments, with an insistence on faculty or subject matter experts (SMEs) conducting assessments twice to ascertain content validity and measure validity. The primary focus was on assessing the level of demonstrable learning rather than just awarding credit. Clear guidelines for institutions to determine whether CPL credits meet degree requirements were discussed to prevent students from pursuing credits that might not transfer or lead to discrimination. Additionally, the conversation touched on the applicability of military credits and the need for consistency in how they are converted and applied across different levels of education. The goal is to provide equitable opportunities for all students to advance their learning through CPL.

As such, the Model Policy Guidance Task Force endeavored to deliver invaluable insights and recommendations (see below) that served as a catalyst for enhanced access to higher education and the equitable recognition of prior learning experiences within the state, thereby contributing to the cultivation of a more inclusive and equitable educational ecosystem.

Community, Workforce and Employer Partnerships

The policy component focus here is to be inclusive of partnerships with external organizations in support of CPL. It should be noted that often this specific topic has less to do with policies and procedures and more about best practices and innovative opportunities. Their key priorities identified were ensuring external stakeholders have a clear process and messaging how they may engage, benefit, and maintain their job skill needs are being met.

Upon the completion of the subcommittee work, the project leadership team collectively developed a draft CPL model policy guidance for all project participants to begin vetting and sharing with their institutional peers to garner feedback and build consensus around a single state policy to support Indiana's CPL implementation. The vetting of the first draft CPL model policy guidance was shared electronically and opened for feedback for two weeks prior to the scheduled in-person collaboration session in October 2023.

Summary of Feedback from the Task Force [First Draft CPL Model Policy Guidance](#)

The task force came to an agreement for a first draft recommended model policy guidance based on robust conversations and debates over several months. This included substantial feedback from most institutions in the state. Since the first draft was opened for wider comments, some non-task force institutions have offered additional concerns and suggestions. It is unclear if those objections would be placated by a discussion of the merits of the original draft or if there are cases where the language needs to be attenuated to make sure all institutions agree. Similarly, it may be sufficient to reduce imperative language (e.g., changing “shall” to “should”) so that other alterations are not necessary. It is also worthy to note, as with all policies, there is great support for program policy guidance improvements to be made in the future as CPL program implementation starts in 2024 and as the program matures in years to come. Below is a summary of the comments from the open-comment period of this first draft policy:

General comments:

1. Requests for clarifications and cross-referencing where relevant (e.g., value statement notes exceptions are made for specialized accreditation, but this could be repeated in the Standards for Assessment section).
2. The value statement has been updated with new feedback, but others may want to review the new version as well (which has now been done).
3. References to awarding CPL at admission should be changed to matriculation (which has now been done).
4. Changing all references from “shall” to “should” (which has now been done).

Issues potentially requiring further discussion:

1. Transfer guarantees of CPL credits. The task force and some commenters supported this, but feedback from two institutions suggested it should not be required.
2. Partnership examples: There is a request to provide greater specificity and examples for the final section on partnerships.
3. CPL matching to specific courses. The task force and some commenters supported this, but one institution suggested this should be removed.
4. Requirement that the matching of course learning outcomes with the prior learning should be 70% to be considered equivalent. The task force and some commenters supported this, but one institution suggested this should be removed because they want to be more restrictive.
5. CHE goal of having some sort of CPL available in all disciplines. While a wider conversation may be necessary, concerns here may be due to a misunderstanding about the exceptions allowed for specialized accreditation.
6. Utilizing CPL in the same manner as its course equivalents. The task force and some commenters supported this, but one institution suggested this should be removed.

The project leadership team reviewed and considered all the above and openly discussed with CHE leaders to ensure the final [draft CPL Model Policy Guidance](#) serves and supports their goals in implementing a successful statewide CPL Program with the institution's support.

Task 2: Data Collection Task Force

Overview of Process

A CPL Data Collection Task Force was formed to aid CHE in developing program data collection for evaluation and quality assurance on the program. Again, task force members include representatives from Indiana's institutions of higher education, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, the Council for Adult Experiential Learning (CAEL), as well as CHE leadership. A list of all task force members and institutions can be found [here](#).

This task force supported the 2021 Policy Recommendations Report, where there were very specific outlined objectives for successful CPL data collection:

- **Objective 1:** Determine what data CHE needs to collect from each institution.
- **Objective 2:** Develop a standardized dictionary of data terms so that institutions know what type of data to report.
- **Objective 3:** Determine the tool institutions should use to report the data.

To meet these objectives, the CPL Data Collection Task Force utilized a series of virtual meetings, a data collection survey, and various Google Jamboard meeting sessions.

The CPL Data Collection Task Force met five times virtually between the end of June and mid-September 2023. Discussion included:

- Current adult learner data collection efforts in Indiana,
- Opportunities for improvement,
- Standardization,
- Data collection methodologies and reporting,
- Best practices for analyzing and utilizing adult learner data to inform policy decisions and program development,
- Fostering collaboration and information sharing among stakeholders, and
- Exploring innovative approaches and technologies for data collection and management.

During these meetings, both facilitation with notetaking and Google Jamboard were used to collect input from the task force. A data collection survey was developed with task force input and distributed to the individuals designated by each institution on July 31, 2023. Results were shared with the task force during subsequent meetings. Further information on the data collection survey will be shared below. Additional Google Jamboard sessions were offered and held between meetings to build on and clarify work supporting standardized definitions for data collection.

Summary of Activities Completed in Meeting the Objectives

In ongoing efforts to enhance postsecondary educational oversight and programmatic guidance, CHE outlined three primary objectives:

Objective 1: Determination of Data Needs/Fields

Initially, CHE aimed to identify the data each institution must provide. CHE created the Clearinghouse based on that legislation (see pages 26-27 of this report that makes reference to that development) —a centralized inventory for learning assessments that can lead to advanced standing or postsecondary credits at all state educational institutions. Institutions are required to provide data, ranging from assessment name, provider, cost, alignment with state educational institutions, secondary career pathways, industry credentials, and specific competencies or objectives it seeks to evaluate. Additionally, this data must be available on the respective websites of all involved.

Mapping out the data fields began with a survey designed to gauge current requirements and gaps at each institution. Following this, the task force convened for several meetings to discuss, dissect, and finalize the program data fields. Input from external subject matter experts was sought to ensure alignment with broader industry standards. Guidance from CAEL was also incorporated, enhancing our methodology. Once finalized, the data fields table was included in the [final draft CPL Model Policy Guidance](#) for stakeholder reference.

Objective 2: Development of Common Data Definitions

The second objective, developing a comprehensive dictionary of data terms, underscores the importance of standardizing the data. This is crucial given the varied terminologies and data collection methods used across institutions. By defining terms, establishing data parameters, and specifying necessary metrics, CHE can ensure consistent data reporting from each institution.

Data definitions were developed collaboratively with subject matter experts at Kratzer Consulting and CAEL, and complemented by the survey findings. Collaborative sessions using Google Jamboard were conducted to refine the definitions, which were then benchmarked against industry standards from CAEL and ACE®. The finalized data definitions were reviewed by all stakeholders during a final virtual session. A list of these can be found [here](#).

Objective 3: Recommendations for Tools

The final objective considered the most suitable tool for all institutions to report their data. Several tools such as CHEDSS and CAEL's Credit Predictor Pro, and others offer customizable features that can align with CHE's data requirements. The task force's challenge was to identify or adapt a tool that provides a streamlined process for institutions and meets the specific data collection needs of CHE.

After identifying the most commonly used data collection tools, we conducted a series of data collection systems demonstrations to provide an overview of other options, including Credential Engine™, Banner, ACE®, and CHE Data Submission System (CHEDSS). Following these demonstrations, the task force members' consensus leaned towards a flexible approach.

Regardless of the type of system in use, all institutions were advised to collect the data fields (as defined in Objective 1) and export them in a universal format, making it compatible for uploads into CHEDSS. The prospective timeline for this recommendation was contingent on the launch of CHEDSS 2.0. Further guidance on data collection processes, standards and tools will be forthcoming from CHE.

Following is a more detailed report of Task Force activities completed in meeting the three objectives of the CPL Data Collection Task Force.

Objective 1: Identify data collection requirements from each institution.

CPL Assessment Data Guidance Analysis

The examination of the Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) landscape reveals several components essential for refining the operational efficacy and accuracy of the data collection process.

This analysis is informed by standardized terminologies provided by the task force to present a coherent overview.

A key element is the CPL assessment cost, which is designated as a requisite data point. This emphasis underscores the necessity to categorize and report this metric, ensuring stakeholders can evaluate the financial and academic implications of engaging with CPL.

In the context of CPL credits attempted, there exists a pronounced interest in data acquisition. The challenge, however, is the current lack of a structured mechanism for systematic data capture. Therefore, the recommendation is to focus on distinct CPL methods that offer essential data on credits attempted. Methods such as portfolios, challenge exams, and specific individualized exams are particularly prominent in this context.

A deeper examination suggests that the overarching goal of monitoring credits attempted, especially at the institutional level, is to comprehend the success trajectories of varied CPL methodologies. Such insights are instrumental in probing deeper operational queries:

Is the current student support infrastructure adequate? Are advisors inadvertently directing students towards CPL without sufficient prior learning evidence? These pivotal inquiries might require shifts in institutional CPL strategies, potentially impacting areas like student advising.



