

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College
Education Department

Preparation of APL for *Education* Courses

Introduction and General Information

Assessment of Prior Learning (APL) is an alternative path for earning college credit for what you have learned from your work experience that is related to your major course of study. To be granted APL, learning and experience must be documented, verified, and be equivalent to college-level work/learning. Note: there are many experiences working with children that are excellent and contribute to your learning but are not college-level experiences. Examples of these include, but are not limited to, Girl/Boy Scouts, 4-H, Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, summer camp, and other church-related groups.

Students may apply for APL (Assessment of Prior Learning) credit for any of the education courses. (For other courses, contact the WOL Office or the department offering the course for instructions/assistance with APL applications.) APL in the Education Department is granted most frequently for field experiences/practica/student teaching; but may be granted for other courses as well.

The teacher candidate should discuss APL with the Academic Advisor. The Academic Advisor can assist you in determining if your experience is appropriate for an APL application and can provide you with the scoring rubric for the course. Use the scoring rubric as your guide in preparing your APL application.

The APL for which you are applying must be directly related to the course for which you are seeking credit. For example, if you are applying for APL for a field experience in middle/high school math, the learning and experience you are documenting should be related to teaching math in grades 5-12. (You need not have worked in all of these grades but experience in elementary school or preschool cannot be applied in this case.) If you are applying for credit for a field experience in elementary school, the learning and experience you are documenting should be in grades K-5/6. APL related to mild intervention must be in the grade level(s) for which you are applying and must include working with more than one or two students; the intervention must be at the mild level. A critical area for documentation for a field or practicum is verifying the impact of your instruction on students' achievement.

Teacher candidates may not use the same experience for multiple APL applications (e.g., being a teaching assistant in second grade for three years may be used for one application for a field experience but NOT for a second field experience or student teaching).

Keep in mind any courses that are prerequisites for others. If applying for APL for a course that serves as a prerequisite for another course, it must be completed and the decision rendered before teacher candidate may enroll in the second (or higher level) course.

Prepare a separate application for each course for which you are applying for APL. For example, if you are applying for APL for two field experiences, submit an application for each of the

experiences. As stated above, the two experiences (for two applications) must be in different classrooms/grade levels.

When preparing your application, request the APL Scoring Rubric from your Academic Advisor. Be sure you use the correct protocol to prepare your application. For coursework, field experiences, and practica, use the scoring rubric that lists the outcomes/objectives found in the course syllabus. For student teaching experience, prepare a portfolio based on the EDPGs of the Education Department. Applications prepared that do NOT use the correct protocol will be returned to the applicant who may resubmit the application using the correct protocol.

Preparing the APL Application

Teacher candidates must prepare an application, or portfolio, consisting of the following:

- Cover sheet for APL (available online)
- A narrative describing/documenting the experiences
 - Begin your documentation with a narrative that is two to three (2-3) pages in length. This overview should provide background information that will assist the evaluator. It should describe the experience you are documenting and indicate the amount of time in the experience, grade level(s) in the experience, and your responsibilities in the experience. Reflect upon how the experience contributed to your growth as a teacher.
- Narrative and documentation for each course objective/outcome
 - Address each course outcome/objective. Mark each of these clearly. A suggested format is to begin each outcome/objective on a new page. Include the statement of the outcome/objective, then begin your narrative and documentation. Do not approach this like an assignment; you are describing what you have actually done/experienced in the classroom. You are NOT providing “textbook responses.” Write a narrative that describes what you have done. Whenever possible, after the narrative, provide documentation of the experience. For example, if you are describing a variety of assessment techniques that you have used, include a sample rubric you designed or sample quiz you wrote.
- Letters of recommendation
 - Two to three (2-3) letters are required for field experiences, practica, and student teaching. Recommendation letters are strongly suggested for other coursework.
 - When requesting a letter of recommendation, provide a timeframe and guidance for the writer. The letters of recommendation should indicate your dispositions toward teaching and learning. The letters should provide an indication of your attendance, professionalism, dress, adherence to confidentiality, and potential for teaching.
 - Letters of recommendation should be signed by the author of the letter and be written on school letterhead.

As you prepare your application and documentation, remember the following:

- Confidentiality is important. When including student work or assessments, remove names.

- Citations are important when appropriate. If you have used a lesson plan in your documentation and the idea is not original, a proper citation should be included. It is not ethical to claim another's work as our own.
- Proofread. Your application should be error-free. It is a measure of your ability to communicate. Applications that have typos, misspelled words, and grammatical errors are not viewed favorably.

Submitting your APL Application and Receiving Decision

Completed applications should be submitted to the WOL Office. Materials will be forwarded to the appropriate evaluator. Allow four to five weeks for review and notification. Materials are retained by the Education Department. It is your responsibility to copy any documents you wish to maintain in your own files. You may submit copies of certificates and recommendation letters; retain originals in your files.

The application will be reviewed and scored using the rubric based on the course outcomes/objectives (the same rubric you obtained from your Academic Advisor to guide the preparation of your application).

You must attain 75% of the points available to receive credit for the course.

Submitting APL is a privilege granted to teacher candidates because we believe it is important to recognize knowledge learned from work experience. Submitting the APL application does not guarantee the credit will be granted. The application will be reviewed carefully and the evaluator will use the rubric to ensure consistency of scoring. The evaluation will result in one of two decisions:

- ✓ APL is accepted. The teacher candidate is notified of the decision and billed for the appropriate amount, credit is applied to transcript upon payment.
- ✓ APL is denied. Candidate is notified of decision and reason for denial. Candidate may begin the process with a new, revised application. Candidate may NOT submit additional materials to the original application. OR The candidate will complete the course.

Timelines/Policy

All APL applications MUST be submitted for evaluation prior to the student having completed 100 semester hours toward a bachelor's degree, 45 semester hours toward an associate degree, or two semesters prior to non-degree program completion. This is SMWC policy.

APL for field experiences/practica/student teaching must be submitted and approved PRIOR to submitting the application for the Clinical Capstone Experience.

A Last Word

Your Academic Advisor can answer questions about the APL process. Best wishes as you complete your APL applications