

Texas Higher Education

COORDINATING BOARD

Guidelines for Instructional Programs in Workforce Education

2015
(Updated August 8, 2022)

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

This edition of *Guidelines for Instructional Programs in Workforce Education* supersedes and replaces all previous editions of GIPWE.

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Guidelines for Instructional Programs

In Workforce Education

2015

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Chapter One: Introduction

A. Purpose of the Guidelines

The *Guidelines for Instructional Programs in Workforce Education* (GIPWE) manual provides Texas public community and technical colleges guidance to for the design, development, operation, and evaluation of credit and non-credit workforce education degree and certificate programs. These guidelines based on rules adopted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), codified in Texas Administrative Code, [Title 19 Part 1](#) of the Texas Administrative Code.

GIPWE provides instructions for institutions to submit applications for new certificate and degree program approval, request revisions to existing programs, deactivate or reactivate programs, and notify THECB of program closures.

Throughout the guidelines, the word “must” is used to identify program requirements and the word “should” is used to identify characteristics that are strongly recommended.

THECB [Rule 9.93 \(b\)\(1\)\(H\)](#) states that a program must be “designed to be consistent with the standards of the of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), and with the standards of other applicable accrediting agencies, and...in compliance with appropriate licensing authority requirements.” If the guidelines in this manual conflict with the program requirements of the SACSCOC, the SACSCOC requirements supersede these guidelines.

B. Programs and Credentials

The following programs and credentials are covered in the *Guidelines*:

1. Associate of Applied Science (AAS) and Associate of Applied Arts (AAA) degrees;
2. certificates approved by the THECB and offered for continuing education units (CEU) or semester credit hours (SCH); and
3. institutional certificates and Occupational Skills Awards¹.

These guidelines do not apply to academic associate degrees such as the Associate of Arts (AA), the Associate of Science (AS), and the Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) or to certificate programs in the academic core curriculum.

C. Effective Dates for the 2015 Guidelines

The 2015 *Guidelines* must be fully implemented by fall 2015.

¹ Formerly “Marketable Skills Achievement Award.” The award has been renamed to distinguish it from 60x30TX Goal3: Marketable Skills. 60x30TX has been refreshed at its halfway mark and retitled “Building a Talent Strong Texas.”

D. Contact Us

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A directory of THECB staff responsible for workforce education programs is available on the [THECB Website](#).

To submit comments or suggestions for the next edition of the GIPWE, please email WECM@highered.texas.gov.

Chapter Two: General Institutional and Personnel Requirements for Workforce Education Programs

A. Role, Mission, and Institutional Accreditation

Workforce education programs offered by a Texas public community or technical college must be consistent with the institution's role and mission as established by the Texas Legislature and approved by the institution's governing board.

To receive THECB approval for a workforce education program, a public technical or community college must comply with the *Principles of Accreditation* adopted by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

B. Program Coordination and Faculty

Workforce education programs must be directed by an administrator who has appropriate authority to ensure that the quality of the program is maintained and that the program complies with all applicable laws, rules, and guidelines.

Workforce education Associate of Applied Science (AAS) and Associate of Applied Arts (AAA) degree programs must have at least one full-time faculty member whose primary teaching assignment is with that program.

All certificate programs must have an assigned program coordinator who is a full-time employee of the college qualified in an occupational/technical area (but not necessarily assigned full-time to the certificate program). Certificate programs must have at least one appropriately credentialed part-time faculty member teaching in the subject area.

Program coordinators must be familiar with state, federal, and national program accreditation, certification, and approval and credentialing requirements for graduates, including licensure, certification, and/or registration.

C. Program and Graduate Credentialing

Institutions must seek state or national program accreditation, certification, or equivalent recognition, if applicable, in conjunction with the development of the program. If the accrediting or certifying body requires documentation that students have graduated as a condition of certification or accreditation, the institution must seek certification or accreditation within 12 months after the first class graduates.

Graduates must be eligible to seek credentialing upon graduation without additional work experience or education unless the additional work experience and/or education is commonly required of all applicants for the credential.

Institutions must communicate any limitations to students resulting from non-accreditation of a program and inform them how to contact a related credentialing agency when applicable.

D. Equipment, Facilities, Classrooms, and Laboratories

All facilities, classrooms, and laboratory space must be adequate and appropriate for the program to serve the number of students projected to enroll. Equipment should represent technology currently found in business and industry. Opportunities for students to gain additional hands-on experience should be provided via simulations and/or work-based learning experiences.

E. Career Development Services

Institutions must provide comprehensive career development services to students, including career information and planning, career counseling and assessment, job placement, and follow-up services.

F. Qualifications of Workforce Education Program Personnel

The following personnel qualifications information is provided to help institutions ensure excellence in instruction and career development services for students, programs, and course administration.

1. Faculty

It is the responsibility of each institution to ensure that the qualifications of faculty teaching workforce education programs and courses, both for credit and continuing education, are in compliance with the current requirements of SACSCOC, regardless of the teaching modality or location. Faculty must be recruited and appointed by the institution prior to the start of instruction. Institutions must document academic preparation, work experience, other appropriate qualifications (certificates, licensure, etc.), and justification for any exceptions to SACSCOC requirements.

Degrees and graduate credit hours held by faculty members, whether full-time or part-time, must have been earned at an institution accredited by an accreditor recognized by the THECB or its foreign equivalent. It is the responsibility of the institution to verify equivalency of degrees or credit hours granted by foreign institutions. Documentation of degree equivalency must be kept on file as long as the faculty member is employed by the institution.

2. Career Development Personnel

Career development personnel should have a combination of academic preparation and work experience:

- a. Professional guidance, counseling, and career development personnel must meet the requirements of SACSCOC in accordance with their specific assignments. A master's degree in counseling or a closely related field is required; alternatively, a master's degree with significant coursework and experience in career development is acceptable. Examples of related graduate degrees include student development

counseling in higher education and mental health counseling. Professional credentials, such as state professional counseling licensure (LPC) or certification by the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) are preferred.

- b. In exceptional cases, outstanding professional experience and demonstrated competency may substitute for the academic preparation stated above. This should include a combination of both exceptional coursework and experience in career development. Institutions must verify these exceptions on an individual basis and keep supporting documentation on file.
- c. Paraprofessionals employed in specific areas, such as job placement, must demonstrate academic preparation and experience consistent with their assignments.

3. Qualifications of Administrators

The qualifications of administrators of workforce education programs are the responsibility of the institution in keeping with its defined mission, administrative organization, and accreditation standards. Workforce education administrators should possess credentials, experience, and demonstrated competence appropriate for their areas of responsibility.

G. Professional Development

An institution must provide workforce education faculty, career development personnel, and administrators with ongoing opportunities for professional development. Professional development opportunities should include content that assists personnel in further developing knowledge and skills related to their positions. Professional development may include instructional methods, approaches to advising diverse populations, advances in information management, and related activities. A record of all professional development activities should be maintained by the institution.

Chapter Three: Workforce Education Programs

A. Workforce Education Programs: Overview

A workforce education program consists of a coherent sequence of courses designed to prepare students for employment in a career field. A workforce education program is developed by an institution in close cooperation with business and industry to satisfy a need for timely and effective workforce education. Additionally, many workforce education programs are articulated with secondary schools through dual credit and with university programs to provide students the opportunity for a seamless transition to the next level of education.

Business and industry experts should provide substantial input into the curriculum design of a workforce education program, including profession-specific knowledge, skills, and abilities and general skills as appropriate, such as oral and written communication, mathematics, computer literacy, and industry-related workplace practices.

A workforce education program may lead to a single credential (degree or certificate) or offer multiple credentials/exit options (degree and/or certificates). Generally, it is recommended that the number and type of credentials in a program not exceed the following:

1. one AAS or AAA degree, 60 semester credit hours (SCH);
2. two level one certificates, each between 15-42 SCH;
3. one level two certificate between 30-51 SCH;

In addition, colleges may incorporate enhanced skills certificates (6-12 SCH), continuing education certificates (360-779 contact hours), and advanced technical certificates (16-45 SCH) in a program based on workforce demand. These credentials are described in more detail later in this chapter.

In some disciplines, a broader array of credentials may be warranted. The type and number of credentials should provide the building blocks for students to move from basic to more advanced workplace competencies. Ideally, each certificate should enable students to build toward the associate degree. The total number of credentials available in a specific discipline can be found on the Degree Program (Clearinghouse) Inventory at <http://www.txhighereddata.org/interactive/CTCClearingHouse/>.

