

LINCS



Community based learning experiences
College Credit Recognition



LINCS: AN ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING IN NON-CREDIT
SETTINGS
AND
OTHER NON-TRADITIONAL METHOD TO OBTAIN COLLEGE
CREDIT

LINCS PROGRAM

Dear Student:

The LINCS (Learning In Non-Credit Settings) Program is designed to offer students an opportunity to earn appropriate academic credit for learning that has taken place in non-college or non-credit settings. This learning may have taken place as a result of work experience, on the job training or independent study. To obtain college credit, it must be documented, verifiable and at the college level. A portfolio must be submitted to an academic department for evaluation.

Participation in the LINCS Program requires that formal procedures be followed. The preparation of appropriate credit application material is handled through the Center for Adult Academic Services Office located in the Computer and Administration Building, room 231. The portfolio evaluation is done by the appropriate department or college.

The following information will help you get started:

- **General information about the program**
- **A permission form**
- **An application form**

If you need additional information, students are encouraged to speak with an advisor.

Thank you for your interest in the University of Hartford. We hope the LINCS program will be beneficial to the completion of your degree.

Best of luck ,

Center for Graduate and Adult Academic Services

What You Should Know Before Applying For The Learning In Non-Credit Settings (LINCS) Program

The major steps in the LINCS application process:

1. Student meets with an academic advisor in the Graduate and Adult Academic Services Office. Student is advised to meet with the appropriate department chair or dean to determine University of Hartford course equivalent (s) for LINCS credit.
2. The attached permission form must be signed by the department chair or dean and a copy returned to The Graduate and Adult Academic Services Office, Computer and Administration building, room 231.
3. Student submits application and \$25.00 fee along with LINCS related resume to The Graduate and Adult Academic Services Office, Computer and Administration Building room 231.
4. Student assembles and submits portfolio (s) along with the \$25.00 processing fee to the advisor in the Graduate and Adult Academic Office, Computer and Administration Building, room 231. The portfolio is then sent to the appropriate department chair for evaluation with a LINCS Credit Request form.
5. Portfolio is processed
 - a) If credit is granted, the portfolio is returned with the signed Request for Credit Form to the Graduate and Adult Academic Services Office. Student is notified by the coordinator.
 - b) If credit is not granted the portfolio is returned to the Graduate and Adult Academic Services office and the student is notified by the coordinator.
6. Student then pays the \$100.00 per credit fee.
7. Graduate and Adult Academic Services notifies the Registrars Office that credit (s) should be entered on the student's transcript.
8. Portfolios may be submitted for evaluation between **October 1 and March 1. Please allow four weeks for review.**

Must I be a matriculated student at the University of Hartford before applying to the LINCS Program?

Students are not required to be formally admitted into a degree program at the University of Hartford to apply to the LINCS Program.

What are the program fees?

- a) \$25.00 application fee-due with the application
- b) \$25.00 processing fee-when portfolio is submitted for review
- c) \$100.00 per credit fee-payable when the credits are granted

Are credits earned through the LINCS program transferable?

The credits earned through LINCS at the University of Hartford are officially accepted by the University. However, no guarantee can be given that the credits granted will be accepted in transfer by another college or university.

Where can I get further information about the LINCS Program?

The program is administered by the Graduate and Adult Academic Services Office located in the Computer and Administration Building, Room 231. Further information can be obtained by calling (860) 768-4371.



UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD

**Learning In Non-Credit Settings (LINCS)
PERMISSION FORM**

Name _____ Phone _____

Student ID# _____ Email _____

*A Portfolio Review Fee of \$25 must accompany the portfolio upon submission.
Please make check payable to the University of Hartford.*

Title of proposed subject area _____

University of Hartford course equivalent _____

Number of credits requested _____

*Based on preliminary conversation, this student is given permission to
continue the *portfolio preparation process.*

**Note: It is not guaranteed that the portfolio will be accepted.*

Reviewing Faculty (print name) Date

Reviewing Faculty (signature) Date

Department Chair/Dean (print name) Date

Department Chair/Dean (signature) Date

(Please return this form and the fee to the Graduate & Adult Academic Services Office, CC 231)

