School of Education

Guidelines for Evaluating Prior Learning Experiences for Credit

Point Park Undergraduate Catalog states: *"The University may grant credit for applied knowledge learning to students whose life or professional experiences encompass college-level learning. <u>Before seeking such credit, a student must have completed a minimum of six credits at Point Park University</u>. Application forms are available from the department concerned with the academic discipline at issue. A completed application includes a petition from the student, documentation from workplace supervisors, a portfolio or other evidence of acquired learning, and any other information deemed relevant by the respective department illustrating that the student has achieved the course objectives. This documentation will be maintained for five years in the respective department. The chair will review the petition and, in some cases, request further information before making his or her recommendation. Students must submit credit applications for different departments on separate forms. The Registrar must receive recommendations for applied knowledge learning credit at least one term prior to graduation. <u>Under no circumstances will a student receive more than eighteen credits for applied knowledge learning.</u> Credits obtained in this fashion do not satisfy the residency requirement and may not be used to satisfy internship requirements."*

The guidelines below outline the School of Education's process for evaluating prior learning experiences of teacher candidates seeking academic credit for work completed in classroom and/or learning settings. The intent is to recognize relevant, high-quality professional experiences that demonstrate competency aligned with the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Eligibility

- Candidates must be accepted to or enrolled at Point Park University.
- Prior learning experiences must have occurred within the past three years.
- The experiences must involve direct work with students in a classroom or educational setting under the supervision of a certified educator or administrator.
- Candidates may earn a maximum of 18 credits through prior learning assessment.

Credit and Hours

- 3 credit hours = 45 hours of classroom experience.
- Credit may be awarded in increments of 3 credits and equivalent to one course.
- Candidates must submit a log of hours and tasks completed in the classroom, verified by a supervisor or mentor teacher. Please see the attached log.

Fee Structure

If prior learning credit is approved, the candidate will pay a fee of $75 per credit hour.

Submission Requirements:

Each candidate must submit a Prior Learning Portfolio that includes:

1. **Cover Page and Verification**

- Candidate's name, program, and contact information
- Site or school where experience occurred
- The intended program and course at Point Park University
- Supervisor verification signature & contact information to confirm the hours and activities
- Total hours completed

2. **Domain Artifacts and Reflection**

Candidates will demonstrate learning aligned with the four domains of the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the Pennsylvania Department of Education competencies for certification.

For each domain, the portfolio must include:

- **Two artifacts** that provide evidence of competence within each domain.
  One written reflection (1-2 pages) that explains how the selected artifacts demonstrate your knowledge, skills, and growth across each domain, as well as how they provide evidence of your competence in meeting the course objectives.

Domain Requirements:

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation (2 artifacts)

This domain focuses on how the teacher designs meaningful instruction and assessments that reflect an understanding of content, pedagogy, and the needs of diverse learners. Candidates should demonstrate thoughtful preparation that connects learning goals, standards, and student readiness levels.

Examples of Acceptable Artifacts:

- Lesson or unit plans that align with standards
- Assessment tools and rubrics
- Curriculum maps or pacing guides
- Differentiation or intervention plans
- Student data analysis examples

Domain 2: Classroom Environment (2 artifacts)

This domain centers on the teacher's ability to establish a culture of respect, safety, and engagement that supports learning. Candidates should show how they promote positive relationships, clear expectations, and an organized classroom environment.

Examples of Acceptable Artifacts:
- Classroom management plan
- Student expectations or behavioral systems
- Classroom layout or visual supports
- Evidence of routines, transitions, or student collaboration
- Feedback or communication logs

Domain 3: Instruction (2 artifacts)

This domain emphasizes how the teacher facilitates student learning through effective communication, questioning, engagement, and assessment strategies. Candidates should demonstrate the ability to promote critical thinking, adapt instruction, and use evidence of learning to inform practice.

Examples of Acceptable Artifacts:
- Student work samples with feedback
- Instructional videos or observation notes
- Lesson reflections or analysis
- Formative and summative assessments
- Differentiated instructional materials

Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities (2 artifacts)

This domain reflects the teacher's professional conduct, reflection, collaboration, and commitment to ongoing growth. Candidates should demonstrate engagement with professional communities, ethical practice, and reflective improvement of teaching.