In keeping with the U.S. Department of Education and Advance CTE's co-developed national [Career Clusters](#) and the Texas Education Agency's approved [CTE Programs of Study](#), a Career Technical Education (CTE) program is usually identified by a four-digit Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code while a credential is identified by a six-digit CIP code. Generally, as more digits are added to a CIP code, the classification becomes more specific. A two-digit CIP code refers to a broad career field. A four-digit CIP code refers to a career pathway or similar levels of training but possibly in differing occupations. A six-digit CIP code refers to a specific occupation or job title.

For example:	CIP code 50	Visual and Performing Arts
	CIP code 50.04	Design and Applied Arts
	CIP code 50.0402	Commercial and Advertising Art

The Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) is a federal taxonomy developed by the U.S. Department of Education's [National Center for Education Statistics](http://www.nces.gov/ipeds/data/ipeds_datacenter/ipeds_datacenter.asp) (NCES). The CIP taxonomy is used by state agencies and national associations to establish standard terminology, improve communication, and standardize recordkeeping. A list of CIP codes is available at <http://www.txhighereddata.org/Interactive/CIP/>. CIP codes may be crosswalked with Standard Occupational Classifications (SOC) codes commonly used in labor market data and analysis. The US Department of Education has developed a [crosswalk](#) for this purpose.

B. Characteristics of Workforce Education Programs

All workforce education programs must contain the following common elements:

1. Program Demand

Using national, state, and local industry-based trends, standards, and labor market information, the institution must document the need for the program in the college's service area.

2. Effective Use of Advisory Committees

Institutions must establish an industry-based advisory committee for each workforce education program. Advisory committees may be organized by career cluster, provided that each program is reviewed, the committee has the necessary expertise, and ample time is allotted for each program. The role of an advisory committee is to 1) help a college document the need for a workforce education program and 2) ensure that the program has adequate resources and a well-designed curriculum to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities essential for employment. The advisory committee is one of the principal means of ensuring meaningful business and industry participation in program creation and revision.

a. Advisory Committee Functions

Advisory committees perform the following functions:

- (1) evaluating the goals and objectives of the program curriculum;
- (2) establishing workplace competencies for the program occupation(s);
- (3) suggesting program revisions as needed;
- (4) evaluating the adequacy of existing college facilities and equipment;
- (5) advising college personnel on the selection and acquisition of new equipment;
- (6) identifying local business and industry leaders who will provide students with work-based learning experiences, employment, and placement opportunities;
- (7) assisting in the professional development of the faculty;

- (8) assisting in promoting and publicizing the program to the community and to business and industry; and
- (9) representing the needs of students from special populations as defined in Perkins V.

b. Advisory Committee Composition

Advisory committees must be composed of persons who broadly represent the demographics, including ethnic and gender diversity, of the institution's service area as well as the occupational field in all sectors of the business community within the institution's service area. Members should be well informed about the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for the occupation for which they are providing information and guidance.

Full-time faculty and staff of the college may not be members of the advisory committee, but they may serve in a non-voting ex-officio capacity. Part-time faculty who hold full-time positions within the career field may be members of the committee. Faculty and staff of senior institutions with program articulation agreements may be members of the committee.

c. Advisory Committee Meetings/Minutes

Advisory committees of existing programs must meet in real time (either in person or virtually) a minimum of one time a year and should have a quorum present. Additionally, committee members should be kept apprised of the program's performance throughout the year.

During the development of new programs, advisory committees must meet in real time (either in person or virtually) at least twice prior to submission of the program and communicate throughout the program development and approval process.

All meetings of an advisory committee must be recorded in official minutes. The minutes must include the following information:

- (1) identification of committee members (name, title, and affiliation);
- (2) indication of committee members' presence or absence from the meeting;
- (3) the names and titles of others present at the meeting;
- (4) the signature of the recorder; and
- (5) evidence that industry partners have taken an active role in making decisions that affect the program as outlined in Section B.2.a above.

Minutes must be maintained by the institution and made available to THECB staff upon request. See Figure 3.1, Sample Advisory Committee Meeting Record Template, at the end of this chapter.

3. Identification of Program Competencies

Institutions must demonstrate that each credential, whether for credit or continuing education, provides the necessary academic skills and the workforce skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary to attain entry-level employment in a target occupation. Program competencies may be developed and documented using one of the processes discussed below or another systematic methodology. The identified program competencies may then be used to select courses toward program development.

- a. Skill standards recognized by the [Texas Workforce Investment Council](#) (Council) are developed and endorsed by business and industry groups through a statewide job analysis that consists of work functions, key activities, and performance criteria. Council-recognized skill standards identify occupational, employability, and academic skills and knowledge for the occupational area. They can be used as curricular learning outcomes and for the development of related student assessments. For a list of current Council-recognized skill standards, see the [Texas Skill Standards Repository](#) on the Texas skill standards [website \(https://tssb.org/\)](https://tssb.org/). Information about how skill standards have been incorporated into CTE programs is available on the [Recognized Community and Technical College Programs](#) page. Programs recognized by the Council can be easily adopted by other institutions.

The THECB encourages institutions to develop or adopt Texas skill standards-based curricula and curricula developed through collaboratively with business and industry through other statewide CTE initiatives.

- b. The Calibrate process enables institutions to identify marketable skills in collaboration with industry-subject matter experts. Program curricula can be mapped to specific work activities, knowledge areas, employability skills, and tools resulting in a high-fidelity gap analysis. The process includes an online industry validation survey tool for increased efficiency and objectivity at the skill level. Additional information and example job profiles are available at <https://tx.calibrate.app>. Calibrate is a for-fee service.
- c. The DACUM (Developing A CurriculUM) process incorporates the use of a panel of experts to identify the major duties and related tasks included in an occupation, along with the necessary knowledge, skills, and traits. The final result is an occupational profile chart describing a job in terms of specific duties and tasks that competent workers must perform. Additional information is available at dacum.org.
- d. The U.S. Department of Labor has developed several tools to support linking competencies to occupational fields including [ONET Online Skills Search](#).
- e. The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) has developed a framework on [Employability Skills](#) for CTE as part of a national initiative. The framework has defined competencies essential for career navigation. OCTAE also offers resources on [Stackable Credentials](#) which includes

tools and examples of how CTE pathways may be designed with occupational tasks, industry skill standards and instructional mode in mind.

Regardless of the method used to identify program competencies, the final program curriculum must adequately address all identified competencies, and the program's courses should ensure that students have the opportunity to master the competencies. The program's advisory committee should take an active role in identifying program competencies and should validate the curriculum's capacity to instill the competencies.

4. Selection of Program Courses

To select program courses, faculty and administrators should refer to the [Workforce Education Course Manual](#) (WECM) and the [Lower Division Academic Course Guide Manual](#) (ACGM). These manuals describe established courses and guidelines for the creation of Special Topics, Local Need, and Academic Unique Need courses. See Chapter Four of this document for WECM Guidelines.

a. Choice of Prerequisites

All college-level, non-developmental courses that are required course prerequisites and/or requirements for entry into a degree or certificate must be included in the total hours for the credential and must be clearly identified in the proposed curriculum plan. Developmental education course hours must not be included in the total credit hours for the credential.

An associate degree program must be structured so that it can be completed within two and one-half years of full-time attendance, including prerequisites.

b. Course Sequencing

Curricula must demonstrate appropriate course sequencing to promote student attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities. For example, a program may not enroll a student in both a course and its prerequisite course during the same semester, unless both courses can be delivered in a compressed format without an overlap in the two courses.

c. Length of Semesters

Semesters, both traditional sixteen-week and shortened formats, should not award more than one SCH per week of instruction. More information about requirements for courses offered in shortened formats is available in THECB [Rule 4.6](#).

Instruction should be scheduled in a manner that maximizes students' opportunities for success. When a program has a full-time, lock-step schedule, an institution is encouraged to provide alternative tracks such as part-time schedules or other means to provide students with broader opportunities to earn the credential.

