



Policy Chapter: Chapter 6 Faculty Affairs

Policy Number and Title: 06.001 Evaluating, Awarding and Accepting Credit

I. Policy Statement

As an institution of higher education, the University of North Texas holds the responsibility for determining and upholding standards related to the awarding of credit hours for student work consistent with national standards. This policy sets the definition of a credit hour and delineates the ways in which credits are evaluated, awarded and/or accepted by UNT.

II. Application of Policy

This policy applies to any academic credit that appears on an official transcript issued by the university, regardless of course level, whether graduate or undergraduate; or the mode of delivery, whether self-paced, online, hybrid, or face-to-face.

III. Policy Definitions

A. One Credit Hour

“One Credit Hour” means:

1. Student achievement of learning outcomes obtained through one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of course work outside of class each week, for approximately 15 weeks, or the achievement of equivalent learning outcomes over a different amount of time; or
2. Student learning demonstrated as equivalent to that stated in #1, above. For example, such equivalence may be demonstrated by faculty assessment of student knowledge, skills, and abilities in relation to stated learning outcomes that are:
 - a. judged to be equivalent to those demonstrated by students who have successfully passed a course of study outlined in #1, above; or
 - b. judged to be equivalent levels of work in academic activities including, for example, laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and/or independent research activity; or
 - c. judged to meet standards established through recognized disciplinary or accrediting bodies, peer institutions, or other established methodology to affirm equivalency, so long as those standards have been formally accepted by UNT through its curricular approval process.

IV. Policy Responsibilities

A. *Credit Hour as a Minimum Achievement*

At UNT, a credit hour represents a minimum student achievement of specific learning outcomes, as verified by an assessment of student work. The credit hour allows the University to quantify academic activity for purposes of awarding academic credentials and determining federal funding, including institutional eligibility, program eligibility, and student enrollment status and eligibility.

B. *Acceptance or Awarding of Credit*

The acceptance or awarding of credit at UNT rests upon the expertise and authority of the faculty within the relevant discipline. All academic units are responsible for ensuring that academic credit is awarded only for work that meets the requirements outlined in this policy.

1. Awarding Credit for Courses Delivered by UNT

The curriculum committees, from the department, to college, to university level, are charged with following this policy in the review and approval of all courses and for certifying that the designated student learning outcomes for the course are appropriately represented in the number and level of credit hours awarded. The determination of credit hours is made when a course is initially developed and whenever a revision to an existing course is taken through the curriculum review process. A record of this determination is maintained by the Office of the Registrar and published in the graduate and undergraduate catalogs.

2. Minimum Course Contact Hours and Student Enrollment Load

UNT complies with the standards for course contact hours and student enrollment limits set forth in the Texas Administrative Code. This code defines minimum standards for instructional contact hours and time required for learning and reflection. Exceptions to this standard require formal approval, as follows:

- a. Face-to-face courses that contain fewer contact hours or are delivered in shortened time periods must receive formal, written approval in advance from the academic dean or the dean's authorized designee. The academic administrator has responsibility for the program in which the course is delivered.
- b. Students wishing to enroll in more credit hours than stipulated by this standard must receive prior approval from the office of the dean with administrative responsibility for their degree program.

3. Acceptance of Credits in Transfer

In accordance with state law, UNT accepts in transfer those courses designated by another Texas public institution of higher education as fulfilling the state-mandated core curriculum. UNT also accepts credits for transfer into specific academic programs as mandated by the state of Texas.

In addition, UNT may accept credit in transfer from any institution of higher education accredited by a U.S. Department of Education-recognized accrediting agency upon a determination that the course work and learning outcomes are at a comparable level of rigor to UNT courses. The application of these courses to general education and elective requirements follows the curriculum approved by the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. The application of these courses to a major, minor, or certificate is dependent upon the approval of the faculty of that program, as confirmed through the curriculum approval process, and consistent with degree or certificate requirements. Vocational/technical transfer credits may be applied to baccalaureate degrees upon evaluation by qualified faculty and confirmed through the curriculum approval process.

4. Granting of Credit through Validation of Equivalent Learning Achievements

UNT may award credit for the demonstration of specific competencies, regardless of whether they were acquired in an academic setting, provided that the assessment of such competencies are comparable in rigor, substance, and proficiency as the college level credit awarded by UNT. Qualified faculty in the teaching discipline must evaluate and recommend prior learning experiences for UNT credit. Prior learning credit recommendations must be approved through the curriculum process for inclusion on transcripts.

Student attainment of competencies shall be validated through an assessment of student learning prior to awarding credit. Assessments may be administered by UNT or by an entity approved by the appropriate graduate or undergraduate curriculum committee.

Such credits will not be granted in duplication of courses already taken, or for prerequisites of courses already taken. Credits earned in this manner cannot be substituted for a failing grade earned in a course.

In accepting and granting credit for learning that occurs outside the course work delivered in an academic setting, the university works to balance carefully the recognition of existing student competencies with the need to assure a coherent, progressive system of study that extends well beyond the simple accumulation of credits. Therefore, UNT will not apply such credit to meet UNT requirements for residency.

V. References and Cross-References

[34 C.F.R. § 600.2](#)

[Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter A, § 4.6](#)

[Texas Education Code §§ 61.821 - 61.832](#)

[UNT Policy 06.037 Course and Curriculum Development](#)

Administrative Procedures: Awarding and Accepting Credit

VI. Revision History

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| Approved Date: | 06/30/2011 |
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