Data pertaining to CPL credits applied to completion credentials provides a distinct opportunity. It is imperative that these data be collated, monitored, and reported effectively for learners who have finished their academic pursuits. Historical data trends have highlighted challenges, such as with ACE® military credits, related to actual versus recognized credits. It is of paramount importance to ensure that credits awarded align impeccably with a student's academic trajectory, mitigating complications associated with Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and counterproductive credit allocations.

It was recommended that data on CPL credits earned be systematically captured. This metric serves as a cornerstone in evaluating the efficacy of the CPL data process. Conversely, demographic data pertaining to CPL program participants, encompassing parameters like gender, age, race/ethnicity, and income, remains an area of keen interest. A potential solution could be leveraging existing infrastructure, such as the Student Information System (SIS), if it integrates CPL data.

The financial component of CPL, encompassing state financial aid metrics related to CPL costs, emerges as a pertinent data sphere. However, establishing a robust mechanism for data capture remains a challenge. The alignment of CPL assessments with state educational frameworks, secondary career trajectories, academic curricula, Career and Technical Education (CTE) modules, or pathways assure the relevance of CPL.

It is vital to distinctly categorize the assessment terminology from the method, indicating a broader purview for the latter. Essential data attributes also encompass the assessment provider, its congruence with state education paradigms, its resonance with industry validations, and its application scope. It is fundamental that these assessments are anchored in discernible competencies or instructional objectives.

To summarize, while certain facets of the CPL data guidance process have achieved clarity and structure, others necessitate enhanced strategies for effective data acquisition. Addressing these nuances will amplify the precision of the CPL data process, equipping stakeholders with comprehensive insights to drive informed academic and strategic decisions.

CPL Data Collection Survey

The task force suggested we survey the participating institutions to gain a full understanding of the current state of CPL data collection. With this suggestion, a survey was conducted in late July to collect information and feedback specific to CPL data collection. Survey questions gathered input on current data/software tools and resources that have been developed and utilized, what data fields institutions are currently collecting information in (types or methods of CPL offered, assessment names and costs, number of CPL credits attempted and/or earned, CPL program participant demographics, and completion/outcome rates), target populations for CPL, recommendations for improvement and additional resources that might be needed to support CPL data collection. A full list of participating institutions, survey questions and full survey results can be found [here](#). Below are highlights from the survey.

Highlights of CPL Data Collection Survey Results

1. Enhancing Data Collection and Reporting for Credit for Prior Learning Assessment (CPL)

In a concerted effort to improve the tracking and reporting of data related to CPL Assessment, institutions have been actively engaging in discussions and assessments of their data collection tools and processes. CPL, which allows students to earn college credit for knowledge and skills gained outside traditional coursework, plays a crucial role in advancing their academic pathway and accelerating completion.

2. Narration of “What and Why”

Registrar: Building an Efficient Data Collection Tool

The Registrar at one institution acknowledges the significance of a data collection tool that seamlessly tracks inquiries, credit requests, and associated costs. They emphasize the importance of identifying critical data fields for tracking and ensuring their maintenance. While they do not currently have a data dictionary or handbook, they rely on an existing handbook to guide CPL credit transcription. This institution’s commitment to data collection is evident, with multiple required data fields. They are also interested in collecting datafields not currently tracked, recognizing the potential value of this information and the program it serves.

Registrar: The Need for Clear Definitions and Tools

Another Registrar emphasizes the need for clear data field definitions to ensure consistent reporting among all institutions. They also highlight the requirement for additional data collection tools beyond Banner to effectively manage and store data. While they have a handbook for CPL credit transcription, they indicate that not all data fields are currently collected, emphasizing the importance of clarity in practices and data terminology.

Executive Director, Center for Prior Learning Recognition: Current Data Collection Success

The Executive Director of the Center for Prior Learning Recognition indicates satisfaction with their data collection process, citing the use of a homegrown degree plan management tool that provides control and oversight. They possess both a data dictionary and a handbook for CPL credit transcription. Their institution requires several data fields, and they express interest in maintaining standardization for better data interchange.

Assistant Registrar: Increasing Credit Awards and Staff Needs

This Assistant Registrar highlights the challenges they face due to an increase in credit awards, which has required more staff time. They acknowledge the importance of having full-time employees to manage the process efficiently. The institution already possesses a data dictionary and handbook for CPL credit transcription. They also express the need for additional data granularity and centralized processing.

**Assistant Vice President for Student Records - College Registrar:
Centralized Processing and Tracking**

This Assistant Vice President highlights the need for a more centralized process and a system for better tracking and awarding of credit from portfolio evaluations. They also express a desire for greater data granularity and a streamlined process.

University Registrar: Consistency Across Academic Units

The University Registrar emphasizes the importance of consistent practice across all academic units. They already have a data dictionary and handbook for CPL credit transcription. Their institution requires several data fields and actively tracks a wide range of CPL methods and types.

Asst Vice Provost for Lifetime Learning: A Call for Centralized Data Tracking

The Assistant Vice Provost expresses interest in centralized data tracking at the university level and widespread knowledge of CPL processes throughout the university.

3. Current Data Collection Tools and Challenges

- The Registrar of an educational institution is using the Banner software application to collect CPL data. The tool serves as a forward-facing system for tracking inquiries, requests for credit, and final postings while identifying the associated costs. However, the Registrar acknowledges the need to identify important data fields for tracking and maintenance, highlighting the absence of a data dictionary or handbook. Despite this, they do have a handbook guiding how CPL credit should be transcribed. They note that various data fields are required by HEA1549 enacted in 2020 General Assembly, including Type or Method of CPL Credit Offered, Type or Method of CPL Credit Awarded, CPL Assessment Name, CPL Assessment Provider, CPL Assessment Cost, Number of CPL Credits Attempted, Number of CPL Credits Earned, CPL Program Participant Demographics, State Financial Aid Applied, and Other Types of Financial Aid Applied.
- The Executive Director of the Center for Prior Learning Recognition uses CampusNexus/CampusVue by Campus Management to collect CPL data and finds their data collection tool effective. They emphasize the importance of common definitions and groupings to enable better data interchange among institutions.

4. Data Collection and Staffing Needs

- Another Registrar using Banner highlights the need for clear definitions of data fields for consistent reporting. They express the desire for an additional data collection tool, as Banner primarily serves as a storage system for their data. They also mention that having standard definitions among universities would facilitate consistent data reporting. They express the need for more information on how reported data is used to determine the necessity of additional resources.
- The Chief Data Officer and Director of Institutional Data Analytics + Assessment also use Banner for CPL data collection and express the importance of standardization at the state level. They emphasize the need for an easily accessible database to enhance data reporting.

5. Manual Processes and Full-Time Employees

- The Assistant Registrar mentions the challenges of manual data entry due to the manual awarding of credit in Banner. They stress the need for a full-time employee to manage this workload effectively. They highlight the importance of clear guidelines from all levels of involvement and the development of additional institutional coding.
- The Assistant Vice President for Student Records - College Registrar uses uAchieve/Banner and suggests the necessity of more granularity in data collection. They stress the importance of a centralized process for tracking and awarding credit from portfolio evaluations.

6. Consistency and Collaboration

- The University Registrar, who uses PeopleSoft, focuses on achieving consistent practices across academic units. They express a need for more data fields related to CPL and emphasize the importance of common definitions for various student demographics, including those who speak other languages and artists.

7. Centralized Data Tracking and Knowledge

- In contrast, the Assistant Vice Provost for Lifetime Learning does not currently use a data/software tool but expresses an interest in centralized data tracking at the university level. They emphasize the need for widespread knowledge of CPL processes throughout the university.

8. Software Tools for CPL Data Collection:

- 100% of respondents are currently using data/software tools for CPL data collection.
- The most mentioned software applications for data collection include Banner, CampusNexus/CampusVue, PeopleSoft, uAchieve, and homegrown tools.

9. Challenges in Data Collection:

- 100% of respondents highlight the importance of data collection tools for tracking inquiries, credit requests, and associated costs.
- 80% express the need for clear definitions of data fields to ensure consistent reporting.
- 60% report the absence of data dictionaries or handbooks for data terminology.
- 60% mention challenges in maintaining consistency due to varying definitions and practices.
- 80% point out that the lack of standardization in data fields is a barrier to effective CPL data collection.

10. Staffing Needs and Manual Processes:

- 80% of respondents indicate that CPL credit awarding processes involve manual tasks.
- 80% express a desire for additional staffing resources, particularly full-time employees, to manage CPL data effectively.
- 40% report increased staff time required for manual credit input.

11. Centralization and Automation:

- 60% emphasize the importance of centralized data processing systems for streamlining CPL data collection.
- 40% express the need for additional tools to automate CPL data processes.
- 40% mention that centralized systems can improve efficiency and reduce duplication of efforts.

12. Standardization and Collaboration:

- 60% of respondents stress the need for standardization in CPL data reporting, including data fields, definitions, and practices.
- 80% highlight the importance of collaboration and knowledge sharing within their institutions to ensure consistent data reporting.
- 40% mention the value of collaboration between institutions to share best practices and insights.

