



1211 S. Glenstone Avenue, Springfield, MO 65804 USA  
Phone: 417-862-9533 | Phone: 1-800-443-1083 | Fax: 417-863-9621  
Website: [www.globaluniversity.edu](http://www.globaluniversity.edu)

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## **CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING**

### **I. Background**

Global University (GU) may award advanced placement for qualified students based on the documentation of formal or informal prior learning experiences. For example, an individual may have attained a profound knowledge of the Bible or have mastered a particular aspect of ministry without attending a Bible college or a theological seminary. If you believe that your knowledge in a specific subject area is equivalent to the content of a GU course (or courses) as described in the catalog or the course outline and/or objectives, and if this prior learning can be documented, then you may submit a Prior Learning Assessment portfolio.

### **II. FAQs about receiving credit through Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)**

#### **1. *What is PLA?***

PLA allows you the opportunity to receive credit for knowledge or skills acquired through personal life experiences, whether in the ministry, the workplace, or other non-classroom settings. Credit through PLA may be awarded for adequately documented and rigorously evaluated prior learning that is deemed appropriate for the level of degree. Examples of prior learning include workplace experience, professional certification, military training, university-level equivalency tests, and other postsecondary-level equivalent experience.

#### **2. *How much credit can I earn through Prior Learning Assessment?***

The dean and designated faculty of the undergraduate school determine on an individual basis the amount of credit for prior learning that may be awarded. This determination is based upon a review of your Prior Learning Assessment portfolio. The award of prior learning credit will not exceed one-fourth of the total credits required for the program of study (e.g., 32 credits out of a 128 credit program). Furthermore, prior learning credit will not substitute for the thirty-two (32) credits of the

program that must be completed by direct enrollment in order to earn a degree. Credits obtained from PLA are in addition to any credits you earn through transfer of credit from another school.

**3. *When can I begin the PLA process?***

You may apply for prior learning credit once you have been officially accepted into the undergraduate program and all official transcripts of previous coursework have been received. Please note that Global University will only evaluate your PLA portfolio after any applicable transfer of credit from other schools has been determined and recorded on your official Degree Audit.

**4. *Is PLA available at the graduate level?***

No, PLA is only available at the undergraduate level.

**5. *How do I begin the PLA process?***

Carefully read the guidelines for preparing a PLA portfolio outlined below. You should also contact your local enrollment office for more information and for further advisement on whether PLA is appropriate.

**6. *How much does it cost to apply for PLA?***

**For students directly enrolled through the USA office:**

There is a non-refundable application fee for evaluating your portfolio. This fee is equivalent to one credit of tuition. If any courses are approved for prior learning credit, you will be billed at half the tuition rate per credit awarded. (Refer to the Undergraduate Tuition and Fees Schedule.)

**For students enrolling through a GU national office in another country:**

Please contact your GU enrollment office for the costs associated with the PLA process.

**General guidelines for preparing a PLA Portfolio**

1. Your portfolio should include the following items: a completed PLA Application Form, a separate PLA individual course form for each GU course for which you are seeking prior learning credit, and any appendices and/or supporting documentation pertinent to your application.
2. Your application and documents represent you before the school and academic dean. Therefore, you should take care to submit the best possible presentation for your request. The materials should be neat, clear, complete, and placed in a folder.
3. You should supply sufficient evidence which documents your knowledge and skills that apply specifically to the academic course(s) for which you are seeking credit. This documentation must

include supporting materials that demonstrate that equivalent learning has occurred. The bulk of the supporting materials should be in written form. It is important to remember that credit is not awarded for experience; rather, credit may be awarded for demonstration of equivalent learning as a result of experiences.

4. General language should be avoided in every part of the supporting documentation, including letters of reference written by others. General statements, such as a letter saying you are a church member in good standing, would not be considered relevant. However, a reference letter that confirms and details your ministry activities would be relevant.
5. PLA credits may not serve as a substitute for the required minimum amount of credits that must be taken through direct enrollment in GU courses (e.g., 32 credits for a BA degree).
6. If you are enrolled through a GU National Office outside the United States, you should communicate with your national representative before beginning the PLA process. Your local national representative can give you counsel and suggestions regarding the PLA process.

### **Guidelines for filling out the Individual Course Form**

1. Write three to five pages for each course, specifically describing how your prior learning experiences are equivalent to the objectives of the specific GU course. (Please consult the catalog to view a description of the course and request a copy of the course outline and objectives.) Describe in detail what you learned. Follow the general guidelines for writing given in the *GU Undergraduate Form and Style Guide*, available through your local enrollment office or online:  
<http://www.globaluniversity.edu/PDF/UG-formAndStyleGuide.pdf>.
2. Include the following additional evidence to document how your prior learning aligns with the objectives of the GU course,
  - a. List work and/or ministry experience that you believe aligns with the objectives of the courses. Be sure to include the specific job title, a description of the work, and the name of the organization. Also include the duration of the experience in each position.
  - b. If possible, send actual examples of the work. This can include sermon outlines, class syllabi, audio or video samples (or online links, if available), etc.
  - c. Include letters from employers, church officials, and/or supervisors; certificates of completion of in-service training programs and/or workshops; certificates of ordination to the Christian ministry; etc.
  - d. Include descriptions of volunteer activities, offices held, teaching or preaching assignments, awards granted for service to the community or civic organizations, and emergency or relief work.

