**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**TAACCCT Tales**

 **Prior Learning: From Capacity Building to Sustainability**

**Thursday, September 7, 2017**

*Transcript by*

*Noble Transcription Services*

*Murrieta, CA*

LAURA CASERTANO: Again, I want to welcome everyone to today's TAACCCT Tales webinar and remind you, if you haven't done so already, to introduce yourself in that chat, if you haven't done so already.

And I'm going to turn things over to your moderator today, Aparna Darisipudi. She's with the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. Aparna?

APARNA DARISIPUDI: Thanks, Laura. Welcome, everyone. Good afternoon from Washington, D.C. My name is Aparna Darisipudi, as Laura said. I am a part of the larger TAACCCT group that supports all the TAACCCT grantees. I'm going to start off with just talking a little bit about what TAACCCT is, and that's the abbreviation we use for quite a mouthful of a grant program. So for those of you who are joining us and may not be familiar with TAACCCT, this is just a little overview of what TAACCCT is all about.

So TAACCCT is the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College Career Training grant program, and that is called for shorthand TAACCCT. The U.S. Department of Labor made the grant program. It's about a $2 billion investment awarded over four years, and it's an investment to build the capacity of community colleges to serve the educational needs of adult dislocated workers, people who quality for trade adjustment assistance, or learners with similar needs. Of course investments may help others.

Rather than funding the community colleges to train participants, these grants are funding community college to develop or enhance programs of study, among other things. All the programs of study they develop have led to an industry-recognized credential, and those 700-plus institutions across the country have developed a lot, a lot, a lot of curriculum and other materials and there's more to come over the next two years. We're about halfway through the four years, and we have another two years of the grant program.

In order to showcase these TAACCCT funded innovations and products, the TAACCCT Learning Network, in conjunction with the storytelling community and SkillsCommons, which I'll talk to you about in a second, is hosting webinars where grantees demonstrate the curriculum and policy changes they implemented. That is what we're calling today, which is TAACCCT Tales.

These webinars are giving you an idea of what they've learned, what they've accomplished, and to share that with the peers across the country, whether you're a TAACCCT grantee or not. In the coming months we'll host more of these webinars, and we've done a few beforehand.

So if you look on WorkforceGPS, you will find more information on the previous TAACCCT webinars on these stories. We'll be doing future webinars on apprenticeship models, career pathways, and building employer partnerships. You can find all of them on TAACCCT, which is TAACCCT.workforceGPS.org/events, or you can just search on WorkforceGPS for events and TAACCCT.

So now, I'm going to take just a quick moment to talk about SkillsCommons. With the grant working towards systematic change in workforce development, ETA, which is Employment and Training Administration, wants to make sure that all the products and innovations coming out of the TAACCCT program were available for reuse.

The online library, which is called SkillsCommons, was developed as a library, a repository for grantees to submit their curriculum and program designs so other colleges and training providers could benefit from them. The grant programs are required to upload all their information and the products they produce onto SkillsCommons. I strongly encourage you to visit the site and navigate through it. There are thousands of resources that are available for free at any time for reuse for anyone, whether they are a grant program participant or not.

Now, I'm going to hand it over to our presenters, that is Doug, Lisa, and Cecile, all from the community college of Rhode Island. Welcome, and I'm going to hand it over to you, Doug. Doug, you might need to unmute you phone, if you're talking.

DOUGLAS FLOR: There we go. Somebody – there we go. On behalf of President Hughes and the team at CCRI, we want to thank you for the opportunity to be here today. We have one of the largest community colleges in the northeast with over 15,000 students and 95 percent of those students attending CCRI at any of our four campuses are from the state of Rhode Island. And we have some other statistics there for you to take a look at for a moment. We do have 80 degree and certificate programs here, and we're proud to say that 90 percent of our graduates in our latest survey demonstrated that they were employed.

If you would move to the next slide, we have a poll that we would like to have you complete at this time. And that is, given the information in the previous slide about CCRI, how many students do you think took advantage of accelerated pathways at CCRI over the past six years or each year for the last six years? And we got quite a few people clicking in. Very interesting. We'll give you another 10 seconds. OK. Well, the 38 percent of you who selected 668 are correct.