5. Verification of Workplace Competencies

To verify entry-level workplace competencies, the institution must provide at least one of the following for each approved credential: a) capstone experience, b) eligibility for a credentialing exam, and/or c) a work-based learning experience. A capstone experience should occur during the last semester of the student's educational program.

a. Capstone Experience

The capstone is a learning experience resulting in consolidation of a student's educational experience and certifies mastery of entry-level workplace competencies. Methods of providing a capstone experience include the following:

- (1) a comprehensive, discipline-specific examination prepared by the faculty of the workforce education program and administered at the conclusion of the program;
- (2) a course involving simulation of the workplace, case studies, portfolios, and employment scenarios; and
- (3) a discipline-specific project involving the integration of various teams of students performing activities to simulate situations that may occur in the workplace.

b. Credentialing Exams

Credentialing exams are licensure, certification, or registration exams provided by state or national agencies or by professional organizations.

c. Work-Based Learning Experiences

A work-based learning experience, paid or unpaid, enhances lecture and laboratory instruction and is provided at work sites appropriate to the discipline. The inclusion of a work-based learning experience in both certificate and applied associate degree plans is strongly recommended. A work-based learning experience allows a student to receive practical, hands-on training and to apply learned concepts and theories in a workplace setting. There are five types of work-based learning experiences: clinicals, internships, practica, cooperative education, and apprenticeships. See Section C of this chapter for more information on work-based learning experiences and Section D for more information on apprenticeships.

6. Developmental Education Courses

For students with academic skills deficiencies, developmental education courses should be made available, as appropriate, to be taken prior to or in conjunction with curriculum requirements in workforce education programs. Developmental education courses for public college students will only be funded by the state for a total of 27 semester credit hours.

7. Establishment of Program Linkages

Programs should be designed to permit maximum access for students by establishing linkages with other programs in public secondary schools and/or other institutions of higher education.

Linkages may be demonstrated by articulation agreements that provide for student transfer, reverse transfer, and advanced standing opportunities.

C. Characteristics of Work-based Learning Experiences

Clinical and internship experiences provide workplace settings in which students learn and apply program theory and management of the workflow. Clinical experiences must take place in a health care setting and students may or may not be paid for the learning experience. Paid clinicals are not allowed if they are expressly prohibited by a governing, licensing, or certification body. Internship experiences take place in any setting. Students may or may not be paid for the learning experience.

Practica and cooperative education provide workplace settings in which students gain practical experience in a discipline, enhance skills, and integrate knowledge. Each Cooperative Education course is required to include one hour per week of lecture (1 SCH) in addition to the total weekly external hours.

Clinical experiences and internships are defined as closely supervised experiences with instruction in theory provided concurrently. Practica and cooperative education courses are less closely supervised, apply previously learned theory, and are suitable for the student who can work more independently and is either working in the discipline (cooperative education) or is preparing for career entry (practicum). Students may or may not be paid for the learning experience.

The following principles apply to work-based learning experiences:

1. Work-based learning experiences must ultimately be under the control of the educational institution, although individuals in the sponsoring workplace may be responsible for the daily supervision of the student or for the lecture component of cooperative education.
2. Work-based learning experiences must be governed by a written, signed agreement between the higher education institution and the organization providing the experience. The higher education institution must maintain copies of such agreements and have them available for review by THECB staff.

The affiliation agreement should indicate what services each entity will be responsible for and the timeline for expiration or renewal. The renewal process for sites outside the institution's service area should be timed to coincide with the Higher Education Regional Council's approval process.

3. Institutions are encouraged to provide access to liability insurance for students enrolled in work-based learning experiences.
4. Each institution must ensure that the work-based learning experience is consistent with industry standards, supports specific written objectives outlined by the educational institution, and emphasizes current practices in the field of specialization. The on-site supervisor of each work-based experience should have appropriate qualifications in the applicable discipline. Written evaluation records must be maintained by the educational institution.
5. Prior to the beginning of the work-based learning experience, the institution must provide both the student and the external site with written documentation of the objectives, instructional strategies, and evaluation mechanisms of the work-based learning experience.
6. A written Work-based Learning Experience Student Evaluation Form, based on the student's learning plan and describing student learning outcomes, must be developed by the instructor in conjunction with the work-based learning supervisor prior to the start of the work-based learning experience. See Figure 3.4, Sample Work-based Learning Experience Student Evaluation Form, at the end of this chapter.
7. Prior to the work-based learning experience, each student must receive a statement of the expectations of the external site.
8. The maximum number of work-based learning contact hours in an AAS program must not exceed 1008 hours unless the program is specifically exempt. Exemption may be granted to health professions programs based on the standard of practice for the specific discipline. To apply for an exemption, a professional organization must submit to the THECB a request and a rationale for such exemption. If a waiver is granted, it will apply to all programs in that discipline.

The THECB has established the following work-based learning contact hour caps, based on state and national standards of practice:

<u>Discipline Name</u>	<u>CIP Code</u>	<u>External Contact Hour Cap</u>
Diagnostic Medical Sonography	51.0910	2000
Echocardiography	51.0910	1500
Electroneurodiagnostics and Polysomnography Technology	51.0903	2000
Invasive Cardiology	51.0901	1500
Nuclear Medical Technology	51.0905	2000
Radiation Therapy	51.0907	1500
Radiologic Technology	51.0911	2000
Respiratory Care Therapy	51.0908	2000
All other CIP codes		1008

9. In clinical, internship, and practicum experiences, formally scheduled discussion of the work-based learning experience with students is considered part of the learning experience, not a separate lecture component for credit hour assignment.
10. Continuing education workforce credentials, including Occupational Skills Awards² and institutional credentials, may include work-based learning experience courses if they are required for licensure or certification. Work-based learning experiences in continuing education must be approved in advance. A work-based learning experience course is awarded one CEU for every 10 contact hours. Work-based learning experiences may be approved for continuing education as follows:
 - a. up to 10 contact hours in a topic may be included in a lecture/laboratory course; and
 - b. more than 10 contact hours in a topic must be contained in a free-standing course separate from any lecture or laboratory course.

A work-based learning course that is not listed in the WECM must be submitted as a Local Need course and must be approved in advance of instruction to receive funding.

Table 3.1 summarizes the instructional structure for work-based learning experiences. Table 3.2 provides the SCH and contact hour ranges for work-based learning experiences.

² Formerly "Marketable Skills Achievement Award." The award has been renamed to distinguish it from 60x30TX Goal 3: Marketable Skills." 60x30TX has been refreshed at its halfway mark and retitled "Building a Talent Strong Texas."

Table 3.1: Work-Based Learning Experiences

Criteria	Practicum	Cooperative Education	Clinical Experience	Internship
1. Level of Instruction	Basic, Intermediate, or Advanced	Basic, Intermediate, or Advanced	Basic, Intermediate, or Advanced	Basic, Intermediate, or Advanced
2. Type of Learning	Required for health programs; required or elective for non-health programs	Required or elective	Required or elective	Required or elective
3. Student Outcomes	Gain practical experience in a discipline; enhance skills, and integrate knowledge	Gain practical experience in a discipline; enhance skills, and integrate knowledge	Synthesize new knowledge; and/or apply previous knowledge; and/or learn to manage the work flow	Synthesize new knowledge; and/or apply previous knowledge; and/or learn to manage the work flow
4. Method of Instruction	Supervised practice	Lecture with supervised practice	Practical experience related to theory simultaneously	Practical experience related to theory simultaneously
5. Type of Supervision	<u>Health Related:</u> Direct by faculty or a clinical preceptor <u>Non-Health Related:</u> Indirect by external site supervisor	Indirect by external site supervisor	Direct and/or close by faculty or clinical preceptor	Direct by external site supervisor
6. Lecture Component	Separate prerequisite or co-requisite course	1 hour/week required to be included	Separate prerequisite or co-requisite course	Separate prerequisite or co-requisite course
7. Role of College Faculty	Periodic visits	Lecture and/or periodic visits to external site	Primary instructor or periodic visits	Primary instructor or periodic visits
8. SCH to Contact Hour Ratio	1:7, 1:8, 1:9, or 1:10	1:7, 1:8, 1:9, or 1:10	1:3, 1:4, 1:5, or 1:6	1:3, 1:4, 1:5, or 1:6