LINCS PROGRAM
Application Form

INSTRUCTIONS: Please answer the questions below. Attach a vita or resume, which stresses experiences, which are LINCS, related. Also include the title and code number of the course (s) for which credit will be requested. Submit these along with a \$25.00 application fee to:

The University of Hartford
Center for Graduate and Adult Academic Services, Room CC 231
200 Bloomfield Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06117

Name: _____ Student ID #: _____

Home Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Email: _____

Present Occupation: _____ Employer: _____

Name of High School: _____ Graduate Year: _____

Colleges Attended:

Name and Location	Dates Attended	Credits Earned	GPA
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Are you currently enrolled at the University of Hartford? Yes No

Are you matriculated at the University of Hartford? Yes No

What is your major field of study? _____

Title and Code of course planning to LINCS: _____

I certify that the foregoing statements are both correct and complete. I realize that the application fee is nonrefundable; processing fee of \$25.00 is required upon submission of the portfolio for review; a \$100 per credit-hour charge once the portfolio is accepted.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

.....
For office use:

Date Received: _____ Accepted _____ Rejected _____

Payment: Application Fee: _____ Processing Fee: _____ Per Credit Charge: _____

Date Rec'd: _____ Date Rec'd: _____ Date Rec'd: _____

Reviewed By: _____ Date: _____

I. Introduction

This booklet is for people who are interested in finding out how one can get college credit for what has been learned in any one of a variety of non-college credit settings. These may have included on-the-job training, self-study programs, independent reading, conversation with experts, travel, etc. Non-classroom or non-collegiate learning is frequently called experiential or non-traditional learning. This booklet will describe the steps you must take in order to receive credit for learning resulting from such experiences.

In order to receive credit for experiential or non-traditional learning, you must do two things. First, you must clarify for yourself which of your life experiences have been truly learning experiences that might be roughly equivalent to learning gained through college study. A learning experience is one that resulted in what we call a learning outcome that can be verified by a certificate, test, oral interview or some other means.

The second thing you must do is go through the actual verification process by assembling a portfolio. Outlining your learning experiences, which includes documentation supporting your claims for learning. In addition to the portfolio, an oral interview or exam could be requested to verify learning. It is important to remember that the University of Hartford will grant college credit only for learning experience, not simply for life experience. The term "LINCS credit" will be used here to refer to university academic credit awarded for community-based experiential learning/learning in non-credit settings. You will find that many experiences that you have had, although important to you personally, will not qualify for college level credit. The University of Hartford has some guidelines for its credit assessment program which are as follows:

II. Guidelines

A. **The learning must be relevant to the student's degree program and educational goals.** While it is true that most adults have had significant experiences that have led to learning in a variety of areas, much of what is learned may not be relevant to a college degree. An application for the non-traditional learning credit should determine the relevance of that learning to his/her study or degree programs, whether in the required or elective areas of course credit.

B. **Only college-level learning will be credited.** Some of the following criteria are often considered important in assessing whether learning qualifies as college level:

1. The learning should reflect a conceptual as well as a practical grasp of the knowledge or competence acquired. The mere application of a skill or routine or procedure does not warrant credit; students must be able to understand why they are able to do what they do.
2. The learning should be equivalent in quality to college-level work.
3. The learning should be applicable outside the specific context in which it was acquired.
4. Learning should fall within the domain usually considered degree credit higher education, as opposed to pre-collegiate, non-collegiate, or “continuing education” study that carries no college credit.

C. **Learning should be verifiable.** The University of Hartford does not award credit merely for “experience” – credit is granted for the verifiable learning outcomes attained as a result of the experience. Evidence that the applicant engaged in a particular activity or was present in a given experiential setting does not in and of itself constitute sufficient documentation of the learning claimed. Additional measurement and evaluation of the learning outcomes gained from experiences may be required.

The following are examples of acceptable verification that learning has indeed occurred: documentation such as official transcripts, certificates, licenses, examination scores, evaluation letters, or other written evidence that verifies or evaluates learning.