So let me set up a metaphor for this next video that we're going to show you, and this video we got put together through the SkillsCommons and the folks at Edubations (ph). And they've done an absolutely fantastic job at helping us put together a metaphor for the kind of work that we've been doing with credit for prior learning and accelerated pathways. And so without further ado, we will put the video on.

MS. CASERTANO: All right. I'm going to start the video in just one second. For everyone who is listening to this webinar over the phone, you're going to need to mute your line and listen through your computer speakers. So just unmute your computer speakers. The sound is only going to play through your computer speakers. So I'll give you a second now to do that, and I'm going to start playing the video.

VIDEO: CC, a 1964 Chevrolet Impala who loves taking students on the accelerated pathways for prior learning. CCRI has a total enrollment of 16,000 students for each of the past six years, and CC carried students through roughly 650 separate credit award events. About half of those are when students take the college-level examination program or Dante's Subject Standardized Test Exam pathway, and about 85 credit award events are on the pathways traveled by military personnel or veterans through joint service transcript reviews.

CC carried about 75 students on the portfolios and 60 students under departmental challenge exam pathways. CC provides International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers apprenticeship students an opportunity to earn 44 credits toward their technical studies degree and a couple students in medical technician concentrations.

We also have the standardized credit award pathway for those students who have completed the four real estate courses required by the state of Rhode Island for licensure up to 15 credits, and police academy graduates earn nine credits in CCRI's law enforcement program. There are about a dozen variations off this pathway, including firefighting, emergency management, and financial management.

The real difficulty with CC having done a whole scale review is that she is not ready for a cross-country road trip as some pathways were not present for some students, and the processes and procedures were in need of repair. In order to get CC ready, we gave her a new chassis as a secure foundation in which to tie all the system together. This was accomplished through the first ever prior learning policy the college has ever had.

The two most important points in the policy from a student's perspective are that credit would be awarded to specific courses and that all advisement and guidance would be in the best long-term interest of the student. We also gave CC a much needed new engine by implementing the Council for Adult Experiential Learning, CAEL, accelerator, a web-based prescreening tool where students could enter their information and then we provide proactive guidance and specific direction on possible pathways for which students can be awarded credit.

This is proactive in that each student encounters three traffic guides who point students to the accelerator. By implementing the CAEL accelerator, we have seen a 140 percent increase in the number of military personnel and veterans served per month that we are awarding double the prior amount of average credits previously awarded and are on track to triple the total credits awarded for the year.

This is important as we know from analytics conducted on the previous six years that the graduation rate for those students that take advantage of prior learning credit is nearly four times that of those who do not. In other words, four times the number of students cross the finish line when they take advantage of CC's trip down the accelerated pathways.

To promote accelerated pathways further, CCRI developed 10 new videos and spent $30,000 on a new media campaign, radio, TV, newspaper, online ads, et cetera, to let people know of the exciting news about all the pathways at CCRI. We now have a complete list of accelerated pathways. We added GED college ready plus, international baccalaureate diploma program and UExcel exams from Excelsior College in Pearson just to name a few.

We also gave CC a new set of wheels by conducting a statewide summit on prior learning. Working with the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, we invited folks from CAEL and American Council on Education, ACE, who conducted workshops and presentations on prior learning to senior leaders and faculty from all three Rhode Island public institutions and several private institutions in the state.

The TAACCCT grant has not only provided for much of the work done in the area of accelerated pathways to proceed but also has made CC road trip ready and a true benefit for students at CCRI. For more information visit our prior learning website. (End video.)

MR. FLOR: In order to get where we are today at CCRI, a good deal of foundational work had to be done. This included several steps to building capacity and sustainability around accelerated pathways and prior learning. These steps included conducting a gap analysis between what we say we do and what we do, to evaluate the process from beginning to end ensuring all handoffs were proper. Were all accelerated pathways in place at CCRI? Are all the stakeholders represented and represented well? What did our policy actually say? And how did the departmental assessments fit into the mix? Next slide.

As you can see from this planning slide, our work began on the gap analysis in mid-May of 2016 with a documentation of the current process about what we say we do within review of those people involved and what we actually do, the reconciliation of the two with any additions and changes and deletions and finished at the end of July with a review to all stakeholders. As you can see, we started with the various types of prior learning listed on the lower left, and on the right we chose initial programs that we started with as a part of the TAACCCT grant as well.

