

**Memorandum of Understanding**  
Establishing the Adult Learning Consortium

among

*Abraham-Baldwin Agricultural College, Albany State University, Atlanta Metropolitan State College, Clayton State University, Columbus State University, College of Coastal Georgia, Dalton State College, East Georgia State College, Fort Valley State University, Georgia College & State University, Georgia Highlands College, Georgia Southern University, Georgia Southwestern State University, Gordon State College, Middle Georgia State University, South Georgia State College, University of North Georgia, University of West Georgia and the University System of Georgia.*

*THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (“MOU”) is entered into as of July 1, 2021, by and among the Institutions listed above, collectively referred to as the “Participating Institutions.”*

**A. PURPOSE:** The purpose of this MOU is to formally continue and affirm the Adult Learning Consortium (ALC) and empower the ALC to identify and present best practices to the Participating Institutions regarding policies, programs, practices, and services to increase college completion by adult learners, including the subgroup of military-connected students. This MOU will also formalize the Working Principles and Agreements (Appendix A) developed by the Participating Institutions.

**B. MEMBERSHIP:** Membership in the Adult Learning Consortium shall be open to any University System of Georgia institution willing to accept the ALC Working Principles and Agreements (Appendix A), recognize the Ten Standards for Assessing Learning of the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) (Appendix B), participate actively in the ALC, and create and maintain resources—including a web page or web pages dedicated to adult learners and military-connected students—to increase college completion by adult learners. New Member Institutions, if admitted, shall be required to sign an addendum to this MOU accepting the terms hereof and shall enter the Consortium at the beginning of the next academic semester.

**C. GOVERNANCE:** The Consortium shall be comprised of one representative from each Participating Institution and representatives from the System Office. This representative from each of the Participating Institutions will be empowered to act on behalf of the Participating Institution to resolve any issues regarding the ALC at the Participating Institution. Most decisions will be developed through consensus. In the event of a vote, each Participating Institution shall have one vote.

The Consortium shall be governed by an Executive Committee comprised of three (3) members: the chair, the vice chair, and the recorder. The Executive Committee will set direction, provide overall planning, and act on behalf of the ALC during periods between meetings.

**D. MEETINGS:** The Executive Committee shall meet at least six times per year. The time, date and place of the meetings will be set by the Chair. When this office becomes vacant, a new Chair will be elected through majority vote. Additional meetings will be held as necessary upon the agreement of the majority of members of the Executive Committee. The Consortium shall meet at least once per quarter. The time, date and place of the meetings will be set by the Consortium members.

**E. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:** The Executive Committee shall:

- set collaborative goals with member institutions to be executed at the institutional level;
- Support innovative strategies which may include
  - Prior Learning Assessment,
  - transfer and articulation policies,
  - outreach to the military,
  - public awareness campaigns,
  - collaborative online degrees;
- report regularly to share progress and lessons learned;
- share information and expertise with ALC members, the Regents Academic Committee: Adult Learning, and other institutions that want to support adult learning;
- participate in regional and national adult college completion efforts.

**F. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS:** Participating Institutions shall commit to maintain a strong, proactive Consortium of institutions to establish policies, test innovative practices, share adult learning and military-connected resources, lead System directions, sustain the Consortium's efforts through integration of adult-focused policies and practices at the institutional and System level, and increase momentum by selectively adding member institutions to the Consortium. Each Participating Institution shall commit to active participation as evidenced by funding for attendance at ALC meetings and other support, such as professional development and institutional leadership.

**G. TERM:** The term of this MOU will commence on July 1, 2021 and continue until June 30, 2024. Thereafter, the term shall renew for successive periods of two (2) years upon the mutual agreement of the parties.

**H. WITHDRAWAL:** Any Participating Institution may withdraw for the terms of this MOU upon not less than one hundred eighty (180) days prior written notice.

**I. NOTICES:** Notices shall be in writing sent by U.S. Mail, postage prepaid, or by hand delivery to the address of each party set out on the signature pages to this MOU.

**J. GOVERNING LAW:** This MOU shall be governed by the laws of the State of Georgia.

**University System of Georgia - USG Adult Learning Consortium (ALC)**  
**Working Principles and Agreements**

Membership in the Adult Learning Consortium shall be open to any University System of Georgia institution willing to accept the following:

1. As a point of access for adult students, each ALC institution will establish an Adult Learning Committee, with specific consideration for the needs of military-connected students.
2. The ALC works from the principle that nationally recognized, standardized prior learning assessment (PLA) options, such as CLEP and American Council on Education (ACE), and institutionally recognized challenge exams will be inventoried and thoroughly considered before institutions develop individualized assessments such as the portfolio option.
3. When it “minimizes the number of credits that do not contribute to progress toward a degree completion, and does not improperly affect student eligibility for financial aid” (USG 3.3.6), ALC institutions will accept those CLEP® tests for all 20 years for which test scores are available from the College Board, which they can apply, to either elective or program credit; uniformly use the American Council on Education’s recommended passing score for all CLEP tests, and when any ALC member institution transcripts credit for that institution’s course matched to a CLEP test and a student transfers to another ALC member institution, the institution to which the student transfers will not require an additional/original score report. Awarded courses and credits within each major are allocated at the discretion of the accepting institutions’ department.
4. When it “minimizes the number of credits that do not contribute to progress toward a degree completion, and does not improperly affect student eligibility for financial aid” (USG 3.3.6), ALC institutions will accept those Advanced Placement® (AP) test scores they can apply, to either elective or program credit, for all years for which test scores are available from the College Board; uniformly use the American Council on Education’s recommended passing score for all AP tests; and not require an additional/original Score Report when a student transfers from one ALC institution to another if an ALC institution has transcribed credit for that institution’s course matched to an AP test. Awarded courses and credits within each major are allocated at the discretion of the accepting institutions’ department.