13. Compliance with Reporting Requirements:

- 100% recognize the importance of specific data fields required by regulations like HEA1549 enacted in 2020 General Assembly, such as Type or Method of CPL Credit Offered, CPL Assessment Name, CPL Assessment Provider, etc.

14. Desired Future Improvements:

- 100% express a desire for better tools and resources to enhance CPL data collection and reporting processes.
- 40% highlight the need for clearer guidelines and definitions.
- 40% mention a desire for more standardization at the state level and easily accessible databases.

Objective 2: Create a data term dictionary for reporting clarity.

The increasing complexity of data collection within higher education necessitates a standardized approach. Different student record systems and terminologies across institutions can lead to inconsistencies in data interpretation and analysis. To address this challenge, the task force recommends the development of a comprehensive data dictionary and clearly defined metrics. This initiative aims to ensure that all participating institutions provide data in a consistent format, enabling CHE to make informed decisions based on uniform and reliable information.

Developed by the CPL Data Collection Task Force, the following list of common categories, methods and definitions is provided for reference across all institutions and is meant to provide consistency across all of Indiana's higher education institutions as they report CPL data. It is not intended to be exhaustive. However, institutions must adopt the same common definitions for their own communications, policies, and internal purpose, as well as consistency in reporting data to CHE. See task force agreed upon definitions [here](#).



Objective 3: Determine the tool institution should use to report the data.

Many of the institutions surveyed said they were satisfied with their current data collection tools. Most use either CampusNexus/ CampusVue by Campus Management or Banner software application to collect CPL data. Yet, they and the rest of the task force said improvements for collected were necessary and that there is a need to identify important data fields for tracking and maintenance, and to create standard data collection definitions. They also said they are concerned with the manual task involved with CPL credit awarding processes and said additional staffing resources could be needed to manage CPL data effectively.

Overall, the task force expressed the need for a more centralized process and a system for better tracking and awarding of credit from portfolio evaluations.

Task Force agendas for every meeting included discussion of a tool for data collection. To determine what tool could work best for data collection, the task force was asked to recommend best practices and all members were assigned to read the practices shared. This included information for data collection from Colorado, Delaware, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee, as well as a [best practices guide developed by CAEL](#). The task force also saw demonstrations of other data collection tools by ACE®, Banner, Credential Engine, and Indiana's own state data collection software called CHEDDS.

Statement to be included within the Indiana CPL Model Policy Guidance

"Data Collection and Reporting" draft model policy guidance:

We convened with a unified objective to meticulously evaluate and refine the proposed draft model policy guidance, emphasizing clarity, accuracy, and comprehensiveness. The process employed was methodical, encouraging members to utilize the 'Review' feature for comments and approvals.

Data Collection and Reporting draft model policy language to be reviewed:

"The Commission shall require institutions to submit data as part of the institution's CPL operations on a regular basis. Institutions shall collect and report data on the types of CPL awarded based on data points collaboratively developed and agreed upon by the state and the institutions, to be detailed in a separate data collection policy.

Additionally, institutions shall internally monitor their own data for quality assurance purposes.

The policy draft stipulates:

- *The Commission's role in mandating periodic data submission by institutions regarding their CPL activities.*
- *The criteria for data collection and reporting, emphasizing the types of CPL granted, will be determined collaboratively between the state and the institutions.*
- *A detailed framework will be delineated in a separate data collection guideline provided by CHE.*
- *Institutions are tasked with internally monitoring their data to ensure its authenticity and accuracy."*

Post review, several esteemed colleagues and institutions have articulated their feedback:

1. **Allegra Fowler from Purdue Global:** Concurred with the drafted definition.
2. **April Hay from ISU:** Expressed agreement with the policy's content.
3. **Becky Little of VU:** Granted her approval.
4. **Anand R. Marri from Ball State University:** Approved the presented draft.
5. **Jason Hardgrave of USI:** Affirmed his agreement with the draft.
6. **Tim Kish and Drew Lurker of Ivy Tech:** Formally endorsed the policy language.

We extend our gratitude to all participants for their invaluable insights and approvals, ensuring the policy is in its best form.



Task 3: Clearinghouse 2.0 Task Force

Purpose

Fulfilling the requirements of HEA 1549, CHE formally published the CPL Clearinghouse that lists Indiana's public college and university options for receiving credit through several types of CPL opportunities. This critical repository enables Hoosiers to identify ways to earn college credit for previous academic and work-related experiences. As noted during the 2022 Education Value Convening, while CHE has taken critical steps to prioritize CPL in Indiana, this tool remains underutilized and requires personnel to administer, a deeper understanding of the opportunities that exist across fields of study, and general awareness of what these types of credit-awarding opportunities provide for Hoosiers.

With goals to expand the Clearinghouse and make this information accessible to all Hoosiers to continue advancing their educational journey, CHE envisions the next phase of the CPL Clearinghouse to include transparency around the pathways that are made available to individuals through CPL. This encourages Hoosiers to seek out progression across an academic program and clearly understand how their experiences translate to credit earned across a pathway or program. Through this added layer of transparency in the new Clearinghouse 2.0, CHE envisions higher levels of utilization of CPL and awareness of how opportunities support the end-user – our Hoosier talent.

The Clearinghouse 2.0 Task Force purpose was to:

- Assess the successes and opportunities in the current CPL Clearinghouse
- Establish a clear vision for the next phase of the CPL Clearinghouse
- Engage a CPL Clearinghouse 2.0 Task Force to support vision setting and strategy development for statewide implementation
- Refine CHE's CPL Clearinghouse to support the end-user and increase use of the tool

The CPL Clearinghouse 2.0 Task Force included public and private university and college representatives, the State of Indiana's Personnel Department, employers (Human Resources and Line Managers), industry associations, state and local workforce boards, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, CAEL, Kratzer Consulting and TPMA, along with others involved in CPL across the state.

Learnings from the CPL Clearinghouse 2.0 Task Force will inform the next phase of work to establish state and institutional policies and align to ongoing CHE efforts like Credential Engine, Indiana's e-Transcript Program, Collecting Competencies in CHEDSS for Indiana's Credential Registry, and Veteran's Education Pathways.

Process

Overview of Clearinghouse 2.0

On April 29, 2021, Indiana's General Assembly adopted House Enrolled Act 1549 (HEA 1549) to enhance educational pathways for Indiana residents. This legislation mandates leveraging Credits for Prior Learning (CPL) to boost student enrollment, expedite degree completion, and widen educational access across the state.

To comply with HEA 1549, CHE launched the CPL Clearinghouse, a comprehensive catalog of CPL options at public higher education institutions in Indiana. The Clearinghouse operates on a dual-interface system: an internal dashboard for academic institutions to manage and submit data, and an external platform to disseminate information on CPL opportunities to various stakeholders.

Despite its utility, the current iteration of the Clearinghouse has untapped potential. While valuable, it still lacks in certain areas, such as specialized personnel, a broad understanding of opportunities across diverse fields, and increased public awareness of the benefits of CPL.

To remedy these shortcomings and enhance its utility, CHE is planning the next version of the platform, dubbed Clearinghouse 2.0. This upgrade aims to offer greater transparency about CPL pathways, thereby enabling Indiana residents to translate their life and work experiences more easily into academic credits. The envisioned improvements in Clearinghouse 2.0 are expected to drive higher levels of CPL engagement and raise awareness about the transformative power of such opportunities for Indiana's workforce.

To steer the development of Clearinghouse 2.0, CHE assembled a task force featuring representatives from higher education, industry, and workforce organizations across the state. Throughout July and August 2023, the task force held four virtual meetings to formulate a vision for Clearinghouse 2.0, identify its target audiences, set objectives for those audiences, and outline a tiered list of features to be incorporated into the platform.

The recommendations from the task force on how CHE should structure Clearinghouse 2.0 will be detailed in the sections that follow.

Clearinghouse 2.0 Recommendations

Vision

The Indiana Credit for Prior Learning Clearinghouse 2.0 will be an inclusive platform that empowers individuals, businesses, and educators by providing a common space for understanding and validating skills, aiding in recruitment and retention, and facilitating meaningful connections between talent and opportunities.

Audience #1: Learners

The primary focus of the Clearinghouse 2.0 task force was on learners, a demographic that includes high school students, non-traditional students, working professionals, and military veterans. The task force aimed to facilitate the use of the Clearinghouse 2.0 platform as a resource for these individuals to better understand the CPL process. By doing so, these learners can more easily navigate how their pre-existing competencies—gained through avenues like work experience, military training, or dual-credit courses—can be translated into academic credits. The task force determined that the platform should serve as a comprehensive guide for converting these experiences into accelerated educational pathways at a range of higher education institutions across Indiana.

Objectives for How Learners Could Use Clearinghouse 2.0

The task force determined specific objectives to guide the utilization of the Clearinghouse 2.0 platform for learners, with the intent of enhancing the educational and professional experiences for this audience.

