

Syllabus for PLA-1010

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Prior learning assessment (PLA) is a cornerstone credit development program enabling students to earn college credit for their prior learning experiences. This course assists students in identifying existing knowledge, competencies, and skills, which may include prior learning, college equivalent knowledge, licenses, certificates, and testing for credit equivalents. Guided by a course mentor, students construct a portfolio reflecting their combined learnings, experiences, and achievements aligned with their educational goals. Students partner with a course mentor and a content matter expert mentor to develop, advance, and complete their PLA portfolio submission.

COURSE TOPICS

- PLA: purpose, process, and benefits
- Examples of PLA learning narratives and evidence-of-learning submissions
- Course mentor and content matter expert mentor roles
- Courses for PLA credit
- College-level learning
- Relevant academic, professional, and life experiences and accomplishments
- Adult learning
- Bloom's taxonomy
- Evidence-of-learning file
- PLA learning narrative

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After completing this course, students should be able to:

- CO 1** Explain the purpose, process, and benefits of prior learning assessment (PLA).
- CO 2** Evaluate examples of PLA learning narratives and evidence-of-learning files.
- CO 3** Explain the roles of the course mentor and the content matter expert mentor.
- CO 4** Identify the course(s) for PLA credit.
- CO 5** Evaluate college-level learning.

- CO 6** Synthesize relevant academic, professional, and life experiences and accomplishments.
- CO 7** Create an evidence-of-learning file associated with the learning narrative.
- CO 8** Apply Bloom's taxonomy definitions to levels of competencies.
- CO 9** Write a PLA learning narrative aligned with the course learning objectives for which credit is sought.
- CO 10** Develop PLA portfolio narrative and evidence-of-learning file.

COURSE MATERIALS

You will need the following materials to complete your coursework. Some course materials may be free, open source, or available from other providers. You can access free or open-source materials by clicking the links provided below or in the module details documents. To purchase course materials, please visit the [University's textbook supplier](#).

Required Textbook

- No textbooks required

COURSE STRUCTURE

Prior Learning Assessment is a three-credit online course consisting of **eight** modules. Modules include an overview, topics, learning objectives, study materials, and activities. Module titles are listed below.

- **Module 1: Prior Learning Assessment**
Course objectives covered in this module: CO 1, CO 2, CO 3, CO 4
- **Module 2: Exploring College-Level Learning**
Course objectives covered in this module: CO 4, CO 5, CO 6, CO 8
- **Module 3: Exploring Your Achievements Toward Developing a PLA Portfolio**
Course objectives covered in this module: CO 2, CO 4, CO 6
- **Module 4: Prioritizing and Documenting Your Knowledge, Competencies, and Skills Toward Developing a PLA Portfolio**
Course objectives covered in this module: CO 2, CO 7
- **Module 5: Writing the PLA Portfolio Narrative—Preliminary Outline/Draft**
Course objectives covered in this module: CO 7, CO 9

- **Module 6: Integrating Evidence-of-Learning File and PLA Portfolio Narrative (Draft v.1)**
Course objectives covered in this module: CO 7, CO 8, CO 9, CO 10
- **Module 7: Finalizing the PLA Portfolio: Portfolio Narrative (Draft v.1 Continued) and Evidence of Learning**
Course objectives covered in this module: CO 9, CO 10
- **Module 8: Finalizing the PLA Portfolio**
Course objectives covered in this module: CO 9, CO 10

A WORD ABOUT TERMINOLOGY

There are several terms that are used in specialized ways at Thomas Edison State University. This brief list will help you understand how they apply to your portfolio development.

- **Objectives:** Objectives are part of every Thomas Edison State University course. They state, using measurable verbs, what students will be able to do after they have successfully completed the course.
- **Learning Outcomes:** Learning outcomes are, essentially, objectives that relate to the college-level learning that you will need to demonstrate in your portfolio. They state (again, in measurable terms) what you have learned through your experience to earn college credit. In Week 3 of PLA-1010, you will begin to develop your Evidence of Learning Table/Worksheet. This worksheet is a list of courses for which you intend to earn credit, along with the relevant course objectives (COs) for each course and your accomplishments that align with the course objectives. Your PLA learning narrative will focus on detailing how those accomplishments align with the outcomes.
- **Course Mentor:** During the first five weeks of PLA-1010, you will have the guidance of a course mentor, a generalist who will facilitate your completion of the assignments in this course, including the writing of your narrative outline. The course mentor will grade your assignments and discussion postings according to the established rubrics and will provide helpful feedback along the way.
- **Content Matter Expert Mentor:** During the latter seven weeks of PLA-1010, you will have the guidance of a content matter expert mentor (CMEM). They are an expert in a particular academic field and provide guidance in writing your PLA portfolio learning narrative. They will also provide an objective evaluation of the creditworthiness of your portfolio. Assessment occurs only after:
 - The course is over.
 - You have assembled your portfolio, which will include your PLA learning narrative and evidence-of-learning file, and have uploaded it as your final project.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

For your formal work in the course, you are required to participate in online discussion forums, complete written assignments, and complete a final PLA portfolio. See below for details.