Table 3.2: Work-based Learning Experience SCH Course Ranges

Course Type	Course Numbers	SCH	Contact Hour Range per Semester
Clinical	XXXX 1160, 1161, 1162, or 1163 XXXX 2160, 2161, 2162, or 2163	1	48-96
Clinical	XXXX 1260, 1261, 1262, or 1263 XXXX 2260, 2261, 2262, or 2263	2	96-192
Clinical	XXXX 1360, 1361, 1362, or 1363 XXXX 2360, 2361, 2362, or 2363	3	144-288
Clinical	XXXX 1460, 1461, 1462, or 1463 XXXX 2460, 2461, 2462, or 2463	4	192-384
Clinical	XXXX 1560, 1561, 1562, or 1563 XXXX 2560, 2561, 2562, or 2563	5	240-480
Clinical	XXXX 1660, 1661, 1662, or 1663 XXXX 2660, 2661, 2662, or 2663	6	288-576
Cooperative Education	XXXX 1280, 1281, 1282, 1283, 1284, or 1285 XXXX 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, or 2285	2	128-176 (16 Lec + 112-160 Ext)
Cooperative Education	XXXX 1380, 1381, 1382, 1383, 1384, or 1385 XXXX 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, or 2385	3	240-336 (16 Lec + 224-320 Ext)
Cooperative Education	XXXX 1480, 1481, 1482, 1483, 1484, or 1485 XXXX 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, or 2485	4	352-496 (16 Lec + 336-480 Ext)
Cooperative Education	XXXX 1580, 1581, 1582, 1583, 1584, or 1585 XXXX 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, or 2585	5	464-656 (16 Lec + 448-640 Ext)
Cooperative Education	XXXX 1680, 1681, 1682, 1683, 1684, or 1685 XXXX 2680, 2681, 2682, 2683, 2684, or 2685	6	576- 656 (16 Lec + 560-640 Ext)
Internship	XXXX 2186, 2187, 2188 or 2189	1	48-96
Internship	XXXX 2286, 2287, 2288 or 2289	2	96-192
Internship	XXXX 2386, 2387, 2388 or 2389	3	144-288
Internship	XXXX 2486, 2487, 2488 or 2489	4	192-384
Internship	XXXX 2586, 2587, 2588 or 2589	5	240-480
Internship	XXXX 2686, 2687, 2688 or 2689	6	288-576
Practicum	XXXX 1164, 1165, 1166, 1167, 1168, or 1169 XXXX 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, or 2169	1	112-160
Practicum	XXXX 1264, 1265, 1266, 1267, 1268, or 1269 XXXX 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, or 2269	2	224-320
Practicum	XXXX 1364, 1365, 1366, 1367, 1368, or 1369 XXXX 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, or 2369	3	336-480
Practicum	XXXX 1464, 1465, 1466, 1467, 1468, or 1469 XXXX 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, or 2469	4	448-640
Practicum	XXXX 1564, 1565, 1566, 1567, 1568, or 1569 XXXX 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, or 2569	5	560-640

D. Characteristics of Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a structured system of job training designed to prepare individuals for occupations in skilled trades and crafts. It combines on-the-job industry skill standards training under the supervision of experienced journeyman-level workers with job-related classroom instruction. Traditional apprenticeship programs are in construction and manufacturing and include occupations such as electrician, plumber/pipefitter, machinist, and sheet metal worker. The Department of Labor has approved some non-traditional occupations for apprenticeships, such as child development and research technician. However, each institution considering a program in these occupations must determine whether state laws and regulations allow apprenticeships in non-traditional occupations. For more information, visit <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/>.

All apprenticeship programs must be registered with the U.S. Department of Labor's [Office of Apprenticeship](#). These programs must be under the direction of an Apprenticeship Committee as described in [Texas Education Code \(TEC\) Chapter 133](#). Program sponsors such as individual employers, associations of employers, or groups of employers in cooperation with organized labor may provide on-the-job training (OJT). Public school districts and postsecondary institutions may provide the related classroom instruction component necessary to fulfill the requirements of an approved apprenticeship program. The related classroom instruction may provide SCH or continuing education units (CEU) and may be part of an applied associate degree or workforce education certificate.

According to the Texas Education Code, apprenticeships are controlled by employers. If an apprentice takes college courses that are funded by the THECB as part of the apprenticeship, the following principles apply:

1. The college courses remain subject to the SACSCOC *Principles of Accreditation*;
2. Courses reported for state funding must be open to any eligible student, both apprentice and non-apprentice;
3. The college is in control of all classes with and without apprentices;
4. The Apprenticeship Committee, employers, and the Office of Apprenticeship are responsible for ensuring the program meets Department of Labor standards and for evaluating a student's completion of the program; and
5. If employers select a curriculum that coincides with the college's requirements for a degree or certificate as part of the apprenticeship program, students may receive a college credential as part of the overall apprenticeship.

Institutions may participate in apprenticeship training either in an apprenticeship-dedicated program approved and funded by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) or in the enrollment of apprentices in THECB-approved and funded coursework open to any qualified student.

1. State Funding Sources

State funds are available for job-related classroom instruction costs. State funds may be accessed from either the TWC or the THECB, but not both. Authorization for state funding of the classroom costs of apprenticeship programs from the TWC is found in [TEC Chapter 133](#). Funding for all other components of apprenticeship programs is subject to the rules and regulations of the Texas Workforce Commission as prescribed under Chapter 133. For further information on TWC processes, contact the TWC. Additional information is available at <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/apprentice.html>.

Institutions may provide up to 144 hours of job-related classroom instruction as CEU or SCH, following THECB rules for all degrees and certificate programs. The college may enroll regular as well as apprenticeship students in such courses and obtain regular contact hour funding for them. These courses should be chosen from the *Workforce Education Course Manual (WECM)* as described in Chapter Four. Tuition and fees apply. See [TEC 54.051](#) and guidelines in this manual.

2. College Credit

The above-referenced 144 hours of job-related classroom instruction per year may be transcribed by colleges as CEU or as SCH, resulting in a maximum award of 14.4 CEU or approximately 6-9 SCH per year.

Up to 1008 contact hours of on-the-job training acquired through an apprenticeship may apply toward the completion of a certificate (CE or credit) or an AAS degree. The institution should have a governing board-approved process for determining what courses to transcript and the number of CEUs or SCH to be awarded. For CE courses the ratio of one CEU to 10 contact hours should be used, resulting in a maximum of 100.8 CEU. For credit courses the ratio of one SCH to 7-10 contact hours of apprenticeship training per week for 16 weeks should be used, resulting in a program maximum of nine SCH for students.

Apprenticeship programs and colleges are encouraged to work together so that students are able to learn, earn, and acquire college credit. Colleges are also urged to explore partnership opportunities with secondary schools in creating apprenticeship programs.

Additional information is available in [TEC Chapter 61](#) and [Chapter 133](#), THECB [Rule 9.27](#), and [Texas Workforce Commission Rules Chapter 837](#).

E. Characteristics of Applied Associate Degrees

An applied associate degree results in a formal credential that indicates mastery of a prescribed series of competencies with defined employment outcomes. The degree options for a workforce education program are the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree and the Associate of Applied Arts (AAA) degree. AAS and AAA degrees are technical in nature and are usually identified with a broad designation (e.g., AAS in

Electronics and AAA in Music Performance).

1. Maximum Number of Semester Credit Hours

Degrees must be limited to the number of semester credit hours required for the degree by SACSCOC, currently 60 SCH, unless the program appears on the list of [Programs Approved for Exemption From 60 Semester-Credit-Hour Requirements](#) below.

The THECB has approved exemptions for the following disciplines.

Discipline (CIP Code)	Approved SCH Exemption
American Sign Language (16.1603)	65
Cancer Data Management (51.0707)	61
Dental Hygiene (51.0602)	68
Diagnostic Medical Sonography (51.0910)	65
Physical Therapist Assistant (51.0806)	66
Radiation Therapy (51.0907)	65
Radiologic Technology (51.0911)	64
Respiratory Care (51.0908)	66

Institutions across the state with approved programs in these disciplines may exceed the 60 SCH limit up to the approved SCH.

If the number of SCH required to complete an associate's program exceeds 60 and the program is not exempted, the institution must provide detailed written documentation explaining the compelling academic reason for the number of required hours, such as, but not limited to, programmatic accreditation requirements, statutory requirements, or licensure/certification requirements that cannot be met without exceeding the 60-hour limit. The THECB staff will review the documentation provided and make a determination to approve or deny a request to exceed the 60-hour limit.

2. Degree Title

Institutions may choose their own degree titles provided the title clearly defines the nature of the degree. Institutions are encouraged to use common titles as specified in the CIP code manual to promote consistency with program offerings and credentials granted by other institutions, as programs should be designed to educate students broadly within an occupation or industry. Where applicable, certificates should follow the same guidelines, using standard terminology and types of credentials.