I know this looks like a scary looking slide, but while I was working at Hewlett Packard and Electronic Data Systems, I learned that, if I could draw out the process, I could find out the steps in the process where there were problems. And oftentimes those were in the handbooks and especially to find out the difference between what we say we do and what we actually do.

The accelerated pathways that are listed here in blue, such as advanced placement, CLEP, military credit for prior learning, and so on, are those accelerated pathways that we had in place at CCRI before the gap analysis. Since the gap analysis we were able to add the GED college ready plus, the international baccalaureate diploma program, the UExcel Exams that are developed in conjunction with Excelsior College and Pearson, and we've also had one of our academic programs selected for the DoD SOC, Servicemembers Opportunity College.

When thinking about the best long-term interest of students, I developed this way of categorizing the various accelerated pathways for prior learning. The top layer represents those pathways with the broadest recognition for transfer credit and are accepted at thousands of colleges across the United States. These are programs like – or accelerated pathways like advanced placement, CLEP, DSST, and International Baccalaureate.

The middle layer represents those pathways with a broad recognition for transfer credit and are also accepted at many of the same schools listed in the top layer but not as many as the top layer. Some of these are things like ACE transcript recommendations and UExcel exams, just to name a couple.

The lowest level has a more restricted recognition for transfer. Things like departmental challenge exams, standardized credit awards, portfolio assessments, corporate training not reviewed by ACE. While these are all now accepted within our state at any of the three Rhode Island institutions, we wanted to ensure that students who wish to go out of state find that their credits would be awarded in a way that allowed them to take as many of those credits across the state border into other areas. Hence, we needed to prioritize accelerated pathways for prior learning. CCRI is the first institution I know of to take this into consideration and implement.

While I could speak to the basics of educational level and quality or compliance with accreditation, the two areas highlighted in the earlier video about the new prior learning policy that I think are unique and important to the students are best long-term interest of the student and that the credits would be applied to specific courses. No longer were we going to provide credits towards elective credits and those credits that may or may not bear toward the degree, but we wanted to make sure that as many credits as we were awarding would even go toward specific credit-bearing courses within the degree. We also wanted to ensure that we could be proactive and evaluate the process to build in efficiency.

At this time I would like to turn it over to my colleague Cecile Roberti, department chair of the business administration program at CCRI.

CECILE ROBERTI: Hello, everyone. My name is Cecile Roberti, and as Doug said, I'm an associate professor and the department chair for the Business Administration Department at the Community College of Rhode Island. When establishing a policy for awarding prior learning credit within our department, the first step was to evaluate our course offerings and see what course were applicable for awarding credit for prior learning.

This is a listing of all of the accounting courses offered in the department. As you can see, there are some courses for which we do not award credit for prior learning. Intermediate Accounting I and II are examples of these higher level courses that do not lend themselves to prior learning credit due to the advanced nature of the course content.

Once we determined which courses we felt were eligible for prior learning credit, we determined for which ones there existed a nationally recognized exam such as CLEP, DSST, or UExcel. For example, you can see that the personal finance has a DSST exam associated with it. We first evaluated these exams and made sure that they covered the required learning outcomes that we had established for the related course.

Then we prioritized the exams with CLEP and DSST being the first choice. We felt that they were in the best interest of the students as credit obtained via these national exams tend to transfer to other institutions. If a CLEP or DSST exam did not exist, we would then use UExcel. For example, there is no CLEP or DSST exam that covers management and labor relations, but there is a UExcel exam that we would use to evaluate prior learning for that course.

For those courses where a nationally-recognized exam did not exist, we would evaluate the prior learning based on a portfolio submitted by the student. For example, there is no nationally-recognized exam for advertising principles. Therefore, prior learning would be evaluated using a portfolio developed by the student. For each course there exists a course description along with required learning outcomes, which are stated on our department website. The portfolio needs to demonstrate that the student has met all of the stated learning outcomes for the course through their prior learning. The portfolios are assigned to a faculty member who specializes in the course that the student is seeking credit for. The students work with the faculty member and are given guidance in creating their portfolio.

Let's look at an example using Business 1000: Workplace Relationship Skills. Here you see the stated course description and the required learning outcomes. The student must demonstrate and provide evidence in their portfolio that they have met each of the five stated learning outcomes.

Let's take a look at outcome number one and how a student would do this.