- D. **Learning can be granted credit only once.** Learning from any one source of life experience already granted credit cannot be granted additional or duplicate credit in a prior or subsequent classroom learning situation.
- E. **Request for large blocks of credit are difficult to analyze and substantiate.** Applicants and involved faculty are urged to separate requests for evaluation into parcels representing the academic equivalent of six or fewer credit hours.
- F. **A maximum of 60 LINCS credits can be applied toward a bachelor’s degree.**
- G. **Normally, the last 30 credit hours of the student’s degree program must be taken in residence at the University of Hartford.**
- H. **Each department will determine whether major degree program requirements can be satisfied with LINCS credit.**

- I. **LINCS credit may be awarded for learning done in any discipline in any college of the university on the undergraduate level.**
- J. **Equivalency credit should be equated to existing courses in the traditional University of Hartford curriculum;** for example, CS 110 – Introduction to Computer Science – 3 credits. (Some examples of how to equate your learning with that done in traditional University of Hartford courses will be found later in this booklet.)
- K. **Determination of credit equivalency and applicability to degree requirements rests ultimately with the dean of the college in which the credit is being sought.** The Dean may grant or withhold such credit after consultation with the appropriate departments and the Coordinator of the LINCS (Learning in Non-Credit Settings) Program.
- L. **It is possible that several student applicants may seek academic credit for the same non-accredited or non-institutional programs.** In this case, the Director of the LINCS Program may set up a special credit route for a “hypothetical applicant” who typifies the credit requests of its group of applicants. The applicant should consult with the Director of the LINCS Program to see if she or he can be accommodated in such a pre-existing program.

III. **Assembling Your LINCS Portfolio**

Many non-traditional students will find that their learning experiences are drawn from such varied sources that they can be adequately described and evaluated only in the context of a portfolio. A portfolio is a formal written communication which details learning experiences, providing supporting information, and requests credit of this learning. It normally will contain:

1. A brief introductory essay (See Figure I, p.9)
2. A life history or vita (See Figures I and II, p. 10-11)
3. A formal statement of learning outcomes (See Figure II, p.12)
4. A formal request for credit (See Figure IV, p.13)

Even though the introductory essay will appear at the beginning of your portfolio, it is probably best to prepare it after the rest of the portfolio, but also because it introduces you, your background, and your goals and aspirations to the reader. For these reasons, it is best to begin your portfolio process with the vita, leaving the preparation of your introductory essay until last. (See Figure I, p.9)

A. The Vita

The Vita, like a resume, presents all significant life experiences since high school for which you have not received college credit. It does not need to include personal information or list all of the jobs you have held, but it should include all of the positions and responsibilities you have had through which “college level learning” has taken place. The following words may remind you of significant experiences, which contributed to your community-based college-level learning:

Accomplished	Created	Investigated	Presented
Achieved	Designed	Led	Produced
Administered	Directed	Managed	Recruited
Analyzed	Governed	Negotiated	Rehabilitated
Conceived	Implemented	Organized	Supervised
Conducted	Initiated	Performed	Trained
Controlled	Innovated	Planned	Upgraded
Coordinated	Introduced	Prepared	Wrote

For LINC S a vita is commonly organized in an outline form in three columns. (See sample vita, Figure II, p. 13.) In the left-hand column is the time during which you participated in a particular activity or experience. It is customary to list your life experiences in reverse chronological order, most recent ones first. In the middle column, list the title or position you held, if that is relevant. The third column should contain a description of the activity or experience. You may also want to break your vita down further into two or more sections: one for educational attainments since high school, a second for work or military experience, and a third for voluntary or organizational activities.

Bear in mind that the above are only suggestions for writing your vita. You may find it easier to organize your experience into two columns or four, or to dispense with the outline form altogether and write a narrative history of your life, like the sample in Figure III, p. 14. Any form is acceptable as long as it presents your life experiences in a manner that is clear, well-organized and easy to read.

B. The Formal Statements of Learning Outcomes

After a careful review of your vita, you will be ready to separate your learning experiences, which you believe may be creditable at a college level, from the rest of your life experiences. When you have done that, you should then try to equate your learning experiences to a course(s) currently listed in the course catalog of the University of Hartford. As you choose a course(s), keep in mind how it/they will fulfill requirements in the degree programs offered at the University of Hartford. You will then need to write a separate statement of learning outcomes for each course selected.