Approved applied associate degree and certificate programs will appear in the THECB's [Degree Program \(Clearinghouse\) Inventory](#). All programs will be subject to established statewide program evaluation procedures. Credentials must be listed in an institution's catalog, appear on the student's transcript, and be subject to the institution's Graduate Guarantee policy. The guarantee must assure a graduate's employer that the graduate

has met program competencies and must offer up to nine tuition-free semester hours of education for a program graduate judged by the employer as unable to perform on the job the competencies specified in the college program.

3. Technical Component

An AAS or AAA degree should have a technical component with 50% to 75% of the course credits drawn from a common technical specialty identified by the program CIP code. This ensures that each degree or certificate program has a clearly defined subject matter focus and provides students with opportunities for employment and career advancement. The curriculum may include both *Workforce Education Course Manual* (WECM) courses and *Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual* (ACGM) courses that are directly related to the discipline. The remaining percentage of an AAS or AAA degree should consist of support courses and general education courses. These guidelines are not intended to establish an arbitrary number or percentage of specific courses that must be contained in a program; logical exceptions to the guidelines are permitted.

In cases where a program may require a preponderance of academic courses, the institution must document that the additional academic coursework was recommended by the program advisory committee and that it is directly related to the occupational field and/or to a THECB-approved Field of Study Curriculum.

4. General Education Requirements

To meet SACSCOC guidelines, each applied associate degree must have a minimum of 15 semester hours of general education courses. Courses must be selected from the following areas and must include at least 3 SCH in each area: Humanities/Fine Arts, Social/Behavioral Sciences, and Natural Sciences/Mathematics. Table 3.3 maps the Texas Core Curriculum component areas to these SACSSOC categories. Generally, courses should be selected from the institution's core curriculum, though each institution should work with its SACSCOC representative concerning courses that meet the requirements. General education courses must be transferable courses found in the ACGM or on the college's approved academic unique need course inventory, although unique need courses cannot be part of a core curriculum. See SACSCOC [Principles of Accreditation](#) and the [Texas Core Curriculum](#) for further information.

Table 3.3: SACSCOC-Required General Education Courses
By Texas Core Curriculum Component Area

Humanities/ Fine Arts	Social/ Behavioral Science	Natural Science and Math
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication* • Language, Philosophy, and Culture • Creative Arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American History • Government/Political Science • Social and Behavioral Sciences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics • Life and Physical Sciences

* Note that the SACSCOC Executive Council adopted the following interpretation in February 2010: “Courses in basic composition that do not contain a literature component, courses in oral communication, and introductory foreign language courses are skill courses and not pure humanities courses. Therefore, for purposes of meeting this standard, none of the above may be the one course designated to fulfill the humanities/fine arts requirement in [this standard].” For more information, see <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/07/faculty-credentials.pdf>.

5. Program Specializations

A program specialization is a variation within one AAS or AAA degree that allows students to take a sequence of courses based on their career objectives. A specialization does not result in a different AAS or AAA degree and is not listed separately in the THECB program inventory, so a student may not earn more than one degree in the discipline. However, a specialization may result in the award of separate certificate credentials. The specialization must match the program CIP code of the approved credential and must have at least 50% of the technical specialty component (including WECM and ACGM courses) in common. Program specializations may be approved as additions to the original degree. For example, an institution could offer a single degree program, AAS in Hospitality Management, with two specializations, one in Hotel Management and another in Tourism.

6. Shortened Tracks – Advanced Technical Certificate

An AAS or AAA degree program that provides a shortened track of 16-45 SCH for students who currently hold a related associate’s or bachelor’s degree may offer an Advanced Technical Certificate (ATC) for the shortened track. For example, an AAS degree program in Sonography may provide an ATC in Sonography for students who already hold an AAS in Echocardiography. In this case, the program inventory would list both an AAS and an ATC in Sonography. The ATC is discussed further below, in Characteristics of Workforce Certificates.

7. Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Requirements

All students enrolled in an associate degree program or a Level Two certificate program

must meet the requirements of the Texas Success Initiative (TSI). However, since students are not required to have achieved college readiness in order to graduate from high school, students enrolled in certain level two certificate programs and associate of applied science programs have the option to choose either a college-level mathematics or science course to meet degree or certificate requirements. If a non-mathematics option is chosen, the institution's faculty content experts may determine that a student does not need to attain the mathematics college-readiness designation. The minimum levels of readiness are demonstrated through successful completion of those lower level or program-specific career -technical education course.

More information about TSI requirements is available in THECB [Rules Chapter 4, Subchapter C](#).

F. Characteristics of Workforce Certificates

A credit certificate should provide progression toward an AAS or an AAA degree. At least 50% of the course credits should be drawn from a single technical specialty. The remaining courses may be technical or academic courses.

Credit certificates will be approved in four different categories or levels:

1. A level one certificate (CERT1) can be completed by a student in one calendar year or less. It must consist of at least 15 SCH and no more than 42 SCH. Level one certificate programs are exempt from TSI requirements, but certificate programs may perform local assessment and remediation of students, provided that these activities do not exclude the student from enrollment in the certificate program.
2. A level two certificate (CERT2) is defined as any certificate for which a student must meet certain eligibility requirements prior to entry into the program. A CERT2 program may consist of between 30 SCH and 51 SCH. Students enrolling in CERT2 programs are subject to the TSI requirements as described above in Section E-7 and may be subject to other eligibility requirements as determined by the institution.
3. An Enhanced Skills Certificate (CERT3) is an optional certificate associated with an AAS or AAA degree program that is intended to provide advanced skills, identified by business and industry, which are not part of the degree. The certificate must be clearly defined in course content and outcomes. It must consist of at least 6 SCH and no more than 12 SCH and may extend an AAS or AAA degree to an overall total that must not exceed 72 SCH. ESCs are awarded concurrently with a degree but may not be considered to be an intrinsic part of the degree or be used to circumvent the 60 SCH associate degree limitation.
4. An Advanced Technical Certificate (ATC) is a certificate that has a defined associate or baccalaureate degree as a prerequisite. In some cases, junior level standing in an approved baccalaureate degree program may be a prerequisite for admission into an ATC. The ATC must consist of at least 16 SCH and no more than 45 SCH. It must be focused, clearly related to the prerequisite degree, and justifiable to meet industry or

external agency requirements. An advanced technical certificate attached to an AAS degree must be in the same program area as the AAS degree. For an advanced technical certificate attached to a baccalaureate degree or to junior level standing in a baccalaureate program, the institution should consult with THECB staff to determine the appropriate program area to which the certificate should be assigned.

The following credit and noncredit credentials may also be offered:

1. A Career Foundation Core (CFC) Certificate is created through a statewide curriculum development process recognized by the THECB with input from business, industry, and instructional specialists. Each CFC certificate is based upon the identification of a sequence of courses and learning outcomes that represent a career foundation core within a specific career cluster. A CFC can be defined as a level one or level two certificate. A level one CFC certificate draws its core entirely from the WECM, while a level two CFC may draw from both the WECM and ACGM. The intent of this credential is to maximize an individual student's opportunity for employment, with options to pursue the program's associate degree or transfer to another higher education institution or technical college. This certificate also allows a student to pursue a second year in a specific Career Pathway program.
2. A Continuing Education (CE) certificate program consists of workforce knowledge and skills identified in the same manner as those in credit programs. All CE certificate programs must be listed in the college's approved inventory of programs and must be transcribed. Workforce education programs of 780 contact hours or more may be offered only as SCH. An exception is made for Emergency Medical Technology/Paramedic continuing education programs, CIP 51.0904, which may have a maximum of 800 contact hours.
3. An Occupational Skills Award³ (OSA) is a sequence of courses that meet the minimum standard for program length specified by the Texas Workforce Commission for the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program (9-14 SCH for credit courses or 144-359 contact hours for workforce continuing education courses). An OSA must possess the following characteristics:
 - a. The credential is TSI-waived under THECB [Rule 4.54b](#);
 - b. The content of the credential must be recommended by an external workforce advisory committee, or the occupation must appear on the Local Workforce Development Board's Demand Occupations list;
 - c. In most cases, the credential should be composed of WECM courses only. However, non-stratified academic courses may be used occasionally if recommended by the external committee and if appropriate for the content of the credential;
 - d. The credential complies with the Single Course Delivery guidelines for WECM courses (see Chapter Four); and
 - e. The credential prepares students for employment in accordance with guidelines

³ Formerly "Marketable Skills Achievement Award." The award has been renamed to distinguish it from 60x30TX Goal 3: Marketable Skills. 60x30TX has been refreshed at its halfway mark and retitled "Building a Talent Strong Texas."

established for WIOA.