- 1. Career Exploration:** Clearinghouse 2.0 should function as a valuable instrument for in-depth career exploration, aiding learners in identifying and targeting roles in sectors with high demand for labor.
- 2. Skills Mapping:** Clearinghouse 2.0 should be designed to assist learners in both recognizing and effectively articulating the specialized skills they have already acquired, thus facilitating more advantageous interactions with potential employers.
- 3. Guidance for Veterans:** For those in transition from military service, Clearinghouse 2.0 should offer focused guidance to ease the conversion of military training into academic credit or applicable workforce qualifications.

Audit of Current Clearinghouse

The task force reviewed the current Clearinghouse through a learner's lens and recommended elements that should be moved to Clearinghouse 2.0 and recommended modifications. The results of this audit are found below.

Clearinghouse Elements to Keep

The task force particularly values the current platform's use of icons, as they contribute to a visually engaging user experience. Additionally, the task force appreciates the current Clearinghouse's design, which permits easy access to key information without necessitating extensive scrolling.

Recommended Changes

Navigation and Accessibility

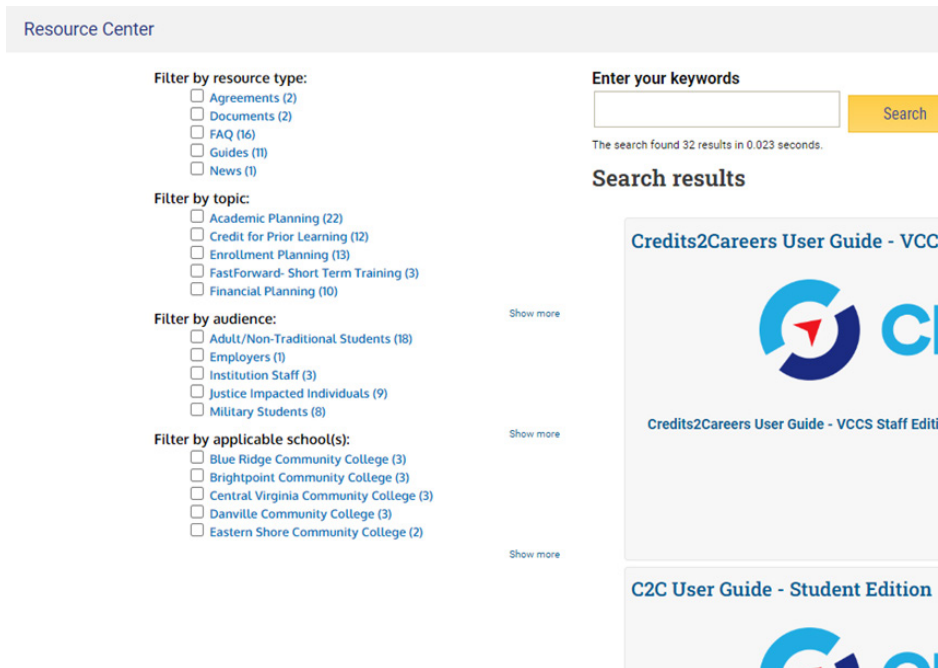
While the task force recognizes merits in the existing design of Clearinghouse 2.0, they recommend several enhancements to improve user-friendliness. The platform currently burdens the user with excessive text. The task force suggests streamlining this by reformulating the information architecture. They recommend implementing an interactive "wheel and spoke" design, with the student at the information ecosystem's center. To simplify user engagement further, the task force suggests including visual aids, such as demonstration videos or images.

Information Filtering and Clarity

The task force advocates for advanced filtering capabilities that allow for direct comparisons of credit opportunities across various institutions. They recommend clear, step-by-step guides accompanied by "calls to action" to direct users. The task force also calls for more transparency about which universities participate and what programs they offer, rather than forcing users to scroll through an exhaustive list.

Usability and Guidance

The task force finds the initial layout and text elements confusing for first-time users. They recommend replacing terms like “Exam,” which could be off-putting, with more informative and welcoming language. Furthermore, they suggest that the platform should communicate its purpose and benefits more clearly right from the outset. The task force finds the AP and CLEP databases in their current matrix formats to be confusing and recommends an interactive, self-explanatory tool like a calculator for specific data input. The picture below is an example from a different Clearinghouse that demonstrates this recommendation.



Resource Center

Filter by resource type:

- Agreements (2)
- Documents (2)
- FAQ (16)
- Guides (11)
- News (1)

Filter by topic:

- Academic Planning (22)
- Credit for Prior Learning (12)
- Enrollment Planning (13)
- FastForward- Short Term Training (3)
- Financial Planning (10)

Filter by audience:

- Adult/Non-Traditional Students (18)
- Employers (1)
- Institution Staff (3)
- Justice Impacted Individuals (9)
- Military Students (8)

Filter by applicable school(s):

- Blue Ridge Community College (3)
- Brightpoint Community College (3)
- Central Virginia Community College (3)
- Danville Community College (3)
- Eastern Shore Community College (2)

Enter your keywords

 Search

The search found 32 results in 0.023 seconds.

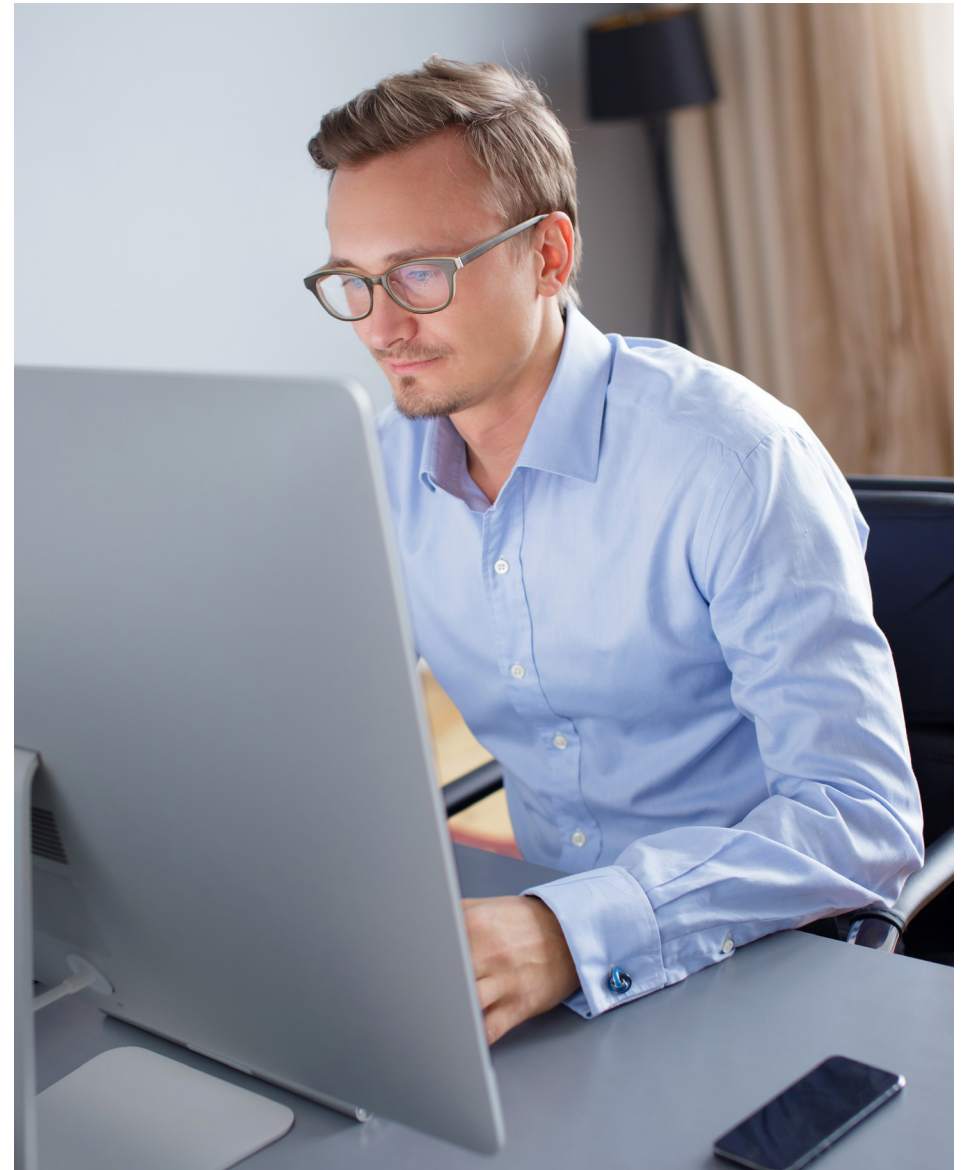
Search results

Credits2Careers User Guide - VCCS



Credits2Careers User Guide - VCCS Staff Edition

C2C User Guide - Student Edition



Phase III CPL Project Technical Assistance & Professional Development

Within this Phase III CPL project, technical assistance and professional development was provided by TPMA and their subcontractors, national subject matter experts, CAEL and Kratzer Consulting, LLC.

These activities included:

- Serve on the project leads team,
- serve as subject matter experts on all the three of the task forces,
- aid in policy development, research, and legislative recommendations,
- provide guidance on current veteran's programs such as Joint Service Transcripts and the public workforce development tools, and
- provide professional development workshops to build upon the growing CPL program support community within Indiana.