Learning outcome one states, "To examine and develop a strategy for improving interpersonal job-oriented skills as it relates to individual career interests." Guidance is given to the student to assess if they have met this opportunity by outcome by asking them a series of questions to use as a guide in developing their narrative. This slide shows an example of some of these questions. They are also asked to provide evidence to verify their claims.

They are often provided with an example of ways they can provide that evidence. In addition, the faculty member evaluating the portfolio can work with the student on any questions they may have. We found that this structure and support resulted in more successful achievement of prior learning credit for the students.

So I'd like to turn it back over to Doug.

MR. FLOR: Thank you. One of the things that we did with the TAACCCT grant was that we also developed through the financial aid company a series of videos that introduced the various accelerated pathways. And we covered areas like the advanced placement, AP, and all the others that are listed there. At this time we would like to show the video about the military and veteran.

VIDEO: How do veterans and active duty service members get college credit for military training? As a veteran or even as a current active duty service member, you may have participated in various training for which college credit may be awarded. The process at the Community College of Rhode Island, CCRI, begins by first acquiring a copy of your military transcript. Official – (End video.)

MR. FLOR: These 10 videos are placed on our website, and in conjunction with the opportunity to be more proactive, we have set these out and let them be used by our media folks as well.

CCRI, in an effort to meet the sustainability aspect of the TAACCCT grant, has initiated a new budget line item for prior learning coordinator. We have moved from a decentralized, incomplete, fragmented process that is reactive, and we have moved to a centralized, complete, efficient process that is proactive. That new prior learning coordinator is CCRI's evidence of how we are committed to sustaining this fact as we move forward.

One of the things that we do is – with the accelerator is that every student who is accepted at CCRI is asked to complete the accelerator. The CAEL accelerator is a web-based prescreening tool that we've adapted to meet our current needs. To introduce this and speak more to the accelerator, I'm going to introduce Lisa in just a second here.

But when the students call in to set up their ACCUPLACER and placement test, they are reminded by the counselor that they speak with, have they taken the accelerator yet? When they actually come in to take the ACCUPLACER for placement in reading and math, they are also reminded a third time. So we're trying to be as proactive as we can with getting students to know that we want to and work with them in the accelerated pathways for prior learning credit. Lisa's now going to take over.

LISA ROBICHAUD: Thank you, Doug. I'm pleased today to have this opportunity to talk about our accelerator tool for determining possible areas of credit for prior learning at CCRI as well as my role in the process. First, we'll take a look at both – we'll take a look at the accelerator as seen by both students and non-students alike who are able to access it through our website's prior learning page. The accelerator can be accessed through the clicking of the image in the center of the page.

Whether students access the accelerator through the website or through the link which is – that is included in their acceptance letter or e-mail, they begin by creating an account. The accelerator can be accessed by persons who are not yet students at CCRI, and it's great for our admissions recruiters when they're out in the field. Students are guided through the various sections of the tool where they can input valuable information used to determine possible credit for prior learning.

In the first section titled "about you," students can list whether they have any military experience, work experience, prior college credit, and AP credits from high school. When students click continue, it takes them to the next section. Next, students are asked whether they speak any foreign languages fluently and whether they have ever taken a CLEP exam.

In the next section students are prompted to list their education, which is broken down into three areas, traditional, non-traditional, and self-directed. Traditional education is defined as having a formalized curriculum from an accredited institution of higher learning that provides credentials of completion such as certificates, diplomas, or degrees.

Non-traditional education includes certification exams like project management or Cisco networking as well as on-the-job training, online courses, continuing education units, or community courses. Self-directed education, the third category, is defined as learning experiences that students have had on their own, hobbies, leadership roles, or family responsibilities that have led to college-level learning.

In the next section students can list in detail any work experiences that they've had that may translate to credit towards their studies. They can also list and provide details for life experiences, for example, planning events, volunteering, serving as a board member, and even semi-professional hobbies.

The final section is areas of expertise where students can check academic programs for which they have extensive knowledge that may qualify for credit. Then they can then select courses from within the program with which they may have expertise. In this section students rate their mastery of the course learning outcomes as being not like me, somewhat like me, or exactly like me.

Next, we're going to take a look at what a completed accelerator report looks like. As you can see, the accelerator report takes all relevant information that relates to credit for prior learning and lists it in a concise manner in the report. This makes the information easily accessible for the reader. The accelerator report shows whether the student speaks foreign languages, transferrable credit from prior college courses, non-traditional education and self-directed areas of expertise, life experiences, work experiences. In the last section of the report we see the level of expertise selected by the student in relation to the courses selected.