Examples of Acceptable Artifacts:
- Reflective journals or professional growth plans
- Evidence of collaboration or mentoring
- Communication with families or stakeholders
- Professional development certificates
- Service to school or community initiatives

3. **Log of Classroom Hours**
- Detailed log indicating dates, hours, and tasks completed
- Verification initials for each time in the classroom or learning setting
- Final signature from the cooperating teacher, site supervisor, or administrator

4. **A Letter of Support from your cooperating teacher, site supervisor, or an administrator.**

Evaluation Process

- Portfolios will be reviewed by two faculty evaluators within the School of Education.
- Evaluation will be based on demonstrated proficiency within each Danielson domain and alignment to the Pennsylvania Department of Education competencies for certification and direct correlation to the course description and objectives for the intended Point Park course.
- A rubric will be used to ensure consistency and fairness.
- Candidates may be asked to participate in a brief interview or presentation to discuss their portfolio.
- The submitted artifacts and log of experiences will be reviewed to determine if credit will be awarded for the intended Point Park course.

Grading and Credit Award

- Final credit awards will be documented on the student's transcript as a Pass (P)
- Credits earned through this process do not replace required student teaching or capstone experiences.

Timeline

- Applications for prior learning credit must be submitted to Dr. Kamryn York at kyork@pointpark.edu
- Candidates will receive notification of their results within four weeks of submission.

School of Education

Point Park Courses to be considered for Prior Experiential Learning Credit

Choose one of the following Point Park courses (each course = 3 credits) to align with your classroom experience and guide your portfolio submission. Students can earn a maximum of 18 credits. When assembling your portfolio, ensure that the two artifacts for each Domain of Teaching align both with the domain's components and the learning objectives of the selected course. Your 1-2 page reflection should demonstrate strong evidence of competency by clearly explaining how your artifacts show your knowledge, skills, and growth.

PLEASE NOTE: A full syllabus can be provided once you identify the course for which you are seeking prior experiential credit.

EDUC 101 Technological Literacy for Education

Course Description: This course will enable the preservice teacher to utilize technology to improve their professional practice. The course will enable students to comply with state standards and competencies as enumerated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Preservice teachers will begin to build e-portfolios to enhance their accountability and marketability.

Course Objectives: By the completion of this course, students will:

1. Upgrade his/her technology skills
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the necessity for the inclusion of educational technology in today's classroom
3. Align instruction using technology to the PA competencies and standards
4. Use technology to access data to drive instruction
5. Use recordkeeping tools that will help them become more effective classroom teachers
6. Become familiar with the different types of educational technology available for use in the classroom
7. Incorporate technology as a tool for instruction in lesson planning and assessment
8. Become familiar with technology resources specific to his/her content area

EDUC 150 Introduction to the Teaching Profession

Course Description: This course is an overview course in which students are introduced to the philosophy for preparing highly effective Pennsylvania teachers. At the beginning of the semester students will obtain all clearances as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, so that by the end of the semester, students are able to begin their required observation experiences. During the semester students will begin to understand how the components of: instruction, state standards, standards-based curriculum, materials and resources for instruction and appropriate interventions all lead to highly effective classroom instruction.

Course Objectives: By the completion of this course, students will:
1. Understand the historical influences which have shaped modern education and the contemporary issues which will impact education in the future

2. Explore and identify various theoretical and philosophical perspectives of education
3. Explore the issues related to the career of teaching
4. Understand the educational process within various contextual environments including family, school, peer group, community, society, government, and cultural settings
5. Have a knowledge of the historical, philosophical, social and cultural foundations of Early Childhood Education
6. Have knowledge of Pennsylvania Academic Standards according to content and grade level
7. Have knowledge of the behavior and professional conduct stated in Pennsylvania's Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators and local, state, and federal laws and regulations
8. Interpret conduct and behavior in real life scenarios according to the Pennsylvania's Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators
9. Begin to select, implement, and adapt effective instructional strategies, curriculum resources, and technologies in collaboration with other educators to meet the needs of diverse learners including: identifying, assessing, and building on the students' prior knowledge, experiences in each content area
10. Understand the planning of instruction based upon local, state, and federal mandates

EDUC 222 Assessment and Adaptation

Course Description: This course focuses on the development of children through the selection and use of formal and informal assessment and development of the student's observational skills of diverse academic levels, including children with special needs. Special emphasis is placed on authentic assessment, lesson planning and related standards as outlined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education Academic Standards. Classroom observations are required.