Consult the Course Calendar for due dates.

Promoting Originality

One or more of your course activities may utilize a tool designed to promote original work and evaluate your submissions for plagiarism. More information about this tool is available in [this document](#).



Discussion Forums

You are required to complete **seven** discussion forums. The discussion forums are on a variety of topics associated with the course modules.



Written Assignments

You are required to complete **seven** written assignments. The written assignments are on a variety of topics associated with the course modules.



Synchronous Meetings with Course Mentor and Content Matter Expert Mentor

You are required to attend **three** synchronous course mentor meetings and **four** synchronous meetings with the content matter expert mentor (CMEM). The 1-hour synchronous events are on a variety of topics associated with the course modules. The synchronous event schedule is decided after you discuss with the mentors. To attend the event, click on the Synchronous Course Mentor Meeting Space link in the Edison Live! section of the Moodle course space. Use the [Edison Live!](#) link for technical assistance. Be sure to discuss any questions about this synchronous meeting directly with your mentor.



Final Project

For the final project, you are required to submit a PLA portfolio that includes the final draft of your portfolio narrative and all the evidence-of-learning files you have worked on throughout the modules.

GRADING AND EVALUATION

Your grade in the course will be determined as follows:

- **Online discussions (7)**—25%
- **Written assignments (7)**—25%
- **Final project**—50%

All activities will receive a numerical grade of 0–100. You will receive a score of 0 for any work not submitted. Your final grade in the course will be a letter grade. Letter grade equivalents for numerical grades are as follows:

A	= 93–100	C+	= 78–79
A–	= 90–92	C	= 73–77
B+	= 88–89	C–	= 70–72
B	= 83–87	D	= 60–69
B–	= 80–82	F	= Below 60

To receive credit for the course, you must earn a letter grade of C or better (for an area of study course) or D or better (for a course not in your area of study), based on the weighted average of all assigned course work (e.g., exams, assignments, discussion postings).

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

First Steps to Success

To succeed in this course, take the following first steps:

- Read the entire Syllabus carefully, making sure that all aspects of the course are clear to you and that you have all the materials required for the course.
- Take time to read the entire Online Student Handbook. The Handbook answers many questions about how to proceed through the course and how to get the most from your educational experience at Thomas Edison State University.
- Familiarize yourself with the learning management systems environment—how to navigate it and what the various course areas contain. If you know what to expect as you navigate the course, you can better pace yourself and complete the work on time.
- If you are not familiar with web-based learning, be sure to review the processes for posting responses online and submitting assignments before class begins.

Study Tips

Consider the following study tips for success:

- To stay on track throughout the course, begin each week by consulting the Course Calendar. The Course Calendar provides an overview of the course and indicates due dates for submitting assignments, posting discussions, and submitting the final project.

- Check Announcements regularly for new course information.

Using AI Ethically: A Guide for TESU Students

TESU's [Academic Code of Conduct](#) permits student AI use in support of their writing and research process--not as a replacement for original writing. Document AI use with an acknowledgment statement at the end of each assignment, noting the tools and prompts used. Cite any AI-generated content on the References page. Please review [Using AI Ethically: A Guide for TESU Students](#) for more detailed information.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Thomas Edison State University recognizes, values, and relies upon the diversity of our community. We strive to provide equitable, inclusive learning experiences that embrace our students' backgrounds, identities, experiences, abilities, and expertise.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Thomas Edison State University adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, 1990; ADAAA, 2008) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) oversees requests for academic accommodations related to disabilities; a student who is pregnant, postpartum, or a student parenting a newborn who is not the birth parent [as covered under NJSA18A]; and students requesting academic accommodation for a short-term/temporary illness and/or injury. Information can be found on the [Office of Student Accessibility Services](#) webpage and questions can be sent to ADA@tesu.edu.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

To ensure success in all your academic endeavors and coursework at Thomas Edison State University, familiarize yourself with all administrative and academic policies including those related to academic integrity, course late submissions, course extensions, and grading policies.

For more, see:

- [University-wide policies](#)
- [Undergraduate academic policies](#)
- [Undergraduate course policies](#)

- [Graduate academic policies](#)
- [Graduate course policies](#)
- [Nursing student policies](#)
- [Nursing graduate student policies](#)
- [International student policies](#)
- [Academic code of conduct](#)