SUBMITTED TO



IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS OF

(DEGREE PROGRAM)

(DATE)

BY

(YOUR NAME)

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# Educational Goals

Use the guidance from the book and the following questions to help you start writing your educational goals. You can write several pages or a short synopsis, but the clearer and more specific, the better.

**Goals, Motivation, and Time Frame**

What are your goals? What are the reasons (professional and personal) you are pursuing your goals? What is a realistic time frame for completing your education? What are your thoughts and feelings about not having finished your education? Where do you see your career headed in the next 5 to 10 years?

**Action Plan**

What is your plan to receive the maximum benefit from your education? What changes in your lifestyle are you able to make in order to find time for classwork? What are several action steps you can take now that will help you manage your time effectively? Who will support you in pursuing your goals? Financially? Emotionally? Academically? Are there any skills you need to be better prepared for the challenges ahead, and if so, how will you brush up on those skills?

**Connection of Prior Learning to Goals**

This is the most important section of this part. How will the prior learning credit you are requesting will fit into their future educational and career goals?

# Extended Resume

# Please upload or create an extended resume in LinkedIn (using LinkedIn is preferred) with all relevant experience in detail. Lists all jobs held, including volunteer. Note duties, skills and expertise used in performing job tasks. When possible relate to educational outcomes and language similar to that used in the outcomes for the courses you want reviewed and use verbs from Bloom's taxonomy that reflect your level of learning.

# See example at www.linkedin.com/in/andrewsears. You can download your LinkedIn profile as a resume by selecting View Profile As, then Save to PDF. After you download, upload here.

# Learning and Experience Autobiography

The autobiography is a complete picture of the learner – who you are, what you have done, what you know, and what you want to accomplish. To demonstrate why you have selected the course in this portfolio, prepare an autobiographical essay based on your life experiences using your resume as a guide. Relate the relevant experiences to the course in a general explanation. (Specifics will be detailed in the Significant Learning Worksheet). The autobiography introduces you to the evaluator and helps him/her understand the context of your learning for the particular course you are requesting. This should include your educational and career goals. More importantly, it is intended to help you reflect on how experiences from different times in your life may have come together for a common goal.

To summarize, the essay should be two-four pages and summarize the significant learning experiences in your life; define your personal, educational, and career goals; and describe how your experiences will validate your knowledge of the course content and meet the course outcomes being petitioned for credit.

# Learning Narrative for (Course Name)

(copy and complete all parts of this section for each course)

(*Note that* the course syllabi to which you refer below may be either nationally or regionally accredited. However, undergraduate students should use undergrad-level courses 1xx-4xx, and graduate students should use graduate-level courses 5xx and above. Also, make sure that the number of credits of the referenced course is what you expect, since that is how many credits you would get for that narrative, if it were approved. For example, if you referenced a course that was only 2 credits, you could only get a maximum of 2 credits for it as Prior Learning credit.)

## Courses from Accredited Universities

### Link to Syllabus

### Course Outcomes/Objectives

Course outcomes are what you should know and can do after a course is completed.

## Learning Narrative (3 to 8 pages per course)

Following the instructions in Chapter 10, write an educational narrative. Note, this is the most important section of the entire portfolio, so please put significant effort into it. You should consider using the following methods:

* Strategy 1 (page 134). Write a Detailed Description. Tie your narrative back to how you have demonstrated the learning outcomes in the course listed above.
* Strategy 2. Use Kolb’s model (Chapter 7) to describe incidents of learning (examples on page 136)
* Strategy 3. Describe steps to learning (page 137)
* Strategy 4. Integrate Knowledge of Concepts. Tie your narrative back to concepts from the course. You can look online for an outline of the chapters and concepts from the books used in the course.
* Strategy 5. Write Competency Statements that accurately reflect your level of expertise (page 140)
* Strategy 6. Demonstrate Problem Solving Abilities (page 141).
* Strategy 7. Describe Level of Learning (page 142)

Note that a key goal is that this exercise will be a learning process in itself as you reflect on how your experience relates to key concepts learning outcomes in accredited courses. It is critical that you clearly focus on the learning objectives (what you know and can do) rather than the experience.

This essay (or narrative) is a detailed explanation of your activities and the resulting competencies achieved (what you know and can do).

1. Use the course objectives (above) to guide your discussion of your accomplishments.

2. The intent is that your resume and autobiography are the high level outline, but this section will be where you provide several pages of detail.