All of this information is then cross-referenced with CCRI's degree evaluation which gives us a much clearer picture of exactly what the student needs to complete to satisfy their degree requirements here at CCRI. Using both the accelerator and degree evaluation gives us all the information we need to advise the student on the best pathway towards earning their degree. OK. Now, I'm going to hand it back to Doug.

MR. FLOR: One of the things that we wanted to talk about before we got into the benefits is to take a moment to answer any questions that you may have. So I'm going to call the moderator back in to help us with the questions, and we will answer them as they come up.

I see the first one is regarding credit for prior learning sustainability. "Do we move university associate institutions beyond the traditional models like CLEP for reviewing and acceptance of prior learning credit?"

Yes. Absolutely. We should be. We've mentioned that we have standardized credit awards at CCRI. For instance, if you take the four real estate exams – or courses through the Rhode Island Association of Realtors and take the state licensure exams, we've looked at those and we've said that's the equivalent of up to 15 credits in our business program. We've done other standardized credits in firefighting, emergency management.

Anyone who attends the police academies in Providence or the county sheriffs or the state patrol, those students can earn up to nine credits in the law enforcement program. And so I think we should be advancing beyond the standardized credit or beyond the traditional ways of doing things and moving into standardized credit awards, moving into recognition of professional certifications, moving into opportunities for awarding credits for creative writing and so on.

So I think that we should be moving well beyond just CLEP, but I do think it's really important to remember that CLEP credits and AP credits and some of those others, they transfer almost anywhere. And so it's really important to keep those on the forefront.

Moving to the second question, "Did CCRI develop the accelerator in house?"

No. We did not. It is a part of CAEL. We worked with CAEL. My colleague at CAEL, Wilson Finch, he and I worked together to review what exactly the accelerator would do, and they customized it to meet our needs. Specifically, we wanted to do not just assessment at the program level but we wanted it at the course level and at the course student learning outcome level.

So we took and put together a spreadsheet with all of our programs, all of our courses, all of the student learning outcomes for those, and we've uploaded those into the CAEL tool. We also worked with them to bring about 15 to 20 innovations into the accelerator. They've been very good. Absolutely a perfect partner to work with in this regard.

Let's see. I'm going to move on to the benefits unless there are other questions that come through. OK. Let me move on to the benefits.

This slide is all about increasing the number of nationally-recognized exams for prior learning credit. It is also about increasing the number of exams for which credit is applied to specific courses, even credit-bearing courses towards the degree programs. We now have 129 exams, up from 87.

So we've had an increase of 142 percent just in the number of exams that we have for credit at CCRI and that we recognize; of those 129, 118 of them are targeted to specific courses. As always, there will be some of these exams for which they just don't fit with a particular course and we give elective credit, but wherever possible we award credit to specific courses at CCRI.

On this next slide we want to bring about a very important statistic, and that is that we're serving 40 percent more military persons per month than we did in the previous six-year average per month. And the average credit award for those military persons has gone up from an average of 7 credits per person to 14. That means an almost 200 percent increase in the numbers of credits awarded per person. And we are on track to triple the total number of credits awarded to military personnel for the year when we compare with our six-year average from previous.

This next video tells a story about Brian, a student at CCRI who is also in the navy. Brian came to us wanting to see what could be done as he was preparing to retire from the service in four years, and he wanted to finish his two-year degree doing part-time work by then. Upon reviewing his joint service transcript, we were joyfully glad to be able to share with him that we could award nearly 45 credits towards his associate arts – associate's degree in technical studies. And at this time I'd like Brian to tell you his story. So here's Brian.

VIDEO: My courses needed for the degree and leaves me with – and [inaudible] and procedural compliance. I would like –

MR. FLOR: As you can see, Brian is an outstanding young man, and some – a great person who has served our country well. Word is getting out along the – in the military community about the work that we're doing in prior learning, and we're just seeing an increase every day over what we've been doing in the previous six years.

And I'm quite excited about the fact that we're doing that here at CCRI. It makes what we do meaningful. And at this time I'm going to turn it over to Aparna for wrapping things up and taking the final questions.

