

Cocheco Arts & Technology Academy Extended Learning Opportunity Policy

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1. Introduction and Overview

Extended Learning Opportunity (ELO) requires initiative, motivation, creativity and organization. Through ELO, students who have carefully considered the goals of their Personal Education Plans and their learning plans have the opportunity to design their own Extended Learning Opportunity projects and earn credit for these endeavors.

The Extended Learning Opportunity program is intended to:

- provide increased opportunities for individualization of academic programming.
- provide increased opportunities for first-hand experience in the arts and technology with those who model creative pursuits as a livelihood, a profession and/or as a hobby.
- recognize and provide credit to students who initiate and assist in the development of a project tailored to individual needs, abilities and interests.
- provide opportunities for 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grade students.

The Extended Learning Opportunity program is not intended to:

- replace regularly scheduled CATA course offerings.
- provide academic credit for extra-curricular activities (unless combined with academic study – see guidelines).

The Extended Learning Opportunity program may be:

- granted credit to meet CATA graduation requirements dependent on the successful completion of the project and approval of the ELO coordinator, and Guidance Counselor.

- evaluated and recorded in the same way all CATA courses are assessed; including (but not limited to) Numeric and Narrative Assessment.

Extended Learning Opportunity requires the identification of a strong academic component. If a student is serious about initiating an ELO project then he/she must identify the academic value of such an endeavor.

2. ELO Components & Procedure

Independent Study (IS):

1. The student can obtain an ELO application form from guidance. The student, in conjunction with their guidance counselor must complete the application form in its entirety.
2. Applications must be approved BEFORE the IS begins.
3. The student is responsible to find a mentor. ALL independent studies must have a mentor. The Mentor Coordinator coordinates mentor approval and will work with each student to assist them in finding a mentor.
4. Upon approval of an application, a student will be assigned an IS Coordinator at CATA. A student is required to meet with their IS Coordinator bi-weekly to monitor student's progress.
5. A student is eligible to earn no more than two credits through the IS program. Students are awarded a 1/2 credit upon meeting the following requirements:
 - a. 60 hours of documented satisfactory work in conjunction with an approved mentor
 - b. Presenting their IS to the student body
 - c. Receives a passing numeric report from their mentors
6. Students may not complete state requirements through the IS program

On-line Courses:

1. The student can obtain an ELO application form from guidance. The student, in conjunction with their guidance counselor must complete the application form in its entirety.
2. Applications must be approved BEFORE the program begins.
3. On-line courses are available through Brigham and Young University, Virtual High School or The Virtual Learning Academy.
4. Students may use on-line courses for upper level courses, AP courses, electives and credit recovery.
5. On-line courses are paid for by the student. The student may apply for partial or full tuition reimbursement from the Board of Trustees if they pass the course with a B- or better. Tuition reimbursement is awarded based on availability of funds, student ELO application and course grade.

Out-Of School Credit:

1. The student can obtain an ELO application form from guidance. The student, in conjunction with their guidance counselor must complete the application form in its entirety.
2. Applications must be approved BEFORE the program begins.
3. Out of school credit are courses taken at another education institution such as colleges, adult education courses and classes taken at a student's sending school.
4. The program must have a formal description including number of hours, a syllabus and contact person.
5. No credit will be awarded until the student provides guidance with a formal assessment documenting completion of the program.
6. Out of school classes are paid for by the student. The student may apply for partial or full tuition reimbursement from the Board of Trustees if they pass the course with a B- or better. Tuition reimbursement is awarded based on availability of funds, student ELO application and course grade.

Work Education Program:

CATA's work education Program is designed for students who request credit for part-time employment at an approved work site. The experience is monitored and evaluated by a school staff member and the student's employer. If performance is acceptable to the employer and the staff member, the student will earn $\frac{1}{4}$ credit for every nine weeks of work, with an average of 4 hours per week during the school year.

1. The student can obtain a work education application form from guidance. The student, in conjunction with their guidance counselor must complete the application form in its entirety.
2. Applications must be approved BEFORE the program begins.
3. No credit will be awarded until the student provides guidance with a completed evaluation form from the student's employer documenting the student's completion of the aforementioned requirements.

Driver Education:

Driver Education is designed to teach basic driving skills, knowledge of New Hampshire rules and regulations and to help a student become a safe driver. Driver Education is offered by an outside agency and there is a fee for the course. The course is state approved and $\frac{1}{4}$ credit is given upon successful completion. Credit will be awarded once student has provided guidance with a copy of certificate indicating completion of the course.

3. Guidelines

IS Coordinator and IS Mentor:

Extended Learning Opportunity courses are under the ultimate supervision of an approved CATA IS Coordinator. ELO students are required to meet with the IS Coordinator(s) bi-weekly for a progress update, and at the end of the semester/year to turn in final assessment documentation.

Students must also work with an IS mentor who is an expert in the field of study. They are responsible for finding a mentor and will be provide assistance if needed.

Students are responsible for arranging a schedule of weekly or bi-weekly meetings with the outside Mentor. These meetings are to take place regularly, at the Mentor's convenience.