Third party subject matter experts also supported professional development needs for the project that resulted in building key stakeholders i.e., higher education, business and public workforce development staff capacity and engagement around the newly developed state policies, programs, and processes of these tools. More specifically two CPL training modules were marketed to all institutions for participation and provided during the CPL Phase III Project.

1. CPL Fundamentals & Benefits Webinar

September 28, 2023, 2 pm EST – 3:15 pm EST

This 75-minute webinar provided by CAEL was aimed at key stakeholders to create buy-in to the concepts surrounding a CPL program. The session included an overview of what CPL is and is not, the most recent research of the benefits of CPL, and why CPL provides value to students and institutions.

2. From the Ground Up

October 24, and October 26, 2023 each a 4.0 hour half day sessions.

These two-half day virtual workshops, hosted by CAEL were designed to cover all the questions you have about credit for prior learning but were afraid to ask! Designed as an introduction to credit for prior learning, the workshops begin by laying a foundation by exploring the different opportunities students have to demonstrate their knowledge and learning, and the impact CPL has on organizational practices and student success. Participants engaged in case studies that examine principles of organizational change and how a CPL program becomes integral to student learning and success. Using sample documents, scenarios, and institutional examples, participants worked collaboratively to create an action plan and design processes for introducing or expanding CPL options to gain support from key campus constituencies.

3. CPL In Person Collaborative Convening

As mentioned earlier in this report, this project allowed for an in-person collaboration event for all the Phase III CPL project task force participants and key stakeholders to come together. This one-day event allowed for a final vetting of the draft CPL Model Policy Guidance, Clearinghouse 2.0 outcomes as well as Data Collection strategies. This event also supported demonstrations of the alignment of this project with other key projects currently underway at CHE. These projects include:

- Indiana e-Transcript program where moving all high school and college transcripts sent as XML data in common format;
- Indiana Achievement Wallet and Digital Credentials and Competencies;
- CHEDSS now storing Competencies for all programs; and lastly
- Veteran's Education Pathways Initiative which will serve as the first pilot student target population for the CPL data collection program with this project.

Recommendations for Indiana's CPL Program Success

As CPL programs are being fully implemented across institutions and the CPL model policy guidance is revisited routinely, as are all CHE policies, the convening participants provided areas within the CPL program that will require additional work, as well as recommendations for CHE's consideration. During the convening, TPMA utilized Mentimeter, a technology-based tool where participants respond to questions based on their institution's CPL needs, gathering participants CPL program input and feedback. The responses cover various aspects such as areas needing further development, funding requirements and/or assistance, and program implementation. (See full [Mentimeter outcomes here](#)).

Below is a summary and organization of the key points from the polling:

After reviewing the Draft State Model Policy Guidance, what in your opinion do you feel is missing?

Five responses were good with the Draft policy and 16 offered further suggestions, here are a few:

- Very clear language of what institutions are actually required to do in regards to transcription and what should be transferred.
- State funding start up support as was provided in some of the model state policies the teams reviewed. The start-up support would be crucial for implementing some of the ideal practices described. How will we fund the statewide message?
- Best practices and model examples of implementation.

What additionally needs to be developed for the CPL work?

Out of 20 responses, the top three areas in priority order were

- Clearinghouse 2.0,
- CPL program definitions and terms, and
- Data collection standards.

Some other key points noted specifically were:

- Need for formulae to translate experience into credit.
- Revamp and rename the clearinghouse website.
- Operationalize data dictionary; reduce vague language and ensure consistency in practices, definitions, and reporting requirements.
- Determine questions for data, operationalize terms, and recognize data collection burdens.
- Funding for policy and clearinghouse development.

What type of one-year funding will your institution need to begin to implement a CPL Program?

Out of 15 responses, the top two funding levels were:

- \$50,000 or more
- \$25,000 - \$50,000 range

How many budget cycles will your institution need to sustain a CPL Program?

Out of 15 responses, the top three noted in priority order:

- 3 Budget Cycles
- 4 Budget Cycles tied with More than 5 Budget Cycles

What Types of staffing resources will your institution need to implement CPL? Check all that apply was an option for this response.

Out of 17 responses received, the top three staffing levels in priority order were:

- Clerical
- Program Director
- 3 way tie - IT Professional, Faculty 1.0 FTE, and Marketing

What barriers do you expect to encounter at your institution that would prevent a fully implemented CPL Program?

Out of 17 responses, the top three in priority order were:

- Lack of resources
- Faculty buy-in and support
- Need for CPL Program professional development

Feedback on Leadership and Program Awareness, participants were asked to rate their respective institutions on a scale where they strongly disagree equals zero and strongly agree equals 5.0.

Out of 17 responses the overall response was 3.3.

Some key points noted specifically were:

- Leadership interest, but lack of resources.
- Support varies by college, school, and program.
- Interest in growing CPL for student benefits.
- Need for ongoing refinement and improvement.

Participants identified Areas Needing Further Development for Full Implementation:

Out of 15 responses, the following were key points worth noting:

- Clear transcription and transfer guidance.
- Implementation resources.
- Standards for assessing CPL and quality assurance.
- Establishing consistency for locally assessed CPL.
- Data collection standards.

How will your campus/institution implement and sustain Program Awareness with Students, administrative and faculty staff?

Out of 19 responses the top 3 in priority order:

- Design and develop institution custom marketing efforts.
- Institution Social Media Platforms.
- Provide program professional development and student workshops.

Other noted ways to implement and sustain program awareness:

- Need for professional development and funding.
- Establishing appropriate policies that are approved by faculty.
- State funding for CPL coordinators.
- Employer awareness and co-building of talent.
- Training for staff and faculty.

How will your campus engage community support?

Out of 18 responses here were the top three categories selected:

- Request a State CPL Program Marketing Package and or Assistance.
- Design and develop institution custom marketing efforts.
- Speaking engagement at community-based leadership organizations.

Here are a few of the noted “other” ways to engage community support:

- Incorporate CPL into supports for employers adopting skills-based hiring, onboarding, and development.
- Seek state funding for a CPL External Coordinator to reach out for partnerships.
- Opportunity to have agreed upon scores for CPL/credits to reduce barriers and confusion for individuals seeking CPL.



What program specific supports will your institution need from the Commission?

Responses received in priority order:

- 17 - Data Collection Guidance and Standards
- 15 - Supplemental Funding (1-2 Budget Cycles)
- 14 - Clearinghouse 2.0 Guidance and Standards
- 12 - Standing Statewide CPL Advisory Committee
- 12 - Professional Development for faculty and Program Staff
- 12 - CPL Program Guidance
- 11 - State CPL Program Marketing Package

Other Responses:

- Long-term funding.
- Infrastructure and financial support to prevent burnout.
- Continuous improvement and manageability.

Rate your Institutions preparedness to support veterans with M-CPL.

On a scale of 1 – 5, rate the following statements:

Overall, our institution is well equipped to support veterans in their pursuit of M-CPL	3.2
Our staff receive regular training on how to assist veterans in obtaining M-CPL	2.3
The M-CPL process at our institution is streamlined and user-friendly for veterans	2.7
We regularly gather feedback from veterans and make improvements to our M-CPL processes based on their needs	2.4
We have sufficient resources, such as counselors and advisors, dedicated to assisting veterans with M-CPL	2.6

Please rate the following statement with 0 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree.

After serving on this project, I feel qualified to speak and support a CPL program at my institution 4.2

Along with utilization of the Mentimeter to collect futurist program needs, the participants were also grouped into their respective three task force groupings where a SWOT analysis was conducted. These workgroups were asked to collectively respond to the following:

- Based on the Indiana draft CPL Model Policy can you identify what the strengths are?
- Are there weaknesses in the first draft Model Policy? Do you see opportunities with the new State CPL Program, policy and clearinghouse?
- Are there threats for the State CPL Program and policy that will prevent it from being successful?
- Do you have further recommendations for CHE to consider in administering this statewide CPL Program?

Below is the outcome of this SWAT analysis exercise:

Value Statement recommendations:

- Strength – the current draft policy value statement acknowledges Indiana Higher Education values, great job;
- Further Recommendation - Align to the Indiana workforce and educational attainment goals and look at how to frame higher education’s role.

Assessment, Standards and Quality recommendations:

Faculty Perception – Trust

- Very institution specific
- Specialized accreditation
- Clarification of rigor
- Demonstrate to faculty the data on how CPL has been in effect and how referring to faculty who have engaged
- Faculty-centric standards

Competency – Based Evaluation Consistency

- Use of rubrics
- Trained and experienced reviewers
- Documenting consistent practices

Repository – Clearinghouse 2.0

- Types of certifications, industry approved credentials, etc. that are evaluated and recommended for crosswalks (like ACE® Military Guide

Standardized and Non-standardized Credit

- Standardized being the AP, CLEP, DSST, IB, etc. and the non-standardized credit being the portfolio-based credits and institution-based challenge exams.
- What are the crosswalks, ACE® Military Guidance, parity and state statute, what are the institutions options post ACE® monetization.
- How to scale.
- Trained staff with sufficient experience.
- Balancing student-perceptions of what should apply with the realities of credit toward degree requirements along with financial aid considerations.
- Communication about credits that may not apply if students change major or transfer.

