So many learners, so little time: Streamlining PLA support with an online interactive seminar

Sara Leiste, MS
Senior Academic Associate, PLA
Capella University at a glance

• Capella University is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission and is a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), [www.ncahlc.org](http://www.ncahlc.org).

• Completely online institution serving adult learners

• Degree programs focus on learning outcomes that are based on professional standards and employer recommendations
Capella University

- Course match PLA model
- Prior learning assessments are based on the course competencies
- PLA is offered in all undergrad (upper division and general education) and select master’s level programs
Do your students ask...

- How do I get started with PLA?
- What are the evaluators looking for?
- Can you explain learning vs. experience...again?
• PLA is intentionally flexible
• Allows a variety of learners to present a variety of learning for credit
• Many learners want structure. They perceive flexibility as disorder or lack of guidance
• End up frustrated or apprehensive
• Even confident learners need to know what is expected
Prior Learning Assessment Labs

- Brings learners together in a familiar environment
- Provides resources and step-by-step guidance through the PLA process
- Reduces anxiety about the process and viability
  - Feedback from PLA expert
  - Examples of successful petitions
  - Testimonials
Goals of the Lab

• Provide structure to learners who need it, clarifying the PLA process.
• Allow learners to explore options, determine their own path and set their own pace.
Units of the Lab

1. Assessing Qualifications.
2. Gathering Supportive Evidence.
3. Writing the PLA.
4. Submitting the PLA
Role of the facilitator

- The lab also offers learners the opportunity to interact with other learners and the seminar facilitator.
- PLA professional, not a subject matter expert.
- Advises learners regarding the PLA process, writing issues and available resources.
For more information, please contact:
Sara.Leiste@capella.edu
612-977-5663

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