

Second Regular Session  
Sixty-eighth General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO

DRAFT  
10.27.11

BILL C

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LLS NO. 12-0209.01 Brita Darling x2241

HOUSE BILL

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Massey and Fields, Holbert

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Bacon and King K., Hudak

SHORT TITLE: "Higher Ed Prior Learning Assessments"

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 CONCERNING CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION.

Bill Summary

*(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://www.leg.state.co.us/billsummaries>.)*

**Educational Success Task Force.** The bill requires the commission on higher education, after consulting with public institutions of higher education (institutions), to develop criteria for awarding credit for a student's prior learning through work experience, military service, community involvement, or independent study and to define a process to assess prior learning. Beginning with the 2013-14 academic year, public

*Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.  
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.*

institutions will implement a program awarding academic credit for a student's prior learning.

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1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly  
3 finds that:

4 (a) Many adults entering Colorado community colleges, state  
5 colleges, and universities have acquired college-level knowledge in the  
6 workplace, through military service, in the community, or through  
7 independent study;

8 (b) A student can save time and money in completing a certificate  
9 or degree program if the institution at which the student enrolls assesses  
10 the student's college-level knowledge and awards academic credit as  
11 appropriate based on the assessment;

12 (c) Awarding academic credit for a student's prior learning will  
13 increase the likelihood that the student will complete his or her certificate  
14 or degree and achieve his or her academic and economic goals; and

15 (d) Colorado's economic development depends upon a  
16 well-educated workforce with the academic credentials necessary to  
17 compete in the job market.

18 (2) Therefore, the general assembly declares that it is beneficial  
19 to students and to the development of an educated workforce in Colorado  
20 for community colleges and other public institutions of higher education  
21 to develop criteria and assessment methods to recognize a student's  
22 college-level learning that takes place outside of the classroom and to  
23 award credit toward completion of postsecondary certificates and degrees  
24 based upon this prior learning.

25 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-1-125, **add** (4.5)

1 as follows:

2           **23-1-125. Commission directive - student bill of rights - degree**  
3 **requirements - implementation of core courses - competency test -**  
4 **prior learning assessment. (4.5) Prior learning assessment.** ON OR  
5 BEFORE JULY 1, 2013, THE COMMISSION, IN CONSULTATION WITH EACH  
6 PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SHALL DEVELOP CRITERIA  
7 FOR AWARDING ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR A STUDENT'S PRIOR LEARNING AND  
8 DEFINE A PROCESS TO ASSESS A STUDENT'S PRIOR LEARNING AND  
9 DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER OF CREDITS TO AWARD. PRIOR  
10 LEARNING MAY INCLUDE, BUT NEED NOT BE LIMITED TO, WORK  
11 EXPERIENCE, MILITARY SERVICE, COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, AND  
12 INDEPENDENT STUDY. THE ASSESSMENT OF PRIOR LEARNING MAY  
13 INCLUDE COMPETENCY TESTING AND OTHER METHODS OF ASSESSMENT AS  
14 DEFINED BY THE COMMISSION. BEGINNING IN THE 2013-14 ACADEMIC  
15 YEAR, EACH PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL  
16 IMPLEMENT A PROGRAM GRANTING ACADEMIC CREDIT TO A STUDENT  
17 WHOSE PRIOR LEARNING MEETS THE CRITERIA DEVELOPED BY THE  
18 COMMISSION.

19           **SECTION 3. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act  
20 shall take effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the  
21 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August  
22 7, 2012, if adjournment sine die is on May 9, 2012); except that, if a  
23 referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the  
24 state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act  
25 within such period, then the act, item, section, or part shall not take effect  
26 unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in

- 1 November 2012 and shall take effect on the date of the official
- 2 declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.