



# Standard Administrative Procedure (SAP)

## 11.03.99.L0.02 Awarding Credit Hours

**First Approved:** December 19, 2019  
**Revised:** December 16, 2021  
**Next Scheduled Review:** December 16, 2026

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### Procedure Statement and Reason for Procedure

The purpose of this SAP is to establish guidelines for awarding credit hours for courses at Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) to ensure that credit hours awarded for courses conform to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board rules ([Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4, Sub-Chapter A, §4.6](#)) and are consistent with commonly-accepted practices in higher education.

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### Procedures and Responsibilities

#### 1. GENERAL

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board defines a 3-semester-credit-hour course as containing 15 weeks of instruction (45 contact hours) plus 1 week for final examinations so that a course contains 45-48 contact hours (depending on whether there is a final examination or not).

#### 2. THE CREDIT HOUR

The term “credit hour” is defined by Federal regulations and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) as an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally-established equivalency that reasonably approximates the following:

- a) Not less than 1 hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of 2 hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately 15 weeks for 1 semester or trimester hour of credit, or 10 to 12 weeks for 1 quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time, or

- b) At least an equivalent of work as outlined in Section 2(a) for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Faculty must teach a minimum of 15 lecture hours, a minimum of 30 laboratory hours, or a minimum of 45 internship/externship hours to award 1 semester credit.

### **3. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF COURSES WITH NON-TRADITIONAL CONTACT HOURS**

- 3.1 Courses taught in a non-traditional manner -- such as internet-based courses, blended courses with fewer traditional contact hours, and compressed-format courses (e.g., flex-term courses, study abroad courses) -- may be offered for credit hours if the course has been reviewed and approved through the TAMIU curriculum process. Departmental faculty are responsible for determining whether the course is of sufficient scope and rigor to ensure the amount of material delivered is comparable to the same campus-based course. Courses with non-traditional contact hours are approved by TAMIU's normal curriculum review, including departmental and college committees, and the University Curriculum Committee. Final approval rests with the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (Provost).
- 3.2 To approve a course with non-traditional contact hours, curriculum committees must review and affirmatively determine that the course has equivalent learning outcomes to an equivalent traditionally-delivered course.

### **4. PROCESS**

Assignment of credit hours for courses or programs is done by departmental faculty during the course development stage. Each course will be reviewed to ensure that the assignment of credit hours conforms to [Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4, Sub-Chapter A, §4.6](#). The review process is as follows:

- a) Department Curriculum Committees review and approve course syllabi and curriculum changes and make recommendations to the Department Chair. New or revised course information includes title, description, prerequisite, semester credit hours, syllabi, student learning/program outcomes, and justification for adding or modifying the course. Curriculum changes approved by the department Curriculum Committee and the Department Chair are forwarded to the appropriate college/school Curriculum Committee. The members of the department Curriculum Committee are appointed by the Department Chair.
- b) College/school Curriculum Committees review and approve requests submitted by the department Curriculum Committees and forward them to the Dean. Upon approval by the Dean, curriculum recommendations are forwarded to the University Curriculum Committee. Members of the college/school Curriculum Committee are appointed by the academic unit heads.
- c) The University Curriculum Committee reviews and approves requests submitted by the college/school Curriculum Committees as forwarded by the Deans. The University Curriculum Committee evaluates the proposed new course/revisions, the appropriateness of the learning outcomes for the level of course, as well as the appropriateness of the credit hours. Members of the University Curriculum Committee are appointed by the academic unit heads with the concurrence of the Provost and Faculty Senate.

- d) The University Curriculum Committee forwards recommendations for new/revised courses to the Provost for final approval to appear in the University catalog and course inventory.

Courses taught in a non-traditional learning format will be evaluated to determine if the course has equivalent learning outcomes to courses taught in a more traditional format. Courses that do not conform will be returned to the originating department for revisions.

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## **Related Statutes, Policies, Regulations, or Rules**

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[Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4, Sub-Chapter A, §4.6](#)  
[System Policy 11.03, \*Shortened Courses\*](#)

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## **Contact Office**

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