

### 3.4.6

#### **Educational Programs: All:Practices for awarding credit**

The institution employs sound and acceptable practices for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for courses, regardless of format or mode of delivery.

#### **Judgment**

Compliant    Non-Compliant    Not Applicable

#### **Narrative**

*Note: Text for all linked documents below can be increased/decreased for ease of reading by pressing your keyboard's Ctrl key while rotating the mouse wheel.*

Angelo State University employs sound and acceptable practices for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for courses, regardless of format or mode of delivery.

#### **DETERMINATION OF THE AMOUNT AND LEVEL OF CREDIT AWARDED**

Angelo State University's academic components determine the amount of credit awarded for graduate and undergraduate courses in accordance with ASU OP 04.12, Definition and Calculation of Credit Hours, which defines the unit of the semester credit hour in accordance with rules established by the US Department of Education (34 CFR 600.2, Credit Hour; 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (l)) and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). In accordance with the THECB requirements, courses offered in a non-traditional way, such as online courses, are "reviewed and approved through a formal, institutional faculty review process that evaluates the course and its learning outcomes and determines that the course does, in fact, have equivalent learning outcomes to an equivalent, traditionally delivered course" (19 TAC §4.6). As stated in ASU 04.12 (Section 3), "Each academic component is responsible for establishing a formal faculty review process to ensure that the amount and level of credit awarded for the component's undergraduate and graduate courses is compatible with sound academic practice in the given field. Where appropriate, the components base their review policies and processes on the standards of discipline-specific professional organizations" (ASU Program Accreditation).

#### **Institutional Review and Approval Process**

All departmental review processes align with ASU OP 04.05, Approval Process for New Degree Programs, which requires all new programs, new courses, and proposed changes to existing courses and programs to be reviewed and approved by the appropriate faculty committees and administrators. As required by ASU OP 04.11, Distance Education, all courses and programs offered via distance education are also approved through this formal curriculum review process. In accordance with ASU OP 04.05, any proposal for a new course or a change to an existing course must be submitted on a Request for Curriculum Change form, which documents the number of contact hours and credit hours associated with each course, the course description, and a justification for the proposed change.

The Request for Curriculum Change form also specifies which administrators and faculty committees are required to review and approve different types of curricular change. Significant changes—including changes in the number of credit hours for a course—must be approved by the appropriate department head and dean, the registrar, the provost and vice president for academic affairs, the relevant College Curriculum Committee and, where appropriate, the Teacher Education Council (for changes involving teacher certification programs), the University Core Curriculum Committee (for changes to the core curriculum), and/or the Graduate Council (for changes in graduate curricula). All significant curricular changes are also reviewed by the University Curriculum Committee. The curriculum review process ensures that the amount and level of credit awarded for each course corresponds with expected learning outcomes as well as the amount of academically engaged time for a typical student, regardless of format or mode of delivery. (More information about the curriculum review process is provided in Core Requirement 2.7.2, Program content and Comprehensive Standard 3.4.1, Academic program approval.)

A representative example of minutes from the University Curriculum Committee documents the review and approval of new and modified courses (University Curriculum Committee minutes October 14, 2011). An additional example of University Curriculum Committee minutes is provided in Federal Requirement 4.9, Definition of credit hours.

### **Documentation of Credit Hours and Type of Instruction for Each Course**

Information regarding the level and amount of credit to be awarded for each course is reflected in the course number, which is documented in the review process and published with the course description in the institutional catalogs (ASU Undergraduate Catalog 2011–2012 and ASU Graduate Catalog 2011–2012, for example). In the four-digit course numbering system, the level of the course is identified by the first digit (undergraduate 1-4, master's 5 and 6, and Doctor of Physical Therapy 7); the assigned number of semester credit hours is identified by the second digit; and the university and/or departmental codes are identified by the last two digits.

For courses that contain lecture, laboratory, and/or clinical components, numbers in parentheses follow the descriptive title of the course to indicate the number of course hours associated with each type of instruction. The first number represents the number of lecture hours each week, and the second represents the number of laboratory hours each week. For example, (3-2) indicates three hours of lecture and two hours of laboratory each week. Where three numbers appear, the last number refers to clinical supervision, as in Nursing 6105 (0-1-2). (A change in the type of instructional hours associated with NUR 6105 (from 0-3-0 to 0-1-2 is documented on page 9 of the attached University Curriculum Committee minutes October 14, 2011.)

ASU also uses the Texas Common Course Numbering System (TCCNS), which has been designed to aid students in the transfer of general academic courses between Texas public colleges and universities throughout the state. ASU courses identified as common have the Common Course Number listed immediately adjacent to the ASU course number (e.g., MATH 1302/MATH 1314).

Courses that have an alpha character (i.e., English 130C and Mathematics 130A and 130B) are

developmental (pre-collegiate) courses and may not be used to satisfy degree requirements at ASU.

## **OTHER POLICIES GOVERNING ACADEMIC CREDIT**

In addition to the review procedures outlined above, ASU has defined policies and procedures for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit for transfer, experiential learning, and credit by examination. These policies ensure that all credit hours accepted by ASU reflect course work and learning outcomes that are at the collegiate level and are comparable to the institution's own courses and degree programs (Comprehensive Standard 3.4.4, Acceptance of academic credit). ASU does not award academic credit for course work taken on a noncredit basis (Comprehensive Standard 3.4.8, Noncredit to credit).