Prior Learning Assessment

What is it?
Prior Learning Assessment, or PLA, helps students earn college credit for learning and experiences that have happened outside of a traditional classroom. We understand that not all education comes from traditional college classes, and we want to give you the opportunity to earn credit for those experiences! More than half (56%) of PLA students eventually obtained a degree, while only 21% of non-PLA students could say the same.

How can PLA help me?
You can earn up to 30 credits (one year of school!) through PLA, which means you’d be that much closer to reaching your educational goals. Keep in mind this only applies to students who have less than the maximum number of transfer credits (84)—PLA can’t be applied to the 36 degree credits you need to take or general education requirements, and it may not be transferrable if you leave NLC.

What do I do in PLA?
- Review your transcripts to figure out how many credits you need
- Gather documentation of previous Continuing Education Units (CEUs), trainings, certifications, etc.
- Create a learning-focused resume
- Craft an educational narrative
- Write essays reflecting on and documenting previous learning
- Submit this portfolio to NLC for evaluation

Essays? What do I write about?
- Write one essay about yourself! How have you gotten where you are today? Write about your experiences in labor, what you’ve learned, what you want to learn, and how you hope to apply it in the future.
- Begin by reviewing NLC courses for content similar to your experience. Write about how your experience matches the course learning objectives—at least 500 words per course credit. Back up your writing with documentation (certificates, transcripts, etc.). Clearly connect your learning to the course description.
- Students may consider courses from other accredited colleges, but please note PLA reviews are limited to subject matter represented by NLC courses and faculty expertise. NLC will attempt to provide external reviews for subject areas not represented by NLC, but these reviews are subject to additional conditions.

It has to be really expensive, right?
The 7-week introduction is only $336 to register*. You’ll pay to have your portfolio reviewed when you’re ready ($336* for the first 15 credits; $336* for the next 15 credits). You can keep working on your portfolio as long as you’re a student at NLC—so you can earn PLA credits while taking other classes towards your degree!

This sounds perfect for me!
We think so too! Learn more by going to our website or call 888-427-8100 and ask to speak to an admissions counselor.

*Be sure to check out our website for the most updated information on tuition and fees.