Best practices recommended by the ALC but not required for membership include:

- Each institution will identify a gateway mechanism for PLA options, e.g. a course, workshop, or advisement center. Each institution will designate a gatekeeper/coordinator to facilitate the PLA program and will develop an appeals process for portfolio submissions that fail to meet the required standards.

- PLA Courses: A PLA course with a common course description and course outcomes will be implemented on campuses which choose to offer such a course. If the PLA course will be a credit course, it will count toward graduation and can thus be covered by financial aid. The course will be a pre-or co-requisite for portfolio submissions. The ALC will offer at least one on-line course. The revenue source for subsequent PLA portfolio submissions will be a special assessment with tiered pricing based on the number of credit hours of the course for which the student is requesting credit. This special assessment may be covered by financial aid indirectly with the student's authorization; the funding allocation will be to charge the full special assessment upfront and distribute the income based on the following suggested percentages: administrative costs (10%), cost of a shared online advisor (10%), and extra compensation to faculty assessors (80%). The amount recommended is \$250 (\$25 administrative cost; \$25 for online advisor; \$200 to faculty member for assessment services).
- ALC institutions will work collaboratively to standardize transcription coding for credit award via PLA in order to contribute to ease of transferability and to enable institutions to derive detailed reports about the types and number of credits being awarded for PLA.

**Ten Standards for Assessing Learning**<sup>[1]</sup>

- I. Credit or competencies are awarded only for evidence of learning, not for experience or time spent.
- II. Assessment is integral to learning because it leads to and enables future learning.
- III. Assessment is based on criteria for outcomes that are clearly articulated and shared among constituencies.
- IV. The determination of credit awards and competence levels are made by appropriate subject matter and credentialing experts.
- V. Assessment advances the broader purpose of equity and access for diverse individuals and groups.
- VI. Institutions proactively provide guidance and support for learners' full engagement in the assessment process.
- VII. Assessment policies and procedures are the result of inclusive deliberation and are shared with all constituencies.
- VIII. Fees charged for assessment are based on the services performed in the process rather than the credit awarded.
- IX. All practitioners involved in the assessment process pursue and receive adequate training and continuing professional development for the functions they perform.
- X. Assessment programs are regularly monitored, evaluated and revised to respond to institutional and learner needs.

[1] Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (n.d.). Ten Standards for Assessing Learning. Retrieved July 07, 2018, from <https://www.cael.org/ten-standards-for-assessing-learning>

Appendix C  
Policies Approved by the BOR AY19

### **3.3.6 Academic Credit Earned Through Extra-Institutional and Prior Learning**

University System of Georgia (USG) institutions shall provide students with opportunities to be evaluated and earn academic credit for assessed extra-institutional and prior learning toward the completion of a degree program, including course credit earned from military experience.

Once transcribed to the student record, credits awarded for extra-institutional and prior learning at a USG institution shall be applied toward a degree program, regardless of how the credit was earned. Credits awarded for extra-institutional and prior learning by one USG institution shall transfer as the designated course to another USG institution if a student has passed a higher-level course in the course sequence offered at the previously attended USG institution.

Institutions shall maintain a review process for extra-institutional and prior learning that adheres to SACSCOC policies and guidelines, minimizes the number of credits that do not contribute to progress toward a degree program, and does not improperly affect student eligibility for financial aid. Additional guidance for awarding credit for extra-institutional or prior learning is provided in the Academic & Student Affairs Handbook.

#### **3.3.6.1 Course Credit Earned from Military Experience**

Each USG institution shall maintain a policy and procedures that outline the awarding of academic credit for appropriate courses in the curriculum for military experience to students who are veterans or military service members based on the guidelines contained in the Academic & Student Affairs Handbook. When awarding credit, USG institutions shall reference the Joint Service Transcript (JST), DD-214, or transcripts from the Army/American Council on Education Registry Transcript System (AARTS), Community College of the Air Force (CCAF), Coast Guard Institute (CGI), and other appropriate transcripts that summarize the skills and experiences obtained during military service. In evaluating military transcripts, institutions should consult the American Council on Education (ACE) Guide to determine the course recommendation made by that organization.

#### **3.3.6.2 Course Credits for Standardized Examinations**

Each USG institution shall maintain a policy and procedures that outline the awarding of academic credit for appropriate courses in the curriculum for successful completion of college-level curricula and standardized examinations offered by nationally recognized organizations, such as Advanced Placement Program (AP), the International Baccalaureate Program (IB), the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), and DANTES Subject Standardized Test Program (DSST). The policy and procedures shall apply to both in-state and out-of-state students and comply with the guidelines set forth in the Academic & Student Affairs Handbook.

A student may opt not to accept credits. If a student believes that the assessment of his or her work from standardized examination and subsequent awarding of credits is in error, the student may file an appeal with the appropriate academic department office and request a re-assessment. As with other academic matters, if the issue is not satisfactorily resolved at the department level, the student may then appeal to the dean of the respective school or college, with a final appeal to the vice president for academic affairs, whose decision in the matter will be final.

EXECUTIONS ON FOLLOWING PAGES

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this MOU to be executed by their duly authorized representatives.

DocuSigned by:  
*Dr. David C. Bridges*  
Dr. David C. Bridges, President  
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*Georg Lewis*  
Dr. Georg Lewis, President  
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University of North Georgia

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Dr. Tristan Denley, Executive Vice Chancellor  
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