Course Objectives: By the completion of this course, students will:
1. Methods and issues of assessment and evaluation
2. Diagnostic, formative and summative assessment instruments
3. Valid and reliable educational assessment

EDUC 250 English Language Learners

Course Description: This course is designed to introduce the special considerations for working with English Language Learners given their unique cultural, linguistic, instructional and assessment needs. An understanding of who these students are, how to provide appropriate interventions for them and an in-depth look at the Pennsylvania ELL Standards correlation to other content areas will be included. The study will focus on linking research to practice and provide information that will be useful for working with this special population as the fastest growing student group in US schools.

Course Objectives: By the completion of this course, students will:
1. Identify common terms and acronyms of the field
2. Identify the legal responsibilities of educators for ELLs as specified in federal and state legislation
3. Demonstrate an understanding of English Language Proficiency Standards
4. Demonstrate an understanding of instructional models, including the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model
5. Plan lessons with content and language objectives that address speaking, listening, reading and writing skills and incorporate PDE Standards
6. Develop authentic assessments and modify/adapt instruction for ELLs at various levels of English proficiency

7. Compare and contrast theories related to ELL instruction and implications of that research for teachers
8. Identify and analyze cultural bias within student instructional materials.

EDUC 228 Educational Psychology

Course Description: This course will assist students in better understanding the role that psychological and educational theories play in understanding human learning and human behavior. Prime emphasis will be placed on the role that psychological processes such as cognitive development, individual and group differences, motivation, psycho-social development and metacognition play in the functioning of humans in everyday settings and circumstances. Each student will be challenged to make connections between the various psychological theories studied in this course and their own personal and professional interests. As such, an interdisciplinary approach to educational psychology will be utilized.

Course Objectives: Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:
1. Describe the factors influencing personal development, and explain how various socio-cultural forces can influence this personal development.
2. Explain the influence of cognitive, intellectual, personal and social development on the human learning experience.
3. Compare and contrast theories of cognitive development of Piaget and Vygotsky and apply such theories to the study of humans in educational and other applied settings.
4. Apply social learning theory and the information processing approach to patterns of communication and interpersonal relationships.
5. Explain the role that various cultural factors play in human learning and human interaction.
6. Identify various theories of moral development and apply the study of ethical conduct to individual development and social behavior.
7. Identify and explain the various approaches to educational assessment and demonstrate the ability to match assessment approaches to instructional objectives.
8. Explain the relationship between planning, preparation and models of instruction on classroom management and student learning.

SPED 180 Introduction to Special Education

Course Description: This course offers a survey of issues relevant to teaching students with disabilities, including historical, legal, ethical, and philosophical considerations. Educators build the foundations for working with students with disabilities by exploring perspectives on disability, the role of the special educator, and current issues in special education. They articulate a personal philosophy of supporting students with disabilities and reflect on the impact of educator mindsets on students with disabilities. Educators develop resources to help families understand special education laws and policies and they communicate information about special education laws to colleagues. The course culminates with an opportunity for educators to apply their learning by analyzing a student's IEP and developing a lesson plan that both meets the needs of all students through universal design and individualizes support to accommodate a specific student.

Course Objectives: By the completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Explain key terms and concepts that describe special education
2. Trace historical events that have shaped special education services
3. Outline laws that govern special education
4. Describe categories of disability addressed in federal law
5. Explain roles and responsibilities of educational personnel

6. Describe the process that student may become eligible to receive special education services
7. Name the components of the IEP
8. Describe types of services a student may receive and where they may receive them
9. Discuss how parents participate in special education
10. Outline the role of general education teachers with special education students
11. Explain the term, collaboration
12. Discuss how general education contributes to the assessment process of students with special needs
13. Describe the uses of high-stakes testing
14. Describe how alternate assessments may be used
15. Define curriculum-based assessment
16. Explain the meaning of reasonable accommodations for students with special needs
17. Describe the steps of the INCLUDE model
18. Identify and describe key elements of a classroom environment
19. Describe the major components of classroom organization
20. Explain various ways to group students
21. Explain how the use of effective materials and methods can benefit students with special needs
22. Describe low incidence disability, multiple disabilities, high incidence disability, and specific disabilities that fall within those categories and how to include students with these disabilities
23. Describe a variety of instructional adaptations
24. Describe strategies to involve parents in their children's education
25. Describe ways teachers can encourage self-awareness and self-advocacy for students with disabilities
26. List and describe strategies in the areas of reading, writing, reading comprehension, listening, note taking, math problem solving, time management
27. Identify and describe adaptations that can be made before, during and after testing
28. Describe ways to adapt report card grades for students with special needs
29. Explain how performance-based assessment and portfolios can be used for students with special needs
30. Outline strategies for promoting positive behavior
31. Describe purpose of functional behavior assessment
32. Describe ways to promote social relationships for students with disabilities
33. Analyze thoughts and ideas on personal responsibilities, attitudes toward students with disabilities