Students are responsible for maintaining the schedule of appointments and for rescheduling appointments with the IS Coordinator and the Mentor, (i.e. if the student is absent due to illness or the mentor is called away to a meeting, etc.) *A student who misses more than two scheduled appointments will forfeit credit for the project.*

If students encounter difficulties or require assistance at a time when no appointment IS scheduled, they are responsible for contacting the IS Coordinator and/or Mentor.

4. Independent Study Assessment & Credit:

Students are expected to spend a minimum of 60 hours per term on IS work.

Students are responsible for maintaining a log of activities which will be reviewed at each appointment with the IS Coordinator. The Mentor will sign and date the log to verify completion. The logbook acts as the accounting system for the IS project; it is a statement of the time dedicated to the project and its activities, accounting for the credit value of the learning experience. This is a requirement for receiving credit for Independent Study. The notations in the log are expected to include the following:

1. Narrative journal of the student's experiences, including questions, challenges, and how they were resolved
2. Date, time and description of all research, reading, writing, and any other work completed

3. Plan of the next week's work or project(s)

The **final deadline for submission of all project work** produced as part of the IS project is one week before the end of the semester or other assigned date. This includes designs, manuals, reports, art, recordings, and any other documentation of IS project work.

At the end of the semester/year, the IS Coordinator will review the materials and assess the quality of the learning experience to determine whether the student has achieved the goals and learning objectives stated at the beginning of the IS journey.

Students who wish to take Independent Study must submit the appropriate form through the Guidance Counselor. The application must be completed and approved before the IS project has begun.

Students will earn one-half credit for each term of IS – 60 hours per term.

Students may submit a request for consideration of a full year of an IS project but will be carefully considered on an individual basis.

5. **Additional Extended Learning Opportunity Guidelines**

- Student employment is not eligible for IS (see work education program).
- Community Service work is not considered for Extended Learning Opportunity.
- Volunteer services are not eligible unless performed under the supervision of the IS Coordinator, approved before the start of an IS project, and combined with an appropriate amount of academic study.
- Participation in extra -curricular activities is not eligible for IS consideration, unless it is also combined with an appropriate amount of academic study.
- Studies involving religion must fit within an academic framework of comparison of differing points of view.
- Independent Study is not an alternative to summer school or tutorial for students who have dropped or failed classes. It is not to be used to make up an incomplete.
- Students wishing to enroll in subsequent terms of IS in the same field of study (i.e. music, theatre, technology) must submit documentation of the potential for further progress to the IS Coordinator for approval. The student will not be registered until all required paperwork is submitted and approved.
- Students may not receive more than 2 credits through the IS program and no more than 4 credits from the ELO program.
- Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis.

6. Application Process

The ELO application is available in the Guidance Office and must be returned to Guidance.

The **deadline** for the ELO Application will be no later than the end of the second week in the semester in which the proposed ELO is to be taken.

The ELO application requires careful thought and consideration, particularly in the completion of the learning plan proposal, which **must** have a strong academic component.

The following questions should guide the selection of ELO topics/areas of study:

1. Why do I want to initiate an Extended Learning Opportunity project? What do I want to learn? What do I want to learn how to do? What specific topic would I like to learn more about?
2. How will an ELO experience increase my learning and skills?
3. How will an ELO experience shape my creative development?
4. What insights and experiences do I hope to gain from an ELO experience?
5. What methods will I use to demonstrate what I have learned?

Applications for Extended Learning Opportunity will only be considered after all of the required paperwork is complete and has been submitted by the deadline to the Guidance Department. Only after the completed, approved application is submitted will the student be registered. If any of the required forms are not submitted a cumulative assessment will not be given for final credit.

Students are strongly encouraged to request assistance with the application process, and should indicate their interest in ELO as soon as possible to take advantage of resources. Students are encouraged to discuss their ideas in their advisory group, with their peers, their Advisor, and their Guidance Counselor.

7. Extended Learning Opportunity Sign-Up Checklist

1. I have read the ELO Policy and agree to abide by the guidelines.
2. I currently do not have any incompletes on my transcript.
3. I have discussed my ELO with my parent(s)/guardian(s) and have gained permission, as indicated below by their signature(s).
4. I have given the IS Coordinator and my IS Mentor my ELO Application. We have determined and documented the ways in which assessment will be completed for my work (for IS only).
5. I have given guidance a formal description including number of hours, a syllabus and contact person for my out-of school course. I understand no credit will be awarded until I provide guidance with a formal assessment documenting completion of the program (for online & out-of school course only).
6. I agree to meet my IS Mentor as scheduled. I know it IS my responsibility to contact my IS Mentor if I am absent on a regular meeting day to reschedule (for IS only).
7. I agree to keep a weekly log, to have my IS Mentor sign it at each of our meetings, and to submit it at the end of the term to the IS Coordinator (for IS only).
8. I agree to meet with the IS Coordinator on a bi-weekly basis.
9. I agree to meet with the IS Coordinator at the end of the semester & present to student body for a documented IS review (IS only).

Student's Name (please print): _____

Student's Signature: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Name (please print): _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Signature: _____

8. Extended Learning Opportunity Application