



Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)

Topic Guide

Family Life Experiential Learning



Table of Contents

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE.....	2
GENERAL INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS.....	3
Number of Credits	3
Level of Learning	3
Page Count and Sources Guidelines	3
Additional Resources	3
LEARNING OUTCOMES	4
COMPOSING YOUR PLA PROJECT	5
Experience	5
Knowledge and/or Practice	5
Reflection and Self-Assessment	5
Writing Your PLA Project	6
PLA ASSESSMENT RUBRIC.....	8
EXAMPLES OF GENERAL PLA TOPICS AND LEVELS OF LEARNING.....	10
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES.....	12
Office of Prior Learning Assessment	12
PLA Advisor	12
Course Match PLA Examples	12
5 Tips About PLA from a Student	12
The Writing Center	12

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is meant to help you understand the knowledge and skills typically expected of someone who can demonstrate college-level learning for experiences of Family Life. This guide is also meant to help you go through the processes of thinking about your experience, refining your academic knowledge, and demonstrating a connection between your experience and knowledge. Answering the following questions and following the prompts will help you develop the essay, which will be your PLA Project.

GENERAL INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS

Number of Credits

The Family Life Experiential Learning project is the equivalent to a 2-credit course.

Level of Learning

The Family Life Experiential Learning project should be treated as a beginning/freshman college-level course.

Page Count and Sources Guidelines

- at least 6 pages (1200 words)
- at least 4 scholarly, professional or college-level secondary sources
- APA style

Additional Resources

- PLA Advisor (SCPSPLA@depaul.edu)
- University Writing Center (<https://condor.depaul.edu/writing/programs-writing-center-scheduling-appointments.html>)
- Purdue Online Writing Lab APA Style Guide (https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.htm)

LEARNING OUTCOMES¹

To demonstrate this Experiential Learning Opportunity, students must:

1. Offer a personal definition of family and compare that to other established definitions
2. Describe different types of family structures and compare these systems to both personal and established definitions. (Note: particular attention should be paid to diverse contemporary family structures.)
3. Analyze the family's significance to individuals, society, and culture
4. Discuss how family structures have changed in the 20th and 21st centuries
5. Identify one issue contributing to changing family structures
6. Describe and analyze personal experience with the issue contributing to changing family structures

¹ The CCH 253 –Family Live: Past, Present and Future was consulted in developing these Learning Outcomes.

COMPOSING YOUR PLA PROJECT

Follow the outline below by considering the questions and prompts to develop your PLA Project. Simply answering questions and prompts are not sufficient – you will need to expand your writing to demonstrate the depth and comprehensive of your understanding. As you respond and revise them into cohesive portfolio, remember that a content expert will assess your PLA project based on your 1) Experience, 2) Knowledge and/or Practice, and 3) Reflection & Self-Assessment.

Experience

This criterion requires you to communicate relevant descriptions and explanations of personal and/or professional experience related to learning outcome(s). Describe experience(s) and how you achieved college-level learning. Provide the context and background of your experience, and provide relevant details regarding what you did. For example, you might include a new skill you acquired, what you observed, how you approached the situation, how you solved a problem, and the outcome.

Knowledge and/or Practice

This criterion requires you to demonstrate understanding of relevant theories, models, or best practices related to learning outcome(s). You must demonstrate understanding of relationship among relevant theories, models, or best practices. Describe and cite the relevant theories, models, practices, and perspectives related to your experience.

Remember you will need to use at least 4 sources appropriate for scholarly or professional discourse and use APA style for citations.

Reflection and Self-Assessment

This criterion requires you to demonstrate reflect upon experience and critically assess your abilities and experiences in relationship to the sources you have included. You must provide self-assessment of your experience showing how it relates to the academic sources you are citing.

Writing Your PLA Project

Please answer the questions below to the best of your ability.