3. For a course that includes a substantial amount of theory, demonstrate that you have the appropriate balance of theory and application.

4. The narrative will incorporate terminology appropriate to the course and examples of

applications of the concepts as demonstrated through your accomplishments.

5. In addition to demonstrating what you know and can do, the intent of this section is to serve as an opportunity to reflect and learn from your experience.

6. You should get a sample textbook either online or from a library for the courses you are writing so you can list how you know key terms and concepts.

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

Be sure to include the following elements from the Rubric shown below (10% for each element)

1. Validity: Documentation and description of experiences as a valid basis for PLA. Portfolio content succinctly narrates and describes the significance of the candidate’s relevant learning experiences and supplies relevant documentation as evidence in order to establish the candidate as qualified to write on the subject.

2. Evidence (overall) Candidate provides evidence of learning from experience.

3. Learning Outcome Accuracy: Evidence properly formatted and aligned with specific learning outcomes. Candidate provides adequate and appropriate evidence of each learning outcome for the targeted course per the course syllabus. Student has constructed an electronic portfolio accurately formatted, and with complete information for each section and learning objective.

4. Reflection: Evidence aligned with personal experience. Has demonstrated the ability to reflect on experiences. From the candidate’s description of personal examples, it is clear that the learning arose from the candidate’s direct experience and/or experience represents the candidate’s understanding of the topic.

5. Theory: Evidence aligned with academic theory / learning objectives. Appropriate amount and use of academic theory is integrated within the submission, so that the candidate’s learning is grounded in the academic frameworks of the topic.

6. Breadth / Depth of Submission. There is an appropriate depth and breadth of discussion related to requested credits (upper vs. lower division, and amount).

7. Narratives. Narratives clearly introduce the prior learning experience and its relevance to the targeted course. Narratives effectively summarize the main points and critical details, and state outcomes achieved through the experience.

8. Application Uses examples of how the learning has been applied in other settings.

9. Documentation. Documentation provided is effective evidence of experience; documentation is effectively referred to within submission, and its significance and relevance is clear. In-text and end-of-text citations of all sourced materials are correct, complete, and verifiable.

10. Sentence Structure, Mechanics, and Overall Presentation. PLA submission is well-organized, uses appropriate format aligned with objectives and outcomes, and progresses in logical, convincing order. Each sentence is structured effectively. Virtually free of punctuation, spelling, capitalization errors; appropriate format and presentation for assignment. Effective use of vocabulary, and correct and effective grammatical form(s). PLA submission is professionally presented, complete, and clear.

### Bibliography

The bibliography indicates reading done on the portfolio subject. You should have at least 3-10 references, probably including the course’s textbook. Cite sources when you make reference to theorists, laws, statistical data, and any information that does not come from your own mind in the portfolio. References must be cited in American Psychological Association (APA) style. Also include links to Books Used in Course (on Amazon). You can Google “APA Citation Tools” for tools on formatting references.

## Documentation

Each of your experiences and competencies will require verification (evidence). This evidence can take several forms:

Completion of training programs, workshops, seminars, etc., may be verified through

certificates; personnel records, specifically performance reviews showing competencies; job descriptions; transcripts; samples of work; testimonials; certificates of attendance; and/or evidence of knowledge or letters of verification listing proven competencies from instructors or employers. Each piece of documentation for a workshop or training program must be accompanied by a description page of content for each workshop, training program, or seminar and must show how the evidence relates to the course learning outcomes. Employment history and job responsibilities may be documented on copies of performance appraisals, company job descriptions, and examples of projects or reports (verified as your work), or a supervisor's letter of verification.

Evidence of volunteer work may include awards, newspaper articles, or letters of

recommendation. If your portfolio is a request for credit for a performance or activity-based course, you will need to submit evidence such as:

* Paper, publications PowerPoint Presentation, budgets, reports, grant proposals, websites you developed for a course or for work
* Certificates of completion for training
* Job descriptions
* Supervisors letter of verification,
* A videotape of your speech, theatre work, or music recital
* Licenses
* Honors or award
* Samples of your painting, drawing, photography, or ceramics for a studio art course
* Samples of presentations or reports you have generated and verified as your work to
* document competency in spreadsheets or other software

Letters are a common form of verification and can be very effective if the writer understands the purpose of the letter. When you request an individual to write a letter of verification, provide the person with the course description you are presenting in your portfolio. Explain you are requesting equivalent college credit for experiential learning and provide a copy of what might be included in a verification letter. We suggest including in your letter something similar to the following language:

“Based on my experience with (student name), I would attest that his/her learning is at a level comparable to students completing a college course with the following outcomes:

* list outcomes

My assessment is intended to be a level of depth of learning, not a recommendation of credit.”