EDUC 220 Community and Family Diversity

Course Description: This course will provide teacher candidates with methods and strategies for creating a positive, inclusive learning environment that addresses the various cognitive, affective and developmental needs of diverse learners. Cultural, racial, and ethnic issues will be explored as they relate to the needs of school aged students. Students will review strategies for building positive relationships with diverse families and communities and learn how to develop working relationships with key community organizations related to cultural diversity to enhance children's educational outcomes.

Course Objectives: By the completion of this course, students will:
1. Demonstrate an awareness of various cultural dynamics and variables which influence the educational environment, classroom teaching and the learning process.
2. Explain the role of socialization and socio-cultural forces on young children's emerging cognitive skills;

3. Identify and explain culturally-diverse methods of socialization;
4. Explain the concept of cultural identity development and its relationship to academic achievement;
5. Identify and describe the relationship between macro-systemic influences (e.g. SES, race, ethnicity) on variations in family socialization patterns, parenting styles and achievement motivation;
6. Explain the similarities and differences between academic language and social language and the impact of each on children's emerging literacy and linguistic skills;
7. Identify and describe cultural differences in educational goals and values;
8. Describe various factors that result in the over-representation of minority groups in special needs classrooms;
9. Compare and contrast culturally-relevant instruction with traditional pedagogical approaches.

School of Education
Prior Experiential Learning Application

Candidate name   _____

Phone Number   _____

Email Address   _____

Intended School of Education Course   _____

Site or school where experience occurred   _____

Total hours completed   _____

Supervisor name & contact information   _____

_____

Supervisor Signature   _____

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

School of Education
Prior Experiential Learning
Teaching Log

Student: _____

Dates of Placement: _____

Name of School: _____

Classroom Placement: _____ _____

Supervisor Signature: _____

List the time you spent on planning, implementing, teaching, and evaluating students this week. There should be an entry for each time you are in the classroom/learning space.

Date	Time Spent (Hours: Minutes)	Activity (Detailed Description)

Approved by SOE- DEC 2025

School of Education
Prior Experiential Learning Evaluation Form

Candidate Information

Name: _____

Intended Course: _____

Evaluator(s): _____

Date Reviewed: _____

1. Cover Page & Verification

Cover page is complete including all details.	☐ Does Meet	☐ Does Not Meet
Supervisor verification and signature are included.	☐ Does Meet	☐ Does Not Meet
Total hours completed are clearly documented.	☐ Does Meet	☐ Does Not Meet

2. Log of Classroom Hours

Log includes dates, times, activities, and supervisor initials.	☐ Does Meet	☐ Does Not Meet
Log demonstrates required hours.	☐ Does Meet	☐ Does Not Meet
Tasks reflect planning, teaching, or supporting student learning.	☐ Does Meet	☐ Does Not Meet

3. Domain Evidence & Reflection

Candidate provides TWO artifacts for EACH Danielson domain (Domains 1-4).	☐ Does Meet	☐ Does Not Meet
Artifacts collectively demonstrate competency in domain components (planning, environment, instruction, and professionalism).	☐ Does Meet	☐ Does Not Meet
One 1-2 page reflection is included for each domain and aligns to the components.	☐ Does Meet	☐ Does Not Meet
Reflection clearly explains how artifacts demonstrate knowledge, skills, and growth.	☐ Does Meet	☐ Does Not Meet
Artifacts and reflection align to the course objectives of the course.	☐ Does Meet	☐ Does Not Meet

4. Letter of Support

Letter of Support is included.	☐ Does Meet	☐ Does Not Meet
Letter is from cooperating teacher, site supervisor, or administrator.	☐ Does Meet	☐ Does Not Meet

Overall Evaluation

Portfolio demonstrates competency aligned to Danielson Framework and PDE standards.	☐ Does Meet	☐ Does Not Meet
Recommended for Prior Learning Credit.	☐ Does Meet	☐ Does Not Meet

Approved by SOE- DEC 2025