The statement of learning outcomes is a list of learning experiences (which apply to the course selected) running down the left-hand column, with summaries of the knowledge, skills, or competencies acquired on the right. (For a sample Statement of Learning Outcomes, see Figures IV A & B, pp.15-16.) for an example of how to do this, let us take the case of Bill, who worked as a programmer/analyst in the Data Processing Department of an insurance company. On the left-hand side of the learning outcomes statement Bill might write: Computer programmer/data analyst, Greater East Grottlesex Insurance Company, 1981-1983. In the right-hand column he might write: "I have acquired a thorough working knowledge of computer programming in all of its aspects. I have written several programs, including the process of design, flow-charting, testing, debugging and implementation. I have also made extensive use of multi-dimensional tables, all manner of inputs and outputs and the procedure JCL needed to execute the programs. This knowledge is approximately equivalent to that which would be learned in CS 114 – Programming I."

As you write the statement of learning outcomes, try to break down your learning outcomes into learning components. To do this, list separately each skill or competence that you acquired from a particular experience. The knowledge, skills and competencies that you gained should roughly correspond to the major content areas of the course for which you are requesting credit.

C. The Formal Request for Credit

The final stage in the preparation of your portfolio is filling out a form that requests a certain amount of credit for the learning outcomes you have listed in the "Statement of Learning Outcomes" section. This "credit request" form will be furnished by the Graduate and Adult Academic Services office. (See sample form, Figure IV, p.13) On one side of the form you will write brief summaries of your learning outcomes, as discussed in Part B. On the other side, you will list the supporting documentation. Remember to break your credit requests down into the smallest possible units of credit, and to fill out one form for each course for which you are requesting credit.

D. Documentation

In this section of the portfolio, you must provide evidence to support the learning you have claimed in your statement of learning outcomes. In providing documentation or evidence, the objective is to verify that you actually did what you say you did and to furnish an evaluation of the learning which you think you gained from the experience.

A very common form of documentation is a letter from someone who can verify that you had the experience that you claim and that you learned what you say you learned. The following are other common forms of documentation:

Certificates	Newspaper Articles	Course Outlines or	Awards
Programs of	Exhibits	Syllabi	Bills of Sale
Performance	Job Descriptions	Department Exams or	Honors
Commendations	Writing Samples	Interviews	Military Records
Work Samples		Examination Reports	Mementos

Artistic Work and Accomplishments

Photographs
Publications
Art Work
Speeches
Designs

Audiovisual Presentations

Audiotapes
Slides
Videotapes
Recordings

You should attach copies of all written documentation to your portfolio as an appendix, then draw up a list of the different documents with page references (generally in the left-hand column) telling where in the portfolio each document can be found.

Whatever forms of documentation you use, bear in mind that they should be valid and reliable. That is, your documentation should be able to convince an expert in the subject area of your learning that the documentation is a true measure of your competence (validity) and that the evidence consistently supports your claims of learning in that subject area (reliability). For instance, if you are a journalist, you should be able to demonstrate that you actually wrote the article you claim to have written and that it is a good demonstration of journalistic skills (validity), and that that article is typical of the quality of most of your work (reliability). Some ways convincing experts that your documentation is reliable include:

1. Showing the expert more than one product
2. Letting the expert see you perform in more than one situation
3. Using more than one expert to evaluate you.

While assembling your documentation, you should also bear the following general principles in mind:

1. If someone is furnishing a written statement to verify your experience, the following guidelines should be observed:

- a. The person preparing the statement should have directly observed you during the experience and not simply know about your experience second or third-hand.
 - b. One person may verify more than one of your experiences. Any written statement provided by that person should, however, comment directly, separately, and clearly on each experience.
 - c. A statement of verification should be reasonably accurate and complete. In a general way, the statement should cover all points in the description of learning outcomes which you wrote in response to the instructions in Part B.
 - d. The writer of a verification statement should identify his/her relationship to you (supervisor, peer, subordinate, etc.) and his/her qualifications for commenting on your experience.
 - e. The writer of a verification statement should identify the activities that he/she has observed directly.
 - f. The letter should be written on the official letterhead stationary of the company or organization with which the author is associated whenever it is possible.
 - g. You should make it clear to the author that the letter to be written is one of verification, not recommendation.
2. If the documentation, which you plan to furnish, is a product of your experience, such as already mentioned, be ready to furnish proof that you did actually produce the product that you are presenting. This may involve a supplemental letter of verification from someone who observed you in the process of producing the product.
 3. The documentation should verify both the quality and quantity of experience that you have had.
 4. The University of Hartford may, at its discretion, require letters of verification to be notarized.
 5. Products included in your portfolio should be signed and dated by you, and they should also be clearly labeled.
 6. Documentation probably will be considered public information. In other words, you should know that a number of individuals will look at the documentation that you furnish or that is

furnished in your behalf. Persons who provide letters of verification should also be informed of this fact.

7. Even if you attempt to trim down the amount of documentation, some individual specimens may be quite long. You should underline those parts of the document relevant to the claimed learning experience with a colored pen.

E. Introductory Essay

After you have completed your vita and statement of learning outcomes and have gathered documentation, you will be ready to write the introductory essay. (See sample, Figure I, p.9.) The essay is an opportunity to be creative in presenting personal, educational and career goals, and to put these goals into a sharp focus by examining them against the background of the life experiences you have elaborated in your vita.

The introductory essay is important because it is one section of your portfolio that can communicate something very personal and distinctive about you and your aspirations to the faculty member reading your portfolio. Your essay does not have to be long, but it should thoroughly state your educational objectives. Try throughout the essay to relate those objectives to what you have learned and accomplished in your life so far. For instance, you might wish to obtain a bachelor's degree to improve your working credentials in the area of communications. You could show how your past life experience in terms of work, interests, and other activities has tied in with this goal, and then project this goal into the future, describing what you hope to accomplish. If, on the other hand, you wish to enter an entirely new field, you should explain the kind of related skills and knowledge you have acquired and explain why you want to change. Then, go on and describe how you expect to complete this change.

Figure I

Bill Kilpatrick

Introductory Essay

I am presently seeking a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration with a major in Accounting. My related course work will be in Computer Science, Sociology and Political Science. I am currently employed at a Greater East Grottlesex Insurance Company, where I work in the personnel division as a computer programmer and data analyst. I have been interested in computers ever since I received basic instruction in Fortran programming during my service in the Army. Since then, I have further improved my skills in programming and

learned some of the fundamentals of the business uses of computers through my work with the insurance company and through a two-week course in micro-computers which I took there. I have the beginnings of a basic knowledge of accounting, which I acquired through my work with the swimming pool bond drive and through readings I have done on my own.

My present career plans are to attempt to transfer to the accounting branch of the insurance company as a computer systems analyst, and perhaps eventually to become a Certified Public Accountant. I believe that much of my previous experience relates in some way both to achieving this goal and to meeting the requirements for the major in Accounting of the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration program. As my statement of learning outcomes make clear, the prior learning for which I am now attempting to obtain credit is a mixture of formal education, on-the-job training, military service and volunteer work.

The above is not a full introductory essay but only a sketch of some of the sorts of things that should be included in an introductory essay. Bill's essay makes reference to his career and educational goals, and tries to relate his prior experience to these goals. Bill tries to show how his prior experience makes sense as preparation for the specific requirements of his degree program in Accounting.

Figure I

VITA

Bill Kilpatrick
 77 Dutch Elm Tree Lane
 East Grottlesex, CT 06121
 203-376-2323

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Position or Title</u>	<u>Activity or Responsibility</u>
1979-80	Student Bayport Community College	Adult education - Conversational Spanish course, 20 weeks, 2 hours Per week. Received grade of B+
1979	Data processing – student at East Grottlesex Electronics Training Center	Two week course, eight hours per day, on use of micro-computers in business.
1977-80	Data processing Officer, Division, Greater East Grottlesex Insurance Company	Fortran programming, analysis of personnel data.
1973-77	U.S. Army, Spec. 4, Clerk-Typist Fort Dix, NJ	Kept personnel records at battalion headquarters. Received instruction in Fortran programming And processed personnel data on Fort Dix Office of Personnel

		Computer.
1979	Swimming Pool Bond Drive, Chairman	Solicited funds, kept books on finances and supervised personnel.
1978	Election committee for East Grottlesex Common Council Candidate Milton Pimlico	Door-to-door solicitation of votes for Council candidate, successful in election.
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This is only a small sample of the kinds of experience you might want to list on your vita. An actual vita will commonly be longer than this sample. If you have many experiences to list, you may want to subdivide them into sections on education attainment, military service, work experience, volunteer activities, etc.