4. Institutional Credentials

In addition to credentials recognized by the THECB, colleges may offer institutional credentials of fewer than 15 SCH or 360 continuing education contact hours for completion of a course or series of courses that represent achievement of an identifiable skill proficiency. Institutional credentials do not require THECB approval and do not appear in the Board's Workforce Education Inventory.

G. Characteristics of Continuing Education (CE) Programs

A coherent sequence of continuing education courses that totals 360 or more contact hours must be submitted as a workforce education certificate program. Courses are considered to be part of a coherent sequence if they meet one of the following requirements:

1. include required and/or recommended prerequisites or co-requisites;
2. lead to an external credential (license, certification, or registration); or
3. are taken by a majority of students in sequence to meet occupational qualifications.

Workforce CE courses with basic skills content must be designed for specific occupations and specific occupational target populations and must include appropriate occupational objectives. Courses that are primarily intended to develop basic skills, such as Adult Basic Education, GED preparation, and TSI preparation, are not eligible for state funding under this category.

1. CE Administrative Criteria

The institution must have an identifiable office or division with designated professional staff to plan and administer workforce continuing education programs. Through this office, the institution must ensure that both administrative and program criteria are followed for learning experiences offering CEU.

The institution must provide a supportive and positive learning experience through appropriate educational facilities, learning materials, equipment, and support services consistent with the goals and planned learning outcomes of each learning experience.

2. CE Program Criteria

The program or activity must be planned in response to educational needs that have been identified for a target audience.

Each program or activity must have clear and consistent written statements of intended learning outcomes (e.g., behavioral or performance objectives). These outcomes should represent what learners are expected to accomplish as a result of the learning activity (the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to move a target audience to another level

of competency). Program content, instructional methods, and types of learner assessment should be dictated by the learning outcomes.

Qualified instructional personnel must be involved in planning and conducting each learning experience. Instructional personnel should have competence in the subject matter, a clear understanding of intended learning outcomes, the ability to use appropriate instructional strategies, and the ability to effectively communicate educational content to the target audience.

The choice of content and instructional methods should be consistent with the desired learning outcomes. Instructional methods should appeal to the diverse learning styles of each audience. Learners should be actively involved, have an opportunity to process what they have learned, and receive feedback.

Participants should demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes through appropriate assessment strategies. Assessment may take the form of questions and answers, discussions, simulations, written or oral exercises, reports, projects, or plans. Assessment should be used throughout the program to promote and reinforce active learning.

Programs should be evaluated regularly for their quality and effectiveness. Evaluation may measure reactions of participants, the amount of learning, and/or changes in behavior. Evaluation may also provide information about the planning, development, administration, instruction, and support services for a program.

3. Funding of Workforce CE Courses

To be approved for state funding, workforce continuing education courses must be consistent with the role and mission of the institution and must be designed to respond effectively to identified workforce needs by providing the following:

- a. preparatory education in occupations addressed in credit workforce education programs;
- b. occupations that require less than an associate degree for which there is a documented demand within the Texas economy; or
- c. education to enhance or extend the skills of employees already working in a particular field.

Workforce continuing education courses submitted for Local Need approval should not duplicate existing WECM courses or other approved workforce continuing education courses offered by the institution.

A coherent sequence of continuing education courses that totals 360 or more contact hours must be approved as a postsecondary workforce education program. No single workforce continuing education lecture or laboratory course may require more than 176 contact hours.

Tuition and fees for workforce CE courses offered for CEU must be established by the institution's governing board and must be uniformly and consistently assessed. The institution's board must at least annually ratify or approve any changes in tuition and fees; however, the board may delegate interim authority for establishment of tuition and fees.

An approved workforce CE course may be delivered through contract instruction consistent with THECB rules.

An approved workforce continuing education course may be offered out-of-district/service area, subject to approval by the appropriate Higher Education Regional Council(s). See THECB [Rules Chapter 4](#), Subchapters P and Q, for more information.

Further information about approval and funding of workforce continuing education courses taught by Texas public colleges is available in [TEC 54.051](#) and in THECB [Rules Chapter 9](#), Subchapters A, E, F and G.

H. Distance Education, Off-Campus, and On-Campus Extension Programs

All off-campus instruction must adhere to THECB [Rules Chapter 4](#), Subchapters P and Q. Notification and approval procedures for distance education, off-campus, and on-campus extension programs and courses are available on the THECB's [Distance Education](#) website.

Figure 3.1: Sample Advisory Committee Meeting Record Template

CHAIRPERSON:		
MEETING DATE:	MEETING TIME:	MEETING PLACE:
RECORDER:		PREVIOUS MEETING:

MEMBERS: (P = Present) Add nonmembers present to bottom of table with heading "Others Present."

(P?)	Name and Title (List all members)	Business Affiliation	Name and Title

AGENDA

Agenda Item	Action, Discussion, Information	Responsibility
Approve Minutes from Last Meeting		
Old Business:		
New Business:		
Curriculum Decisions:		
Other:		

MINUTES

Key Discussion Points	Discussion
Old Business:	
New Business:	
Curriculum Decisions:	
Other:	

CHAIRPERSON SIGNATURE (or designee):

DATE:

NEXT MEETING:

Chapter Four: The Workforce Education Course Manual (WECM)

A. Background and Purposes of the WECM

The [Workforce Education Course Manual](#) (WECM) is the THECB's web-based inventory of current workforce education courses available for use by Texas public community and technical colleges. Courses may be searched by numerous attributes, including CIP code, rubric, title, and others.

The THECB's [Career & Technical Education/Workforce Initiatives](#) page provides a link to the WECM search page. Workforce educators are invited and encouraged to submit comments concerning WECM courses and processes by downloading the form from the WECM Comments link available on the page and emailing the completed form to WECM@highered.texas.gov.

The *WECM Protocol Manual* provides detailed information about the elements of a WECM course and other course usage requirements. The *WECM Protocol Manual* should be consulted when developing a new program or revising an existing program. The *WECM Protocol Manual* can be found at the top of the [WECM homepage](#).

WECM courses may not be used to provide developmental instruction. Developmental education courses include compensatory material that is below college level and cover topics such as reading, writing, mathematics, study skills, and English as a Second Language. Developmental education courses are available only in the *Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual*.

B. Organization of WECM Courses

WECM courses are assigned six-digit CIP codes that represent instructional codes, titles, and descriptions of academic and occupational programs offered at postsecondary levels. The THECB assigns CIP codes and rubrics to WECM courses for the purpose of classifying, recording, and reporting of workforce education courses. The CIP codes and rubrics are not intended to drive the selection of course offerings; rather, they serve as a guide once a college has identified the outcomes for a course and/or program. Courses should be selected based on course descriptions and end-of-course outcomes, rather than on CIP Codes or rubrics. A program may include courses with different rubrics as long as the course content is applicable to the overall program.

C. Explanation of Course Elements

All WECM SCH and CEU courses are designed with an array of semester credit and contact hour options and are governed by uniform course-writing protocols. Courses allow flexibility for colleges in awarding certificates and degrees and in responding to the immediate needs of students, business, and industry. SCH and CEU courses provide an opportunity for students to obtain skills, knowledge, and behaviors needed for career exploration, entry into the job market, and specific job upgrades.

When an existing WECM course is available to cover specific material, the institution must use the range of credit and contact hours as well as the minimum outcomes specified in the WECM course listing. For detailed information about WECM course elements, refer to the *WECM Protocol Manual* linked at the top of the [WECM homepage](#).

D. Determining Allowable Contact Hours

For SCH and CEU program formats, the institution must assign consistent and appropriate ratios of contact hours to SCH or CEU for each course in the program according to the ratios and parameters established by THECB guidelines. A chart showing the allowable range of contact hours is available in Table 4.1 below.

A CEU course with fewer than seven contact hours of instruction will not receive state funding unless the specific type and length of instruction is required by a local, state, or national licensing, certifying, regulatory, or accrediting agency. No lecture/lab CEU course may have more than 176 contact hours. CEU work-based learning courses must follow the same contact hour limits as SCH work-based learning courses.