Parity/Consistency

- Comparisons of types of credit (e.g. transfer vs. CPL)
- What constitutes an acceptable level of “mastery” and
- Are CPL evaluations on par with how students are graded in an equivalent course

External Partnerships Implementation

- CPL programs should be noted within each institution strategic plan
- Apprenticeship partnerships that include CPL opportunities
- Best practices noted on how to implement with external partners.
- CPL Program noted within Institution’s accreditation process.
- College staff positions who serve as Employer CPL Program Consultant’s
- Industry Crosswalks to programs of study(s)
- Veteran/Military Crosswalks to programs of study(s)
- CPL program specific marketing plan

CPL Program Student Experience/Journey

Types of Student(s)

- Employed in an organization
- Prospective Students

First Impression

- How did they find the clearinghouse?
- How do they make a choice
- Mimic a “profile” development (e.g. LinkedIn)
 - Get Credit for your skills for what you know! (click here)
 - Next – Profile Development
 - Next Connection to applicable opportunities

Once profile is created and then ... Identify potential pathways

- Opportunities for CPL and student can then explore the options.

Skills to the credential pathway

- Next outcome of the above – recommended Job Pathways possibly include a skills gap analysis (source could be O Net)
- Next is the Education Pathway to bridge the gaps
- Then CPL opportunities to explore at which institutions

General Information could be:

- What do you know?
- What do you want to do?

Tailored Information could be:

- Here’s where you can go ...
- What is your experience? Here’s potential pathways

Link and Leverage

- DWD recommended engine (algor (tailored))
- Skills to Pathway and Interest to Pathway
- Student can import their data

Overall, the group shared, this student experience/journey system needs to enable students to share data. Indiana's CPL program could align with current work underway in CHE's Achievement Wallet project, the Credential Engine Project, and Indiana's Career Explorer.

All convening participants also received a QR Code to scan for future reference of the day's materials utilized, this included:

- [CPL Program Ambassador Key Talking Points](#)
- [Power Point on CPL Program Benefits and Ecosystem](#)
- [Mentimeter Polling Results](#)
- [CPL Program Implementation Key Considerations and a Military Credit for Prior Learning Program Hub.](#)

It should also be noted both Ivy Tech and Purdue Global have been participating in CPL research strategy of state policy updates that were originally presented by Education Commission of the States:

[50-State Comparison: Prior Learning Assessment Policies - Education Commission of the States \(ecs.org\)](#)

[50-State Comparison: Academic Credit for Military Experience - Education Commission of the States \(ecs.org\)](#)

For future guidance in support of growing and strengthening the Indiana CPL Programs, the [latest report](#) from [Credential As You Go](#) is important to note within the report for future program review and alignment. CHE, along with an advisory group, should conduct routine CPL program reviews and updates to incorporate where needed into this initial CPL program work.

Phase III Taskforce Members Only - List of Recommendations

During the numerous meetings for the project, all three task forces provided below their lists of future work to be done for the success of the Indiana CPL Program. It was important to note within this report these recommendations that stemmed from those meetings prior to the in-person convening that engaged with some of these same task force members, but also key program stakeholders as well.

Policy and Guidance

The Model Policy Development Task Force recommends that CHE adopt a policy that:

- Demonstrates benefits to the economy and public good.
- Is accessible, equitable, and transparent.
- Is governed by a memorandum of understanding across institutions to ensure consistent data sharing and reporting.
- Provides clear quality assurance and assessment standards.

Program Implementation

- The task force members recommend CHE continue to work on specific guidance/guidelines in support of program implementation, program data collection and reporting, and consistent program marketing resources.
- Many of the institutions are seeking financial resources from the state that will aid them in program implementation and sustainability.
- Task force members support starting with a target sample student population in program implementation to aid CHE and the institutions to identify program gaps, further enhancements and policy guidance needs prior to opening the program up to all students statewide.

Data Collection and Reporting

- The data task force recommends a flexible approach to data collection software, while ensuring that each institution gathers and exports data fields in a universal format to CHE for analysis and reporting through CHEDSS. The prospective timeline for this recommendation was contingent on the launch of CHEDSS 2.0. Further guidance on data collection processes, standards and tools will be forthcoming from CHE.
- The task force recommends that CHE focus on distinct CPL methods that offer essential data on credits attempted. Methods such as portfolios, challenge exams, and specific individualized exams are particularly prominent in this context.
- Regarding data collection, the task force suggests CPL credits earned be systematically captured. This metric serves as a cornerstone in evaluating the efficacy of the CPL data process. Conversely, demographic data pertaining to CPL program participants should be collected via existing infrastructure, such as the Student Information System (SIS).

Clearinghouse 2.0

The Clearinghouse Task Force recommends the following updates to the existing platform:

- **Navigation and Accessibility:** streamline the information architecture of the existing design to a wheel and spoke design with student information at the center.
- **Information Filtering and Clarity:** develop advanced filtering capabilities that allow for direct comparisons of credit opportunities across various institutions. Provide clear, step-by-step guides accompanied by “calls to action” to direct users.
- **Usability and Guidance:** The platform should communicate its purpose and benefits from the outset. For example, replacing terms like “Exam,” which could be off-putting, with more informative and welcoming language. The task force finds the AP and CLEP databases in their current matrix formats to be confusing and recommends an interactive, self-explanatory tool like a calculator for specific data input.

The task force also calls for more transparency about which universities participate and what programs they offer, rather than forcing users to scroll through an exhaustive list.

Closing

In closing the collaborative convening day, CHE along with this project's veteran's subject matter expert consultant, Dallas Kratzer, shared the first designated sample pilot student target population for Indiana's CPL program will be Indiana's veterans. This will support and align with the continuation of recent work and recommendations from CHE's Veterans Task Force Credit for Prior Learning Workgroup's recommendations report, see figure 1.1 below. This first pilot CPL student target population designation of Indiana's veterans also aligns with the upcoming launch of Indiana's Collegiate Purple Star Initiative in 2024.

Military Credit for Prior Learning represents a significant untapped opportunity for Indiana's veterans, employers, and institutions. CHE is seeking a new statewide CPL program/system to support veterans in gaining college credit for what they have already learned. Giving veterans credit for what they know is critical to their success academically and professionally. Thus, the implementation of a sample target specific student population pilot in a statewide CPL program in Indiana, will begin with a Military Credit for Prior Learning.



Indiana CPL Military Program Component

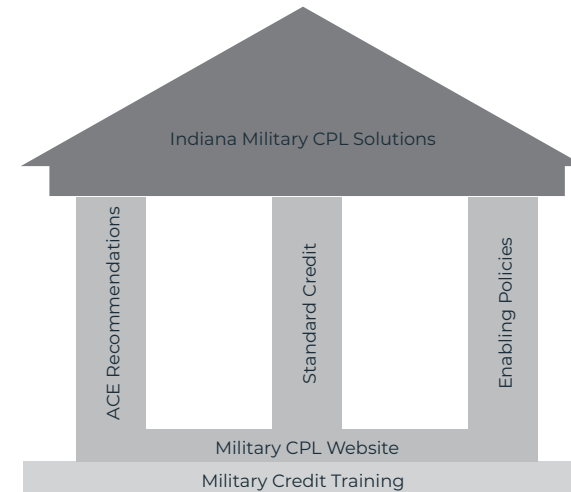
Over the last two years, CHE has done extensive work in understanding and utilizing military workplace learning within the colleges and universities in the state. Indiana has a strong military community with approximately 191,488 veterans below age 64, of which 30 percent are below age 40ⁱ. Additionally, the state has approximately 18,000 Guard and Reserve members and just over 1,028 active duty members.ⁱⁱ During fiscal year 2021, 871 Army active duty soldiers left active service and chose Indiana as their state of residence (the other branches do not report this data) with as many as 79% having some college but no degree.^{iiiiv}

With the number of veterans in the state, of which many have some credit but no degree, the higher education institutions have an opportunity to quickly engage potential students who can benefit immediately from military credit for prior learning (M-CPL) programs. Furthermore, CHE's Veterans Task Force Report identified five actionable recommendations to capitalize on the opportunity to engage prospective veteran students. The recommendations include three pillars (as shown in figure 1.2) that are the framework and two state-wide foundational areas that support the framework. The three pillars focus on:

The three pillars focus on:

- 1) utilizing **American Council on Education (ACE®) Recommendations**;
- 2) **Standardized and Transparent** processes for awarding M-CPL; and
- 3) creating **Enabling Policies** to enable the award of M-CPL. The two foundational works are to create a statewide program on **Military Credit Training** and **Military CPL Website**.

