MEMO OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
AND THE
FACULTY ASSOCIATION
OF
GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Prior Learning Assessment
March, 2012

The purpose of this memo of understanding is to serve as a guideline for the Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) process. The following items will be addressed: qualification of assessors, selection of assessors, requirements of the assessors, faculty pay, and definition of PLA Coordinator’s role. The PLA coordinator will manage the PLA process.

Qualification of Assessors
Orientation and training is required in order to assess students’ portfolios. Current faculty members holding a minimum of a Bachelor degree and who have attended the training in PLA are eligible to be appointed as assessors of the portfolio.

Selection of Faculty Assessors
The PLA Coordinator will recruit assessors.

Faculty assessors are selected based upon their expertise in the subject area challenged by the student. Typically, the faculty member who has responsibility for the course material being challenged by the student would be selected as the assessor of the portfolio. If a faculty member is unavailable or unwilling, the department head/program director will assist the PLA Coordinator in identifying the appropriate faculty assessor. The associate dean will then appoint the faculty to conduct the subject area assessment. The appointment will be made on a seniority basis. A faculty member with the highest seniority in a department will be given first right of refusal followed by the second highest seniority faculty member and so on. Within the boundaries of the stated qualifications, portfolios will be assigned on a round-robin basis. In the event there are not qualified full time faculty assessors for a class, an adjunct faculty member who has expertise in the subject area and the academic credential may be selected as a faculty assessor after completing the orientation and training.

Requirements of Assessors
Faculty must complete an orientation and training of the process and evaluation of portfolio to be eligible to serve as assessors. Orientation and training (approximately one hour) may be accomplished by a scheduled training session or by attending a scheduled training session. The orientation and training will provide an overview of prior learning assessment including an explanation of the processes and procedures, documentation and evaluation of a student portfolio.
Once the orientation and training is completed, faculty may be appointed to serve as assessors. Upon completion of the assessment of the student’s documentation/portfolio, assessors will be required to submit the necessary documentation to the Registrar’s Office and the PLA Coordinator prior to payment for this work.

Faculty Association Agreement for Compensation
Faculty assessors will be compensated according to the current Faculty Masters Overload rate (Appendix B-16.A).

The faculty member will be paid for three (3) clock hours per assessment of a student portfolio. Pay will calculated as overload (.1 CH) per the faculty agreement.

Terms of this agreement
Upon settlement, this PLA process contract language will be added to the Faculty Collective Bargaining Agreement as Article 6.J. The PLA process as outlined above will go into effect immediately when this MOU is signed.

Kathy Keating
General Counsel

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