FIGURE II
VITA

Bill Kilpatrick
77 Dutch Elm Tree Lane
East Grottlesex, Connecticut 06121
203-376-2323

In 1973, I entered the U.S. Army, serving at Fort Dix, New Jersey, as a Specialist Fourth Class Clerk-Typist. My duties include typing, filing and the keeping of personnel records at battalion headquarters. During my service, I received instruction in Fortran programming and, in addition to my other duties, began working at the Fort Dix office of Personnel as a programmer.

Upon my discharge in 1977, I was hired by the Greater East Grottlesex Insurance Company as a Fortran computer programmer, with responsibilities which eventually came to include data processing and the analysis of personal data.

In 1979-80, I enrolled as an adult education student at Bayport Community College in Bayport, Connecticut, in a 2-hour per week, 20-week course in conversational Spanish for which I received a grade of B+. In the beginning of 1979, I also participated in a training program in the business applications of microcomputers to data processing. The course was an eight-hour per day on-the-job training program lasting two weeks, and it was given by the Greater East Grottlesex Electronics Training Center of the Greater East Grottlesex Insurance Company.

Throughout the three years I have lived in East Grottlesex, I have been quite active in a variety of volunteer community activities. In 1976, I served on the election committee for Democratic Council candidate Milton Pimlico, on whose behalf I canvassed and solicited votes door-to-door. I was the chairman of the East Grottlesex Swimming Pool Bond Drive in 1976, which successfully raised the necessary funds to build a community swimming pool. My responsibilities included soliciting funds, staff supervision and bookkeeping.

FIGURE II

Bill Kilpatrick

CS 114

Statement of Learning Outcomes

Learning Experience

Computer Programmer/Analyst
Greater East Grottlsex
Insurance Company,
1/81 – 6/83

Skills or Competence Acquired

I have acquired a thorough working knowledge of computer programming in all of its aspects. I have written several programs from scratch, including the process of design, flow-charting, structured programming, testing, debugging and implementation. I have also made extensive use of multidimensional tables, all manner of inputs and outputs and the procedure JCL needed to execute the programs. This work was accomplished through the use of the high-level business language COBOL, although I have also used MARK IV and a number of PC software products. I have also had a thorough grounding in documentation of a major development system. My most recent work in documentation occurred within the context of a proposal drafted for the senior management through the “Innovation Through Involvement” program. All of this knowledge is approximately equal to that which could be learned through the University of Hartford course “Computer Programming I” (CS 114)

FIGURE IV

Bill Kilpatrick

SPA 110

Statement of Learning Outcomes

Learning Experience

Conversational Spanish Course,
20 weeks, Bayport Community
College

Skills or Competences Acquired

I received intensive training in understanding, speaking, and the use of basic structural patterns in the Spanish language. I have acquired skills in using the Spanish language, equivalent to what would be learned in one semester of SPA 110 at the University of Hartford.

**UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD
LINCS CREDIT REQUEST**

(Use one form for each course)

NAME OF APPLICANT _____

STUDENT ID # _____

TITLE OF SUBJECT AREA _____

UHA COURSE EQUIVALENT _____ **NUMBER OF CREDITS REQUESTED** _____

STATEMENTS OF COMPETENCE

DOCUMENTATION

FACULTY EVALUATION

REVIEWER NAME _____ **DEPARTMENT** _____

SIGNATURE _____ **DATE OF EVALUATION** _____

ACADEMIC CREDITS RECOMMENDED _____

COMMENTS:

DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSON'S APPROVAL

NAME _____ **SIGNATURE** _____

DATE _____

DEAN OF COLLEGE APPROVAL

NAME: _____ **SIGNATURE** _____

DATE _____