E. Types of Instruction

1. Lecture: Instruction that presents new material with additional cognitive and/or affective learning outcomes is classified as *lecture*.
2. Laboratory: Instruction that provides skill development, application, and practice of knowledge under direct supervision of college personnel is classified as *laboratory* instruction. Activities conducted in simulation facilities to develop or practice skills are also classified as laboratory activities.
3. Work-based learning experience: Instruction that involves the presentation or application of knowledge in a workplace setting is classified as a *work-based learning experience*. The integration of knowledge gained through the work-based experience with previously learned concepts or practices is included in the instructional design of the work-based learning experience. For definitions of specific types of work-based learning experiences, see “Characteristics of Work-Based Learning Experiences” in Chapter Three.

A maximum of 47 contact hours of clinical experience may be included as laboratory experience in SCH lecture/lab courses, while continuing education courses may include a maximum of nine (9) contact hours of clinical experience. All clinical experiences that exceed these limits must be designated as separate clinical courses.

F. Assignment of Semester Credit Hours and Continuing Education Units

For lecture/classroom instruction during a 16-week semester, a ratio of one SCH to one contact hour (1:1) must be used. If the instruction is compressed into less than a 16-week semester, the course must still require the same number of contact hours as it would in a long semester.

Example of an eight-week summer course:

8 lecture hours per week = 64 total contact hours.
64 total contact hours/16 weeks is equivalent to 4 hours/week.
Therefore, the course is assigned 4 SCH.

For on-campus laboratory instruction during a 16-week semester, a ratio of one SCH to between two and four laboratory contact hours (1:2, 3, or 4) must be used. Therefore, one SCH can be earned for two, three, or four contact hours per week of laboratory instruction. For allowable hours of work-based learning experience ratios, see Table 3.2.

Example of a four SCH course with lecture and laboratory:

3 lecture contact hours/week	3 SCH
<u>3 laboratory contact hours/week</u>	<u>1 SCH</u>
Total for the course	4 SCH

For continuing education units, a ratio of 1 CEU to 10 contact hours is used. The total number of contact hours is divided by 10 to determine the number of CEU, which may be expressed as a decimal. (For example, 17 contact hours equals 1.7 CEU.) Additional information about continuing education units is available at the [International Association for Continuing Education and Training](#).

G. Special Topics Courses

Special Topics courses are available for temporary use or transitional content and should be used only when course content does not exist in a current WECM course. Topics may address recently identified current events, knowledge, and skills pertinent to the technical area and relevant to the occupational development of the student. A college must specify discipline-specific outcomes for a Special Topics course. Special Topics courses are available for certain rubrics within each six-digit CIP code and are identified by a “9” in the third digit of the course number.

Although THECB approval is currently not required for the content of a Special Topics course, *audit penalties may apply if colleges are not careful to include only legitimate workforce education content and avoid non-fundable community education courses*. Colleges must submit a Special Topics form through the [CBPass portal](#) prior to the end of the semester in which the course is offered.

H. Local Need Courses

Content that is not contained in a WECM course and that will be offered repeatedly over several years is most appropriate for Local Need status. Evidence of need for the course must be substantiated by support from business and industry in the local geographical area. A Local Need course must be submitted to the THECB through the [CBPass portal](#) and approved at least 30 days prior to instruction to qualify for state funding. The THECB course report audit will verify whether colleges have submitted all Local Need course forms. Local Need courses are identified by a “7” in the third digit of the course number.

Local Need courses may be used to respond to unique local or regional conditions or regulatory changes, to expand an existing discipline to include a new specialty, or to create courses in new disciplines. (New disciplines are those with no course rubrics in the WECM inventory of courses.)

I. Development and Submission of Special Topics and/or Local Need Courses

The process for development and submission of a Special Topics or Local Need course is as follows:

1. Determine if there is a suitable WECM course available and whether the course should be offered in a Special Topics or Local Need format.
2. Submit a Special Topics course application (for transitional content) or a Local Need course application (for distinct content that will be offered repeatedly). The Special Topics and Local Need Course Forms are available for electronic submission through the [CBPass portal](#) under “Other Options.”
3. If approved by the THECB, Local Need courses will be added to the college’s Local Need Course Inventory.
4. Special Topics and Local Need courses will be reviewed by the WECM Advisory Committee for possible inclusion in the WECM.
5. Courses that have been added to the WECM course inventory must be used in place of the Special Topic or Local Need courses.
6. If the Special Topics or Local Need course is not adopted as a regular WECM course, the college may continue to teach the content for up to 24 months. After 24 months, the course must be renewed by submitting a new course application or by responding to the Local Need Course Renewal Form that is sent to the college each year.

J. Limited Use of Special Topics and/or Local Need Courses in Credit Programs

Programs not addressing a new discipline or a new specialty within an existing discipline are limited to the following:

1. three Special Topics and/or Local Need courses per AAS degree or Advanced Technical Certificate;
2. two Special Topics and/or Local Need courses per Level 2 certificate; and
3. one Special Topics or Local Need course per Level 1 certificate.

An SCH Local Need lecture-lab course may not have fewer than 16 or more than 176 contact hours. The courses must follow the established ratios for contact hour and credit hour assignments set forth in Chapter Three. Preferred and allowable combinations are outlined in Table 4.1 below. A range of contact hours with lecture-lab components is specified for each number of SCH. Local Need work-based learning courses must follow the established

ratios for the appropriate type of work-based learning course outlined in Chapter Three's Table 3.2.

Table 4.1: Lecture – Lab Credit/Contact Hour Combinations for SCH, Local Need, and Special Topics Courses

SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS (SCH)	PREFERRED* Contact Hour Range per Semester	Lecture /wk	Lab /wk	Contact /sem	ALLOWABLE* * Contact Hour Range per Semester***	Lecture /wk	Lab /wk	Contact /sem
1	16-48	1	0	16	16-64	1	1	32
		0	2	32		0	4	64
		0	3	48				
2	32-80	2	0	32	32-128	2	1	48
		1	2	48		0	5	80
		1	3	64		0	6	96
		1	4	80		0	7	112
		0	4	64		0	8	128
3	48-96	3	0	48	48-144	3	1	64
		2	2	64		1	5	96
		2	3	80		1	6	112
		2	4	96		1	7	128
		1	4	80		1	8	144
4	64-128	4	0	64	64-160	4	1	80
		3	2	80		2	5	112
		3	3	96		2	7	144
		3	4	112		2	8	160
		2	4	96		1	9	160
		2	6	128				
5	80-144	5	0	80	80-176	5	1	96
		4	2	96		3	5	128
		4	3	112		3	7	160
		4	4	128		3	8	176
		3	4	112		2	9	176
		3	6	144				

*Preferred contact hours and combinations are those that typically represent best practices or the most common course patterns.

**Allowable Range includes Preferred Combinations and Other Allowable Combinations.

***Other allowable combinations are available for specific circumstances.

K. Mirror Course

When a course may be delivered in either a SCH or a CEU format, the course is defined as a “mirror” course and must be offered as published in the WECM. The college may add additional outcomes but must not substantially change the intent of the course. Institutions awarding credit for mirror courses taught in CEU format must meet all SACSCOC requirements, including faculty requirements.

L. SCH Single-Course Delivery

In response to local demand or to explore new program viability, colleges may offer a limited number of individual WECM SCH courses even if the college does not have an approved program in the same CIP code. However, the recurrent offering of linked WECM courses outside a THECB-approved program is not permitted. For each academic year and within any program CIP code, a college may offer a maximum of 14 SCH of courses in a CIP area where no approved program exists, provided the following requirements are met:

1. No more than two courses or eight SCH (whichever is greater) may be offered in any one semester;
2. Courses may be WECM courses, Special Topics courses, and/or Local Need courses, but may not be work-based learning courses; and
3. Faculty teaching the courses must meet all SACSCOC qualifications and requirements.

Chapter Five: New Program Approval Process

A. Overview of the New Program Approval Process

THECB rules allow automatic approval of a new associate of applied science degree or certificate program if an institution and its governing board certify that certain criteria are met and documentation is available to support the criteria. The criteria are available in THECB [Rule 9.93](#).

A new applied associate degree or certificate program that meets these criteria may be requested by submitting a New Short Program Application through the [CBPass portal](#) under “Workforce Education Course Manual”, entering the course curriculum in the application, and downloading a copy of the Certification Form for New Associate of Applied Science and Certificate Programs at that location. The form is also available on the [New Associate Degree & Certificate Program Requests website](#). Once the Certification Form has been signed and submitted to the THECB through the [Document Submission Portal](#), the program will be approved if no objections are received during the 30-day public comment period. The institution's program inventory will be updated accordingly, and a letter of approval will be sent to the institution.