Figure 1.2: Indiana CPL Military Program Component



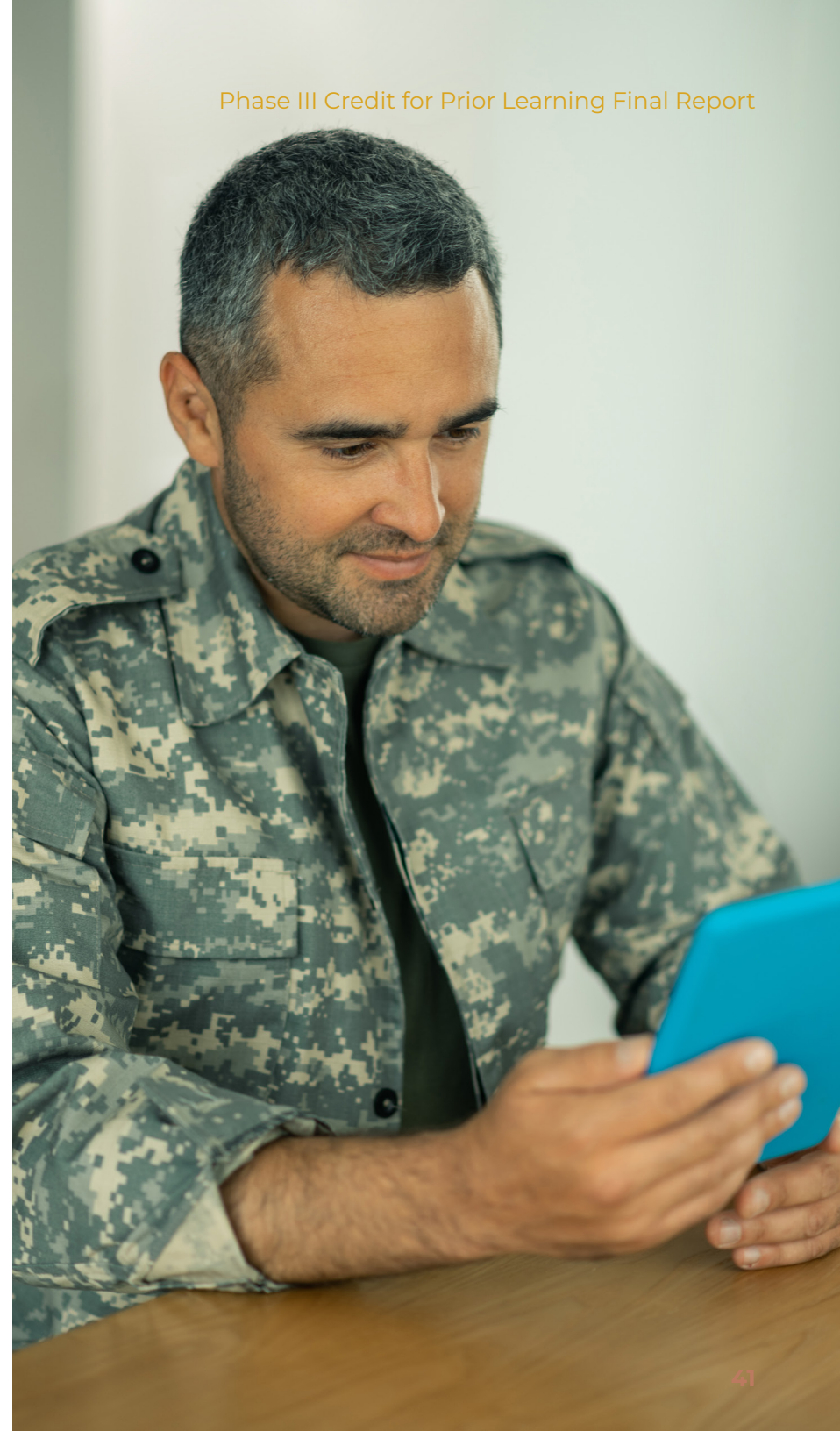
Based on CHE Veteran's Task Force work, the state is positioned to move forward with a statewide initiative to build out an M-CPL program. A pilot program using M-CPL would allow the higher education institutions to begin with a small population of potential students who already have CPL that has been assessed and documented. The next step is to build out a M-CPL plan designed to help the higher education institutions implement the Task Force recommendations. In addition, the plan should address military cultural awareness, present a military/veteran ecosystem, and recommendations for an M-CPL role at the institutional level.

Why Begin with Military Credits?

The long-term goal for CHE is to develop a system that allows for a statewide understanding and acceptance of multiple forms of credit for prior learning. Evaluating and accepting credits based on training military students received in the service is one of the easiest ways to begin. ACE® has done the work of identifying and assessing military learning for several training programs and career fields. These assessments are conducted by faculty SMEs across the nation, providing the depth, breadth, and rigor expected in any CPL program and then provide credit recommendations.

The credit recommendations are accessible via the Joint Services Transcript (JST), which is similar to a traditional college transcript. This transcript is relatively easy for staff and faculty to review and evaluate credit recommendations. Additionally, the online ACE® Military Guide (ACE® MG - <https://militaryguide.acenet.edu/>) provides further details on learning outcome and on-the-job credit recommendations that can be aligned with degree specific courses, thereby facilitating course equivalency results. Furthermore, the ACE® MG is a free resource to everyone and streamlines the process of recognizing military learning as college equivalent credit. Additionally, the Guide has a vehicle by which institutions can share how they have awarded credit in their programs. This feature provides an avenue to coordinate credit recommendations between colleges facilitating a collaborate process that can expedite the recognition of M-CPL. Again, this function is a free resource to all higher education institutions. The ACE® process provides a process that can be a benchmark for creating a CPL program for all learning.

In addition, our veteran population is important to our campus culture and our statewide mission. By improving the M-CPL process, the state is demonstrating a commitment to helping veterans. As the program is implemented, those experiences can be the foundation for developing CPL program that works for all adult learners in the state.



Pilot Project Recommendation

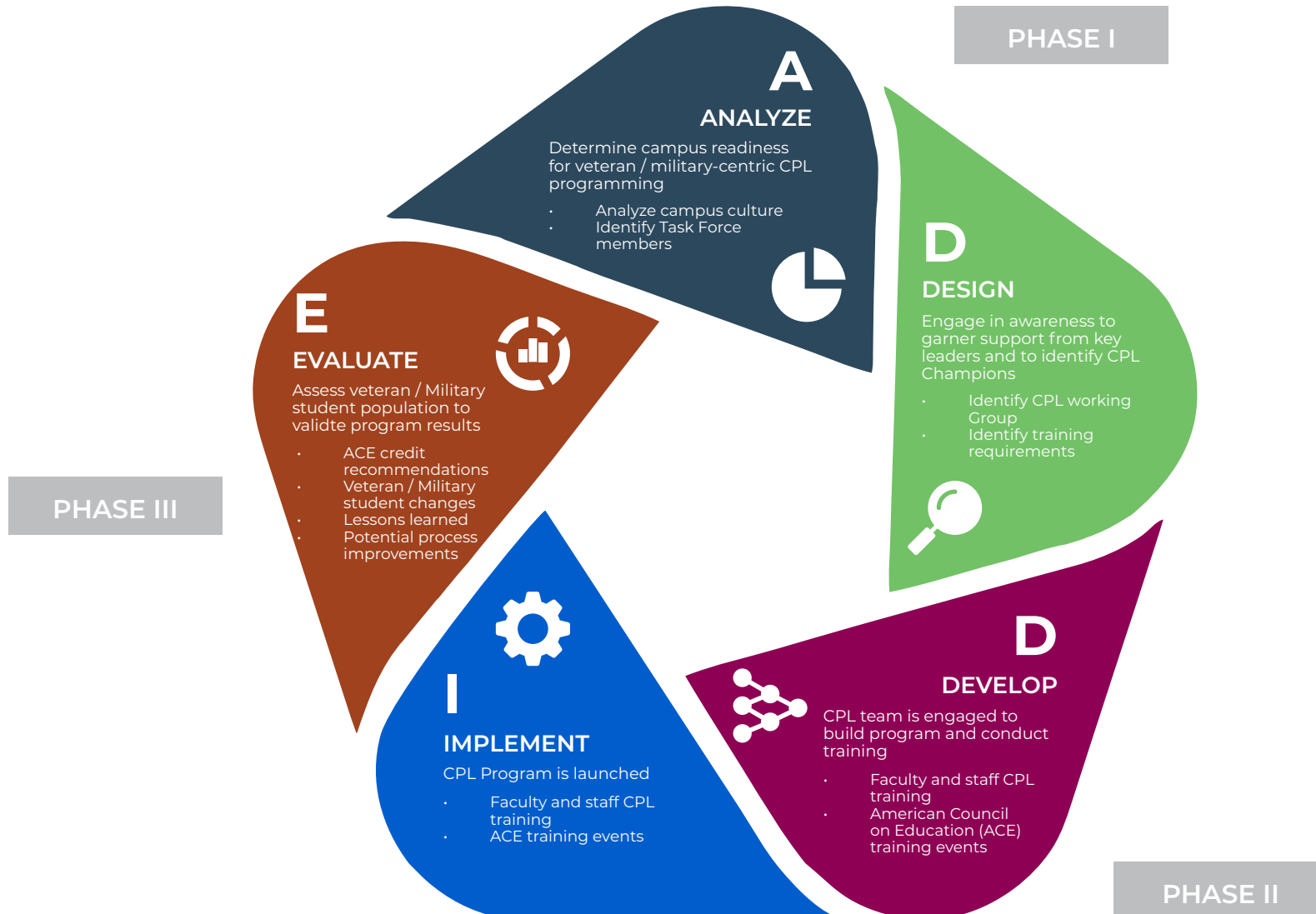
Military CPL (M-CPL) is a subset of a traditional CPL program but is focused on the prior learning for military members based on their learning while serving. A pilot project using M-CPL as the starting point of a larger project associated with recognizing learning allows to a quicker adoption of CPL practices while building the knowledge base required to run a full program. The reason for starting with M-CPL is much of the work associated with the evaluation and assessment of learning in the military system has been done by ACE®, therefore it can accelerate the integration of recognized learning into the academic system.