MS. DARISIPUDI: Thanks, Doug and team. We really appreciate hearing – I think we have a few more questions, Doug, if you want to look at them and see if anything we can answer today.

MR. FLOR: OK. I'm trying to get my screen to cooperate here.

MS. DARISIPUDI: Sure. Let me read one of the questions. One of them was, "Was there a charge for the accelerator?"

MR. FLOR: Yes. There was a – what I consider to be a small fee for the accelerator. It's worth its weight in gold, especially how we've implemented it. We've implemented it in our enrollment and admissions process, and our admissions counselors, when they're out in the field working, they can bring it up and tell people to go and start it. You don't even have to be a student at CCRI to get access to it. And so that student can check us out, and we can work with them even before they become a student at CCRI. But in relation to the cost, I can't say what they charge us because it's in our contract that we not say what they charged us but it's not what you think it might be. It's –

MS. DARISIPUDI: OK. Thank you. There's something else here. I think it's kind of a two-parter. So bear with me. "Did you put together a team or a CLA committee to help organize your process? And do you include institutional challenge exams as part of your accelerated pathways inventory?"

MR. FLOR: So in terms of getting people together, we've had two committee. One committee of faculty that started with us took and looked at and went through all of the national standard exams like the CLEP, the DSST, and UExcel, and we pulled all the information ahead of time so that our faculty had all of the descriptions about the exams and so on and right there before them.

We put it into an Excel spreadsheet with links to everything, and they could then go and look. And so we had a team of faculty members who were involved, and so they were the ones that reviewed and helped us make it so that, in accordance with our new prior learning policy that we have, that we could make that effort to award the credit to specific courses.

We also had another team that worked with us on the idea of how to conduct portfolios better. We had a wide range of variation in how different academic programs were doing portfolios, and so we wanted to get together and determine a way of moving forward.

We're in the process right now of we've evaluated probably one of the top programs in the country in terms of how they do portfolios, and we have utilized this module approach or modularized approach in which we're going to be developing a much more standardized process and in – we're planning on looking at how to use SharePoint instead of Banner – or I mean Blackboard in the management of the portfolios because SharePoint we can then start a student at any point in time in the process and be able to – whether they take three weeks or three months to complete a portfolio, it doesn't matter in SharePoint.

And in that process we will also – we've developed a new rubric on how to assess the learning from a declarative knowledge standpoint, a procedural knowledge standpoint, and an integrative knowledge standpoint so that we have a much more standardized approach. And we're also going to be incorporating the idea of whether or not a demonstration needs to be made. And sometimes there's more of an emphasis in demonstration than in other programs.

For instance, the performing arts programs in theater and music, those are much more demonstrative and – in nature than they would be in terms of the documenting. And so we would want to make sure that we have that. In our advanced manufacturing and CNC courses, we want to make sure that the students have the opportunity to demonstrate that as well and not just know the steps and how to do it. We'll actually set them up on the machine and say, now, OK. Do this. And so our portfolio team, the faculty has worked with us. We've shared with them where we're going and they've given their input and we're moving forward with it.

MS. DARISIPUDI: Great. There's a couple more questions. Let me read you the next one.

MR. FLOR: Sure.

MS. DARISIPUDI: This is from someone. "This looks like it would take a support person to help students determine how to answer all of this, particularly for students who earned credits for foreign schools, colleges, and universities and those who are trying to get credit for life experience from other countries and from a non-academic background. How do you handle this?"

MR. FLOR: Well, that's a good question that we have not handled much of that at this time.

MS. DARISIPUDI: OK.

MR. FLOR: We are work – we do have an international organization in Providence that's requested us to get involved with them, but we have not gotten there this far. We have just been rolling out the accelerator in the last five to six months. We have just been getting all of these pieces rolling, and there's just only so much time in a day. And so we just haven't gotten to that, but we would like to be able to do that even more.

MS. DARISIPUDI: Well, maybe in another few months if you have more experience, we'll have you guys come back and talk to us about that. There's a few more questions.

"How are you transcribing if the credits apply to courses? Do you show the sources of credit on the student's transcripts?"

MR. FLOR: On the transcript what we do currently is we list that the – we put a T on the transcript. That's the current way that we mark prior learning credit on the transcript. All of the accelerated pathways are listed with a T. That will be changing.