1. Family Definition

- What is your personal definition of family?
- How does your social experience demonstrate your personal definition?
 - Address how this definition is influenced by societal expectation; ethnic and religious cultural norms; and families of origin
- Compare and contrast your personal definition of family with those used by scholarly researchers.
 - You may want to begin considering these sources.
 - [Family and Work](#)
 - Christensen, K., & Levinson, D. (2003). Family and work. In *Encyclopedia of community: From the village to the virtual world* (Vol. 1, pp. 485-486). SAGE Publications, Inc., <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412952583.n182>
 - [Organization of Family](#)
 - O'Brien, J. (2009). Family, organization of. In *Encyclopedia of gender and society* (Vol. 1, pp. 271-275). SAGE Publications, Inc., <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412964517.n144>

2. Family Structure

- Consider the implications of these definitions for the following
 - Structure/composition of your family and the families of others
 - Pay particular attention to diverse contemporary family structures.
 - Roles within the family
 - Division of household responsibility
 - Financial management
 - Parental responsibilities (if applicable)

3. Family Significance

- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of family to the individual.
 - Draw on personal experience and secondary sources to support your discussion
- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of family to society and/or culture.
 - Draw on personal experience and secondary sources to support your discussion.
- Compare and contrast the individual and social/cultural advantages and disadvantages.

4. Changing Family Structures

- What is one factor that has contributed to changes in family structure in the 20th and 21st experience?
 - Describe your personal experience with this issue.
 - How has this issue affected your family?
 - What has your family done (or attempt to do) to address or recognize this issue?
 - How has this issue changed the structure or dynamics within the family?
 - What do the secondary sources say about this issue?
 - Consider scholarly sources from psychology, sociology, and/or social work.(Remember to use sources that discuss families in the 20th and 21st centuries,)
 - Compare and contrast what the findings from scholarly sources with your own experience.

5. Final Thoughts

- Based on exploration of the issue, how do you think family structures and dynamics will continue to change in the 21st century?
- How might these changes alter the definition of family?
- How might these changes shift the significance of family?

PLA ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

The content expert who will assess your project will whether you have demonstrated mastery of the learning outcomes for the class with the following rubric.

Score	Result	Meaning
9-7 Points	Accept	Student is awarded credit for PLA project.
6-5 Points	Revise and Resubmit	Student has 2 weeks to revise PLA project based on content expert feedback.
4 – 0 Points	Not Accepted	Student is not awarded credit for PLA project.

	Accomplished College-Level Learning 3 points	Developing College-level Learning 2 points	Beginning College-level Learning 1 point	Not College-level Learning 0 points
EXPERIENCE: Effectively communicates relevant explanation of personal and/or professional experience(s) related to learning outcome(s).	Explanation of experience(s) is comprehensive and detailed. The context and background of experience(s) are described with specific details. There is a clear relationship between the description of the experience(s) and learning outcome(s). Provides specific evidence that learning occurred.	Explanation of experience(s) and the context and background of experience(s) are generally present though with some gaps. There is a general relationship between the description of experience(s) and the learning outcomes(s). Provides general evidence that learning occurred.	Explanation of experience is simplistic and/or incomplete. Minimal context or background of experience(s) was provided. Explanation of relationship between experience(s) and learning outcome(s) is linked but superficial, and is assumed but not explicit. Provides minimal evidence that learning occurred.	Explanation and description of the experience(s) is unclear and/or non-specific. No context or background of the experience was provided. The relationship between experience(s) and the learning outcome(s) is non-existent or scholarly investigation irrelevant. Provides no evidence that learning occurred. Experience is conflated with learning (i.e., length of time is equivalent to mastery).