Extraneous or inappropriate documentation may indicate to the evaluator that you lack

understanding of how your experiences relate to your learning.

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

Note: Parts of this portfolio plan were adapted from: <http://www.polk.edu/wp-content/uploads/PLA-Portfolio-Guidelines.pdf> and from

Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (2006). *Assessing Learning: Standards, Principles, and Procedures* (2 edition.). Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall Hunt Publishing.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Portfolio Assessment Rubric |  |  |  |
| Category | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** | **Score** |
| Course Outcomes Identified and Addressed | Narrative and supporting documentation demonstrate mastery of all course outcomes. | Narrative and supporting documentation support the satisfactory mastery of at least 75% of the course outcomes. | Narrative and supporting documentation support the satisfactory mastery of at least 60% of the course outcomes. | Narrative and supporting documentation do not demonstrate a mastery of the course outcomes. Portfolio addresses fewer than 60% of the course outcomes. |  |
| Learning from Experience | Student is able to distinguish between their experiences and the learning that comes from these experiences. Examples of this distinction appear throughout the portfolio. | Student describes learning separately from experiences that led to the learning but gives limited concrete examples. | Student demonstrates understanding of how experience and learning are linked, but provides few, if any, concrete examples of where this happened in his or her experience. | Student conflates experience of technical practice with mastery. Student argues, for example, that length of time in a position is equivalent to college level learning. |  |
| Understanding of Theory and Practice | Student is able to cite broader theoretical or conceptual links that are related to the learning. | Student demonstrates a balance between application and theory as appropriate to the course, but provides limited concrete examples. | Student acknowledges a difference between theory and application, but provides few, if any, concrete examples. | Student relies on facts and experiences but does not relate learning to broader concepts or theories. |  |
| Reflection | Student demonstrates an ability to apply theory to his or her own experience, using concrete examples. | Student understands the potential for applying theory to his or her own experience, and provides limited concrete examples. | Student includes language appropriate to reflective thinking, but provides few, if any, examples. | Student has not demonstrated the ability to apply theory to his or her own experience. |  |
| Learning Application | Student demonstrates an ability to apply his or her learning to other contexts, as evidenced through specific examples. Student includes explicit references to how this knowledge has been transferred to other environments. | Student understands that the learning is transferable, but clearly states that they have not yet had an opportunity to do so, or, have not otherwise been able to apply the learning to other environments. | Student understands that the learning is transferable to other contexts, but makes no attempt to do so. | Student has not demonstrated that the learning is transferable to other contexts. Student has not conceptualized that the learning extends beyond the original experience. |  |
| Communication | Communication, either through the written word or orally, is at a high‐level, including strong thesis statements, arguments which follow a logical order, and minimal to no syntactical errors. Communication stays tightly focused on the topic being addressed. | Communication is focused and well organized. Communication is relatively free of grammatical or syntactical errors and is reflective of the commonly accepted rules for the English language. Communication is relevant to the learning outcomes being addressed.  | Communication is satisfactory. Narrative flow may be unclear or may jump around. Communication features few or weak transitions. Communication contains grammatical or syntactical errors and sometimes goes off‐topic. | Communication is not at a college level. Narrative is unclear and contains numerous errors in grammar and syntax. |  |
| Supporting Documentation*Source: LearningCounts.org* | Student has demonstrated an understanding of why individual pieces of documentation have been included in this portfolio submission and how each piece relates to the broader petition and narrative. Documentation is appropriate to supporting mastery of the outcomes of the course. | Evidence provided to support the credit request is relevant to the petition and appropriate for a credit recommendation of college‐level learning. Some superfluous documentation is included in the credit request. | Student has demonstrated an understanding of why individual pieces of documentation have been included in this portfolio submission and how each piece relates to the broader petition and narrative. Documentation is not always relevant to demonstrating the mastery of course outcomes | The student has demonstrated an understanding of the connection between the pieces of evidence submitted and the learning acquired. However, supporting documentation is inserted in portfolio without referencing it elsewhere and seem to be independent of other components of the complete portfolio |  |