We've developed a code system that will be going onto the transcripts, and we will identify not only the type of pathway used but, if it's a situation like AP, we will list the AP score, whether it was a four or a five, and if it's a CLEP test, we'll list the score. But when applied toward a specific course, we will list the specific course, and there will not be a grade listed. It will only say that T code or that couple of digits code and then their score, if need be.

MS. DARISIPUDI: OK. Next – we have a few. So a lot of people are very interested in this. So the next question for your team is, "Have you looked at any of the industry-recognized credentials, for example, AWSMN and A Plus, CompTIA, and matched them against existing courses leading to prior learning credit?"

MR. FLOR: Yes. Yes. We have, and yes. We are. In fact, there is a person at the commissioner's office who this last summer had identified some interns who were coming and collating all of the industry certificates and certifications and trying to map those towards specific degree areas.

We have not integrated that into our current what we're doing at this time simply because there are so many of them, and we're trying to focus on what are the most impactful for the students that are coming to CCRI. We do take a look at things like project management certificates from ESI International and see where we can award those credits towards specific courses.

MS. DARISIPUDI: Sounds good. Another question is, "And how about transferring credit for prior learning to universities with which you have transfer agreements?"

MR. FLOR: Actually, that's a good question. Our – the state of Rhode Island has recently passed a transfer and reverse transfer policy that covers even prior learning in the state. And so that is in the process of being worked out and negotiated and articulated exactly how that will work but the policy was just recently approved and we're moving forward as a state to make that possible for students so that they don't lose any of these credits whatsoever.

MS. DARISIPUDI: So the Education Department within Rhode Island kind of partnering agreed to this?

MR. FLOR: Yes.

MS. DARISIPUDI: OK. Great. Another question, "Do you offer any 100 percent online degree offerings so students and veterans from other states could take advantage of your accelerated offering, or do they have to take courses at your physical location or much less be a resident of Rhode Island?"

MS. ROBERTI: Hi. This is Cecile Roberti, and we in the Business Administration Department are just in the process of offering the first fully online degree in general business. So we have approval from our postsecondary council and we're in the process of working out a few more logistics and then that will be marketed. But the intent is to offer these courses to students not within the state or military veteran – military personnel who are stationed elsewhere.

MS. DARISIPUDI: OK. "Do four-year colleges accept the prior learning credit?"

MR. FLOR: Yes. The University of Rhode Island and Rhode Island College, through our new policy that we're working out between the colleges and the articulation and so on, they will be accepting our prior learning credit that we award.

MS. DARISIPUDI: OK. I have one more question, unless someone types in something else. "Hopefully the credits you award for prior learning will be accepted at other institutions," and you just said that they are. "Have you discussed the coding of credits on transcripts then to ensure credits will be accepted?"

MR. FLOR: Yes. And that goes back to the idea of using specific codes on the transcript to identify what kind of transfer credit and what kind of – what their scores were so that, rather than the old way which is that we have a T on the transcript and nothing to identify it. And that causes a whole lot of work from, say, Rhode Island College having to call us and being able to say, what was that credit and how did they earn it and what was their score? It will actually say AP4 and – or AP5 and that way any school receiving the transcript will know exactly what kind of prior learning credit it was or accelerated pathway and what the scores were.

MS. DARISIPUDI: That's the last question I had. This is – we have a couple of minutes. So if anyone else has any other questions they want to type in, we can do that for another moment. If I don't see anything, we'll hand it off to Laura, and I thank you, Doug, Lisa, Cecile, for the invaluable information you shared with the community. And I'm sure you'll have more to share with us after a few more months at this. It seems like you're doing a whole lot in a very short period of time.

MR. FLOR: I want to thank the folks. I want to thank Scott and Trevor Kipon (sp), my program officer. I want to thank Alexandra Sinert (sp) who helped us with the video from Focus Edubation. Maria, she's been fantastic and the folks at SkillsCommons, and it's been fun and enjoyable. We've got a lot of wonderful things happening, and it's all because of the folks who provided us with the TAACCCT grant.

MS. DARISIPUDI: Well, I have one more question, and then I think I'll – we'll wrap it up. The last question is, "Are prior learning credits earned even if the degree is not attained?"

MR. FLOR: Yes.

MS. DARISIPUDI: OK. Thank you. Laura, I'm going to hand it over to you next to wrap up.

MS. CASERTANO: All right. Great. I just want to thank all the presenters and participants.

(END)