



Revision Responsibility: Vice President for Academic Affairs
Responsible Executive Officer: Vice President for Academic Affairs

Source/Reference: [TBR Policy 2:01:01:00](#)
[TBR Guideline A-010](#)
[THEC Policy A1.0](#)
[THEC Policy A1.1](#)
[THEC Policy A1.2](#)
[SACSCOC Substantive Change Policy](#)
[SACSCOC Credit Hour Policy Statement](#)
[Federal Register \(75 FR66832 p.66946 §600.2\)](#)

PURPOSE

To designate responsibility for curriculum development and revision. To establish institutional definitions and procedures for the assignment and calculation of credit hours to comply with TBR policy and common curriculum, SACSCOC policy, the federal definition, and the guidelines of applicable programmatic accrediting agencies.

POLICY

- I. Responsibility for the development and revision of the curriculum rests with the faculty.
- II. The Vice President for Academic Affairs and the President have responsibility for ensuring the curriculum is directly related to, and appropriate to, the mission and goals of the College, and is in compliance with the requirements of the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) and other appropriate agencies or accrediting bodies.

PROCEDURES

- I. All new curriculum proposals and any proposals for substantial revisions to existing curricula are submitted on the Curriculum Change Request (CCR) form to the Curriculum Committee, a representative body of elected faculty and other College personnel appointed by virtue of position.
- II. The proposals are submitted through the Division Dean and Assistant Vice President for Faculty, Curriculum and Programs to the Chairperson of the Curriculum Committee, who processes the proposals according to the rules and procedures of the Committee.
- III. Proposals must include credit hours awarded per course. Following federal regulations, a credit hour is defined 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:

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- A. Not less than one semester hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class student work each week, for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time, or
- B. At least an equivalent amount of work as required outlined in item A. above 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.
- C. At Columbia State one semester credit hour is a minimum of 750 minutes of instructor contact time which equates to 50 minutes as the recognized length of a classroom “hour” of instructional time for 15 weeks.
1. Course credit hours are granted for various types of instruction as follows:
 - a) Lecture courses – The number of course credit hours awarded a lecture course or lecture portion of a course will be determined by the actual number of contact hours per week using a ratio of 1 course credit hour for 1 lecture contact equivalent hours per week.
 - b) Lecture/Lab courses – The number of course credit hours awarded a lecture/lab course will be determined by the actual number of contact hours per week using a ratio of 1 course credit hour for 1 lecture/lab contact equivalent hour per week.
 - c) Lab courses – The number of course credit hours awarded a lab course will be determined by the actual number contact hours week the lab course is scheduled using a ratio of 1 course credit for a range of 2-3 lab contact hours per week.
 - d) Studio work – Credit of studio art is awarded by the actual number of contact hours per week using a ratio of 1 course credit for 4 hours of contact time within the studio per week.
 - e) Work-based learning courses – The number of course credit hours will be determined by the actual number of contact hours per term using a calculation ratio option deemed appropriate for a particular discipline and approved through the curriculum development and revision process defined in this policy. Commonly used ratios are shown below but other ratios may be justified:
 - (1) Cooperative Education – Student will be required to work a minimum of 60 hours for each credit hour earned.
 - (2) Clinical – programmatic accreditation requires consistent ratios of clinical time for credits earned with a specific program but ratios vary from one program to another.
 - (3) Practicum/Internships – Student will be required to work a minimum of 30 hours for each credit hour earned.