<p>KNOWLEDGE AND/OR PRACTICE:</p> <p>Effectively communicates relevant theories and/or best practices related to learning outcome(s).</p>	<p>Explanation describes relevant concepts and/or practices and provides analysis (compares/contrasts) with other relevant ideas. Explanation demonstrates critique of strengths/weaknesses of ideas. Secondary sources are appropriate for scholarly or professional discourse.</p>	<p>Explanation generally describes relevant concepts and/or practice, and references other relevant ideas. Explanation may demonstrate adequate description of key idea(s) but there may be gaps in relating it to others. Secondary sources are generally appropriate for scholarly or professional discourse but may exclude key disciplinary concepts and/or be out-of-date.</p>	<p>Explanation superficially describes concepts and/or practice. Conceptual focus may be misdirected or ancillary. Explanation is mainly factual with limited analytical engagement. Secondary sources are included but markedly exclude key disciplinary concepts, are misused, and/or are inappropriate for scholarly or professional discourse.</p>	<p>Lack of evidence or understanding of relevant concepts and/or best practices. Lack of appropriate secondary sources and understanding of knowledge related to learning outcome(s).</p>
<p>REFLECTION AND SELF-ASSESSMENT</p> <p>Effectively reflects upon experience and critically self-assesses abilities in relationship to relevant body of knowledge.</p>	<p>Reflection on experience(s) specifically connects to broader body of knowledge. Recognizes relationship and provides clear critique and/or explanation of the significance of the connection. Provides critical self-assessment including descriptions of personal strengths and weaknesses as it relates to the experience(s).</p>	<p>Reflection on experience(s) generally connects to broader body of knowledge. Recognizes overall relationship and provides some critique and explanation of the significance of the connection. Provides some level of self-assessment including general descriptions of personal abilities as it relates to the experience(s).</p>	<p>Reflection on experiences(s) minimally connects to broader body of knowledge. Recognizes that there is a relationship but is unable to critique or adequately explain the significance of the connection. Provides superficial level of self-assessment that focuses on what one accomplished rather than how well they accomplished.</p>	<p>Lack of reflection on how experience connects to broader body of knowledge. Lack of evidence connecting experience within body of knowledge. Lack of self-assessment on one's abilities or performance.</p>

EXAMPLES OF GENERAL PLA TOPICS AND LEVELS OF LEARNING

	Building	Project Management	Spanish Culture	Professional Communication
NOT college-level	Know how to put up wallboard	Work to complete items on a checklist given to you	Traveled in Spain twice, for two weeks each time	Sends emails and text messages at work
Beginning college-level	Describe why walls are constructed a certain way	Create a timeline and supervise the completion of tasks	Describe trends and practices related to daily life, holidays, food, religion, etc.; familiar with some Spanish history related to contemporary attitudes and practices List trends and practices related to daily life, holidays, food, religion, etc. Describe some aspects of Spanish history	Communicates in the workplace by writing emails, instant messages and reports for a general audience
Developing college-level	Describe why walls are constructed a certain way Understand how to design a building so the walls stay up Explain why walls are constructed a certain way List the advantages and disadvantages of different methods for building a wall	Create a timeline and supervise the completion of tasks Work to create cooperation of all parties concerned with the project	Discuss trends and practices related to daily life, holidays, food, religion, etc. Identify sub-groups within the overall culture Describe some aspects of Spanish history related to contemporary attitudes and practices .	Communicates in the workplace by writing emails, instant messages and reports for a variety of stakeholders Identifies characteristics of different professional communication genres

Accomplished college-level	Make decisions to design a building so the walls stay up	Create a timeline and supervise the completion of tasks	Analyze nuances related to attitudes and practices	Analyzes professional communication genres to develop complex, diverse, and effective written and oral communication
	Explain why walls are constructed a certain way	Work to create cooperation of all parties concerned with the project	Identify sub-groups within the overall culture and analyze the sub-groups relationships with each other	Adjusts communications to mindfully consider audience, situation, context, and style
	Analyze the advantages and disadvantages of different methods for building a wall	analyze problems or issues and amend the plan; evaluate the outcome of the project	Compare Spanish history with contemporary attitudes and practices	

This chart was modified from [SUNY – Empire State College](#).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Office of Prior Learning Assessment (OPLA)

The Office of Prior Learning Assessment website provides guidance for students seeking to be awarded college credit for prior experience.

PLA Advisor (SCPSPLA@depaul.edu)

A Prior Learning Assessment advisor is available to help you throughout the process. They can help you understand the requirements of a PLA project and are happy to provide feedback on in-progress work.

Course Match PLA Examples

Scroll down to find a few examples of completed Course Match PLA projects.

5 Tips About PLA from a Student

Just what it sounds like—a student who has successfully completed PLA projects shares their tips for success.

The Writing Center

Peer writing tutors are available to help at all stages of the writing process. They can review completed work, in-progress drafts, and even assist with planning and outlining. You can meet with a tutor in-person or online!