Most schools are already using some aspects of the ACE® credit recommendations. At the same time, there are opportunities to further expand and improve on the recognition of M-CPL to attract potential students and increase retention of current military-connected students. Additionally, using M-CPL as a starting point will position Indian's institutions to expand into traditional CPL practices more quickly.

The process for beginning a M-CPL program at an institution has three phases (Figure 2). Phase One (Analyze and Design) begins with identifying an M-CPL Task Force to lead the project. This group will focus on analyzing the culture and institutional readiness for M-CPL. Additionally, Phase One starts the process of building awareness of credit for prior learning (CPL) benefits, practices, and policies, as well as establishing M-CPL work groups.



Figure 2: Veteran / Military-Centric CPL Implementation Plan



In Phase Two (Develop and Implement) the focus shifts to developing and implementing the M-CPL program. This includes educating faculty and staff about ACE® credit recommendations and developing procedures to review and process student requests.

Phase Three (Evaluate) brings the entire process together by evaluating the effectiveness and utility of the program. Along with evaluation, other processes, such as “lessons learned” and continuous improvement ideas are considered to improve the overall program.

Each phase is expected to take between six and eight months, with a six-to-twelve-month stabilization period during Phase Two and Three. The stabilization period is intended to give the new program an opportunity to function before moving into the evaluation phase.

In the early stages of this project, the M-CPL Task Force works to get a better understanding of the campus needs and help others understand the value of a M-CPL program. Veterans are both an important part of our campus community and an untapped resource of potential students. The foundational work begins with a deep dive into the research associated with the military community and culture, then moves to the value of military-connected individuals in higher education and finishes with presenting the challenges associated with veterans in academic institutions.

Armed with a strong understanding of M-CPL programs, the M-CPL Task Force designs an awareness campaign to educate key stakeholders, enlist the help of those who are already favorable toward M-CPL, and secure the support of leaders across the campus. Once the Task Force has built consensus and support with leadership they will establish a M-CPL Working Group to lead the implementation and integration of the project (Phase 2). The last step is to evaluate (Phase 3) the results of the pilot project, determining the return on investment, process improvement opportunities, and next steps.

Understanding Military Culture

The military community has the same aspirations, dreams, and values as non-military individuals. However, the military culture is very different. From the moment an individual begins their military journey they are confronted with a values structure and work ethic that is focused on standardization and mission accomplishment.

The culture is highly structured with a focus on discipline and order. These attributes are reinforced with a strong work ethic built around a team-oriented, collaborative learning environment. Additionally, each branch of the military has developed a set of core values designed to be guiding principles for service members. Once they leave the military many service members continue to live the values and ethics they learned during their time in the service.

Appendix A provides a list of suggested reading, websites, and media content to assist staff and faculty to become familiar with the nature and culture of today's military. These materials are designed to assist in evaluating the culture and readiness of the college or university to engage in building an M-CPL program. There are several articles, research papers, and social media examples that advocate for veterans in higher education, at the same time, it is not an exhaustive list and team members should research and share additional materials they feel will help education staff and faculty.

Committees Suggested for Implementation

There are two committees/teams that are integral to the development and implementation of a CPL program – An M-CPL Task Force and a M-CPL Working Group.

M-CPL Task Force

The task force is comprised of individuals who will lead the initiative for their representative areas. The purpose of the task force is to be the overarching leadership (Ambassadors) for the design and implementation of the M-CPL program. They provide guidance and establish policies for the NS staff and faculty as the campus builds the program.

The M-CPL TF members:

- Attend ongoing meetings, bring critical insights and perspectives from their position in the university;
- Share information about the M-CPL program gather information from stakeholders;
- Develop initial policies and procedures;
- Provide strategic thought and perspective into potential opportunities to advance M-CPL policies;
- Be the CPL Ambassador for their respective areas of influence.



M-CPL Working Group:

The M-CPL Working Group (CPL Champions) support the efforts of the M-CPL Task Force and are charged with operationalizing the policies and practices within the organization. CPL Champions focus on specific CPL functions related to their areas of responsibility. For example, CPL Champions would work in areas such as veteran student recruitment and outreach, data collection, learning assessment, or IT functions. The CPL Champions are the “boots on ground” in this initiative and key to the successful implementation of the program.

The M-CPL Working Group members:

- Attend ongoing meetings associated with their area of expertise, identifying challenges and opportunities for operationalizing M-CPL initiatives;
- Provide operational plans and recommendations for the implementation of the M-CPL plan to the lowest levels of the organization;
- Be the M-CPL Champions who are on the front line of implementation and adoption of the program.

In establishing these teams, consideration should be given to veterans who are already part of the institution’s staff and faculty. These individuals can be a great resource in sharing their military learning and experiences with the school’s community. Their insights can help guide discussions about military culture, career fields, and transitioning to civilian life. Additionally, their own academic journey can be an inspiration to current and potential veteran students.

Recommended Training Opportunities

As the teams work toward building a veteran-centric culture within their institution there is a need to train staff and faculty on CPL design and programs. One approach is to conduct professional development seminars led by recognized leaders in the CPL field. CAEL and the ACE® are nationally recognized leaders for CPL training and military workplace learning, respectively. Both organizations have onsite and virtual courses that can help the Task Force and Work Group teams navigate through the implementation process.

CPL Training Recommendations

CAEL Training:

From The Ground Up: This two half-day or fully virtual seminar provides the basics on building a CPL program. The training is for those who will work directly with the implementation and management of a CPL program.

Recommended Audience: The M-CPL Task Force team, Registrar staff, and selected CPL Champions.

CPL and the Military-Connected Student - Assessing Military Prior Learning for Academic Credit:

This full day workshop provides the tools and best practices for assessing military learning for the award of college-equivalent learning. This course is very similar to From the Ground Up, but focuses on M-CPL.

Recommended Audience: The M-CPL Work Group teams, Registrar staff, and selected CPL Champions.

Assessing Prior Learning: A two half-day or fully virtual workshop equips faculty as prior learning assessors, with an emphasis on assessing workplace learning and student learning portfolios.

Recommended Audience: All faculty members involved in CPL activities.

ACE® Training:

Demystifying the Intricacies of ACE® Prior Learning Assessment:

A one day seminar on how ACE® conducts faculty led evaluation teams to assess military training and workplace learning to determine potential college credit recommendations.

Recommended Audience: All CPL connected staff and faculty

Capitalizing on Military Learning - A Deep Dive on the Joint Service Transcript (JST): This half day seminar introduces faculty and staff to the JST through an extensive review of the function and form of the transcript, introduction to the Military Guide On-line, and best practices for using credit recommendations.

Recommended Audience: All CPL connected staff and faculty.

In addition to these recommendations, there are several suggested readings, websites, and media content available to help the Task Force and Work Group teams become familiar with CPL practices and programs (see Appendix B for more information). Furthermore, there are two conferences that can provide opportunities for learning about innovative and emerging practices from current practitioners.

- **CAEL Annual Conference:** Held every year in November and is attended by hundreds of colleges and universities who are at all levels of implementing CPL initiatives.
- **Council on College and Military Educators:** Held in January and offers the opportunity to engage thought leaders in the military learning eco-system.

Potential Timeline for Implementation (Roadmap)

This roadmap lists the activities, timeline, and audiences that are involved in the process, providing the when, what, and who. Below is a recommended roadmap for M-CPL implementation.

Months	Activities (Goals)	Audience
1 – 3 (Phase 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rational for CPL • Initial survey of culture and readiness for M-CPL • Advanced M-CPL awareness campaign • Identify Core M-CPL Task Force Team 	M-CPL Task Force Team
4 – 6 (Phase 1 & 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation Plan development • Training for M-CPL Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional CPL • ACE®/JST Training • Staff Orientation (Registrar) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - M-CPL Work Group Team - Staff
7 – 12 (Phase 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department Chair/Dean's meetings • Faculty Orientation/Training • Identification of potential credits by department 	Faculty
12 – 24 (Phase 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation 	M-CPL Task Force Team

This is the initial plan for Phase One and the expected transition to Phase Two and Three. The timelines and goals are only projections and are driven by the M-CPL Task Force and Work Group teams.

Conclusion

A statewide Pilot Project with M-CPL as the focus provides an opportunity to establish processes and policies for a wide work in CPL. This plan provides leadership with an actionable plan for implementation with reasonable timeline expectations. It is a guide for taking the initial steps in preparing Indiana colleges and universities to become CPL-equipped institutions of higher learning, while providing the foundational elements to build a strong and lasting program.