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2. Any course offered in fewer than 15 weeks shall contain the same total contact time, content, and minimum requirements at the same course offered in the standard 15-week semester.
 3. Any course offered via distance education or at non-campus locations shall contain the same minimum requirements for content and assignments as the same course offered in a traditional format on a Columbia State campus in a standard 15-week semester.
- IV. When proposing a new course or a change in the course identification number, the originator should consult with the Registrar prior to submitting the CCR to determine the available course number that is in compliance with TBR Common Course Library rubrics and numbers. Course numbers beginning with a 0 are at the pre-college level and receive institutional credit only and do not apply to credits required for graduation. Course numbers beginning with a 1 or 2 are at the college level and receive semester hour credits. Course numbers beginning with a 1 are generally considered freshman level courses while those beginning with a 2 are generally sophomore level courses.
- V. The proposals, along with recommendations for the approval or disapproval, are submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and then to the President for review and approval or disapproval. Certain Program changes require additional approval which may extend the timeline for implementation.
- VI. Certain program changes require TBR approval as follows using TBR Guidelines A-010:
- Establish a new academic degree
 - Establish a new certificate program (note: the Community College must consult with the College of Applied Technology (TCAT) within the designated service area to ensure there is no duplication of effort. Documentation must be submitted, with the proposal, to identify any concerns or to demonstrate there are no objections to the proposed program).
 - Establish a new concentration
 - Consolidate an existing academic program
 - Converting an existing on-ground program to a fully online delivery format
 - Substantive curriculum modification
 - Termination, inactivation, or reactivation of a program
 - Revision of any admission, retention, and/or graduation policy (general or program specific)
 - Extending an existing academic degree to be fully offered at an off-campus location
 - Establishment of a new academic unit or reorganization resulting in a net gain of an academic unit (i.e., department, on-campus center, institute, bureau, division, school, or college)
 - Develop on-line course(s) with costs in excess of \$9,500 or more

- Name change for existing program
- Establishment of an Off-campus Site or Center
- Curriculum modification which changes the total hours required for a degree or certificate program

Deans and the Assistant Vice President for Faculty, Curriculum and Programs will prepare submission documents for the above.

VII. Certain program changes require Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) notification and/or Substantive Changes Review such as:

- Substantially changing the established mission or objectives of the Institution or its programs.
- Changing the legal status, form of control, or ownership of the Institution.
- Changing the governance of the Institution.
- Merging/consolidating with another institution or entity.
- Acquiring another institution or any program or location of another institution.
- Relocating an institution or an off-campus instructional site of the Institution.
- Offering course or program at a higher or lower degree level than currently authorized.
- Changing the way the Institution measures student progress, whether in clock hours or credit-hours; semesters, trimesters or quarters; or time-based or non-time-based methods or measures.
- Adding a program that is a significant departure, either in content or method of delivery, from those that were offered when the Institution was last evaluated.
- Initiating programs by distance education or correspondence courses.
- Adding an additional method of delivery to a currently offered program.
- Entering into a cooperative academic arrangement.
- Entering into a written arrangement under 34 C.F.R §668.5 under which an institution not certified to participate in title IV Higher Education Act (HEA) programs, offers less than 25% (notification), or 25-50% (approval) of one or more of the Institution's educational programs.
- Substantially increasing or decreasing the number of credit hours awarded or competencies demonstrated, or an increase in the level of credential awarded for successful completion of one or more programs.
- Adding competency-based education programs.
- Adding each competency-based education program by direct assessment.
- Adding programs with completion pathways that recognize and accommodate a student's prior or existing knowledge or competency.
- Awarding dual or joint academic awards.
- Re-opening a previously closed program or off-campus instructional site.

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- Adding a new off-campus instructional site or additional location, including a branch campus.
 - Adding a permanent location at a site at which the Institution is conducting a teach-out program for students of another institution that has ceased operating before all students have completed their program of study.
 - Closing the Institution, a program, a method of delivery, an off-campus instructional site, or a program at an off-campus instructional site.

The Assistant Vice President for Faculty, Curriculum and Programs and the College's SACSCOC Liaison will prepare submission documents for the above.

VIII. Certain program changes require notification to or approval by U.S. Department of Education for Columbia State to award financial aid for the program such as:

- Establish a new academic degree or certificate program
- Change the name or Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code for an existing program
- Termination of a program
- Curriculum modification which changes the total hours required for a degree or certificate program
- Offering more than 50% of a program at another campus/instructional site
- Change in minimum number of weeks required to complete program

The Director of Financial Aid will prepare submission documents for the above.

IX. When all approvals are obtained proposals are forwarded to the Registrar for entry in the course inventory.

Revised: November 10, 1994; September 24, 1997; June 21, 2000 (new policy format and spin-off of new Columbia State Policy 02-02); June 3, 2002 (to reflect change in title from Dean of Instruction to Assistant Vice President for Faculty and Programs); February 27, 2012 (added TBR and SACS submission guidelines, changed responsible executive officer, new policy format and updated titles); revised February 2018 (updated titles, hyperlinks, and accessibility standards); reviewed for updates and accepted by Cabinet, approved and signed by the President February 2022; (added new references, revised THEC and SACSOC submission guidelines); reviewed for updates and accepted by Cabinet, approved and signed by the President July 2022.