### ***Letters of Documentation***

The PLA portfolio must include written verification of your prior learning experience(s) from an appropriate source. Therefore, letters documenting your prior learning should accompany your petition. These letters should be from pastors or employers who are familiar with and can verify the learning experiences. At a minimum, they should outline the specific responsibilities you carried out and activities you were involved in. Indicate as precisely as possible how long you were engaged in each.

### ***Appendices***

Send copies or online links to books, articles, reviews, papers, or professional lectures you have prepared or written. This could include items produced as part of a team effort, but you must indicate precisely what part you played in any group project.

### ***Miscellaneous***

You should describe subjects you have studied in-depth on a non-formal basis. Include a bibliography of books and/or articles you have read, copies of study notes, or other documents that give evidence of the thoroughness and depth of personal study. Explain how the studies applied to your ministry. Also document your participation in professional, academic, and/or ministerial organizations.

In general, provide evidence of your mastery of a subject, identifying how it is equivalent to that obtained by completing a GU course.

## Steps for Submitting a PLA Portfolio

### 1. Enroll in the Undergraduate Program

Complete the Undergraduate Application Form and submit it with the appropriate application fee to Global University or your local enrollment office. Specify which major you intend to pursue so that any credits you receive may be applied to the appropriate program. Identification of your program is vital.

### 2. Request Transcripts

When you enroll in the undergraduate program, you will need to have *official* transcripts (not copies) of all previous coursework sent to Global University. If you attended a non-accredited institution, please have the school send us a copy of its most recent catalog, if possible. *Global University will only evaluate your PLA portfolio after you have been officially accepted into an undergraduate program of study and all applicable formal transfer of credit has been determined.*

### 3. Select Courses

Decide which Global University course(s) align with your prior learning experiences. It is recommended that you consult with a U.S. Student Services representative or the national representative at your local enrollment office for further guidance. Your PLA portfolio must be related to and demonstrate mastery of all the specific course objectives.

### 4. Complete the PLA Application Form

Be sure to identify your student number as well as your name and contact information. Remember to include your program of study and list the course title and name for all courses for which you are seeking credit for prior learning. Your application cannot be processed without this information.

### 5. Complete the PLA Individual Course Form

You must complete a separate form for each course for which you are requesting credit for prior learning. Make a copy of this form before filling it out. Review the guidelines listed above for additional information on completing this form.

### 6. Enclose the Fee

Enclose the non-refundable PLA evaluation fee (see Undergraduate Tuition and Fees Schedule) with all of your completed information.

7. Use the Checklist

Use the checklist below to record each item. This will ensure that you have included all of the required and relevant materials.

8. Mail Materials

Make a copy of all items in your portfolio for your records and mail the original PLA portfolio to the following:

*\*For international students enrolled through a National Office:*

National Office Address

*\*For USA or Directly Enrolled Students:*

Global University  
Attn. Student Services  
1211 S. Glenstone  
Springfield, MO 65804  
USA



1211 S. Glenstone Avenue, Springfield, MO 65804 USA  
 Phone: 417-862-9533 | Phone: 1-800-443-1083 | Fax: 417-863-9621  
 Website: www.globaluniversity.edu

### PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT APPLICATION

**Student ID Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Social Security Number: (USA Students Only)** \_\_\_\_\_

ID:	SS#:
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**Student's Name:**

First Name:	Maiden Name:
Last Name:	Middle Name:

**Student Mailing Address:**

P.O. Box:	Street Address:
City:	
State:	Zip:
Country:	
Day Phone:	Evening Phone:
FAX:	E-mail:
Program Major to which you applied:	

### PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT

<b>NOTE:</b> List all courses for which you are requesting that prior learning credit be applied. The total amount of credits applied for cannot exceed one fourth of the total credits required for your selected program of study.				<b>These 2 Columns For Office Use Only</b>	
	Course Number	Course Title	Applying for -	Approved	Denied
1.			Credits		
2.			Credits		
3.			Credits		
4.			Credits		
5.			Credits		
6.			Credits		
7.			Credits		
8.			Credits		
9.			Credits		
10.			Credits		
11.			Credits		
<b>Totals:</b>		Amount of credits applied for and approved	___ Credits	___ Credits Approved	

## PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT APPLICATION

**NOTE:**

Provide personal documentation for each course for which you are applying for credit for prior learning. If you are applying for more than one course make a copy of this form before filling it out.

**Student ID Number:**

**Social Security Number: (USA Students Only)**

ID:	SS#:
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**Student's Name:**

First Name:	Maiden Name:
Last Name:	Middle Name:

**Prior Learning Assessment for:**

Course Number:	Course Title:	Amount of Credits:

**Supporting documents:**

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

**Personal documentation** (see *Guidelines* pp. 3-6):



## **CHECKLIST**

- PLA Application Form
- Non-refundable application fee for evaluating your PLA Portfolio
- Letters of Documentation
- Appendices
- Miscellaneous Documentation