A new applied associate degree or certificate program that does not meet all of the criteria on the Certification Form may be requested by submitting a New Long Program Application through the CBPass portal described above. If a licensing or accrediting agency requires confirmation that a program is approved by the THECB, the institution may request that a letter be sent to the appropriate agency affirming THECB approval.

1. New Program Approval Required

Colleges must submit a New Program application under the following circumstances:

- a. to create a certificate, including an advanced technical or Field of Study Completion certificate, or an associate degree (AAS, AAA) in a program for which the college has no current offerings on its inventory;
- b. to create a certificate, including an advanced technical certificate or Field of Study Completion certificate, or an associate degree (AAS, AAA) in a program that has been deactivated for over three years;
- c. to create an associate degree in a program for which the college currently only offers certificates; or
- d. to offer a sequence of workforce continuing education courses for which the total number of contact hours is 360 or more. See Chapter Three for more information.

A New Program Application is not required to add certificates to an existing program. For this purpose, a program revision may be submitted. See Chapter Six for more information.

2. Application Deadlines

Program certification forms must be received at least 45 days prior to the planned start date of the program in order to allow an adequate amount of time for public comment.

3. Texas Skill Standards Based Program Recognition

Institutions are encouraged to apply for program recognition from the [Texas Workforce Investment Council](#) (Council). This process applies to disciplines for which skill standards have been recognized. A list of current Council-recognized programs and application documentation may be found on the [Recognized Community and Technical College Programs](#) and [Application Forms](#) pages, respectively.

B. Application Procedures and Requirements

1. Letter of Intent to Apply for New Workforce Education Program

A letter of intent must be sent to the chair(s) of the appropriate Higher Education Regional Council(s) and to the appropriate local workforce development board(s). The institution is not required to send a copy of this letter to the THECB. A listing of local workforce development boards is available at www.texasworkforce.org/dirs/wdbs/wdbmap.html. See Figure 5.1, Sample Letter of Intent, at the end of this chapter.

2. Documentation for New Program Development

If an institution submits a New Long Program Application, the following items will need to be included in the application. If an institution is submitting a New Short Program Application, the institution must document that the following were reviewed during the new program design and planning process and must be able to provide documentation upon request by THECB staff.

a. Documentation of Workforce Demand for the Program

Institutions must document pertinent local, regional, and/or statewide workforce demand for the program. Links to data sources from the Texas Workforce Commission are available at <https://lmci.state.tx.us/explore/LMI/LMI.asp>. To satisfy this requirement, institutions must document that the program would accomplish at least *two* of the following:

- (1) prepare students for an occupation that has been documented as needed from a strategic planning website such as [Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc.](#) (Emsi) or the [Texas Workforce Development Toolkit](#);
- (2) prepare students for an occupation that is on the list of targeted, high demand, or priority occupations on the institution's [Local Workforce Development Boards](#) website;
- (3) prepare students for an occupation that has been identified as an emerging

and/or evolving occupation for the region or state in the Texas Workforce Commission's [Labor Market and Career Information](#);

- (4) offer a program for which the [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#), published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, indicates high occupational demand for the next five to 10 years;
- (5) offer a program for which a survey of local or regional employers documents sufficient employment opportunities for the projected enrollment in the program. If a survey is used, documentation should include the type of survey (phone, mail, etc.); description and size of the population; description of sampling techniques; number and location (in district, service area, and/or statewide) of employers surveyed, including the total number of surveys sent and the number returned; number of usable responses; salary ranges and employment opportunities by job title; and demonstration that the program education or training results in added value or an entry level wage higher than minimum wage and/or a standard of living above poverty;
- (6) offer a program that meets advisory committee recommendations;
- (7) offer a program for an occupation listed in the [Occupational Information Network](#) (O*NET); or
- (8) offer a program that meets new regulatory/accrediting requirements.

b. Assurance of Basic and Workforce Skills

The college must maintain documentation that the appropriate level of academic and workplace skills will be achieved upon completion of the described curriculum. See Chapter Three for more information on identifying program competencies during program development.

c. Enrollment Management Plan

The institution should design a program-specific enrollment management plan. The plan should provide evidence that the proposed new program will have sufficient enrollment to support the program, including the following:

- (1) identification of articulated feeder institutions and programs (e.g., high schools offering programs of study or dual credit courses);
- (2) a strategy for enrollment projection and management that includes student recruitment and program marketing;
- (3) a plan that specifies activities for access, recruitment, retention, and placement of students from special populations as defined in Perkins V;
- (4) a history of enrollment in related continuing education/workforce education courses (if applicable); and
- (5) projected enrollment, including the anticipated number of program majors for the first year of program operation, the anticipated average annual enrollment thereafter, and the anticipated annual number of graduates once the program is fully implemented.

d. Program Linkages and Demonstration of Non-Duplication

Each program (or group of similar programs) should document linkage(s) with public secondary schools and/or other institutions of higher education, as well as non-duplication with similar programs within the higher education region and/or service area. Documentation should include the following (as applicable):

- (1) identification of similar workforce education programs and related training programs in the region/service area. Assistive data are available at the THECB's [Texas Higher Education Data](#) website;
- (2) documentation that contact has been made with appropriate institutional administrators to initiate program-specific articulation;
- (3) a timeline for the formal initiation of these linkages;
- (4) a statement specifying the form(s) of program linkage(s) that will be initiated [e.g., articulation agreements, programs of study, dual credit; Advanced Technical Credit); and/or
- (5) documentation that clearly justifies the need for any proposed program that duplicates an existing program in the region or service area.

e. External Agency Approval, Certification, and Accreditation

Institutions wishing to enter contractual agreements with non-regionally accredited organizations should consult THECB [Rules Chapter 9, Subchapter G](#). The institution must document the process and timeline for any required or voluntary external agency approval or accreditation required to ensure the eligibility of graduates to take the examinations required for certification, licensure, or registration.

f. Assurance of Adequate Funding

The institution should detail the initial resources needed for the program, including existing and additional faculty, facilities, equipment, and an estimate of annual operating costs. The following areas should be addressed:

- (1) Faculty. For applied associate degree programs, at least one full-time faculty member with appropriate credentials must have his or her primary teaching assignment in the major, curriculum area, or concentration. All certificate programs must have at least an assigned program coordinator who is a full-time employee of the college and at least one part-time faculty member with appropriate credentials. See Chapter Two for more information about personnel requirements;
- (2) Facilities. These must be adequate for the delivery of the program. All out-of-district or off-campus resources must be adequate to support a program of quality equal to that of the main campus;
- (3) Equipment. A general list of required equipment, estimated costs, and potential donations must be provided; and

- (4) Five-year Costs and Revenue. Details of how the institution will meet projected new program costs for the first five years, including personnel, operating expenses, and capital outlay, must be provided.

g. Advisory Committee Minutes

The institution must keep on file the minutes of all advisory committee meetings conducted for the planning of the program. The minutes from at least two formal advisory committee meetings held prior to submitting the new program application should clearly document industry support. See Chapter Three for more information about advisory committee requirements.

C. New Program Review Process

When developing a new program, institutions are encouraged to consult with THECB staff as well as members of other appropriate state agencies and the appropriate local workforce development board(s).

1. Staff Review of the Application

THECB staff will make an administrative determination that the application is complete no later than five business days after receiving the application. Completed program applications will be posted for 30 days on the THECB website for public comment. The institutions should receive notification of approval 30-45 days after the comment period ends, provided there are no unresolved objections.

If the THECB does not act on a completed application within one year, the program will be approved by default on the first anniversary after submission of the application.

2. Objections to Proposed New Programs and Resolution of Disputes

Objections raised by an institution concerning another institution's proposed new career/technical/workforce education program must be submitted in writing to the Assistant Commissioner for Workforce Education within 30 days from the date the letter of intent is sent to the Higher Education Regional Council. The Assistant Commissioner may delay formal review of the new program until objections are resolved.

Associate degree and certificate programs must be referred to the board of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board if they are the subject of an unresolved grievance or dispute. Other programs may be referred to the board at the Assistant Commissioner's discretion.

3. Implementation Deadline

Programs must be implemented within 18 months of the approved implementation date as stated by the Assistant Commissioner in the approval letter. To pursue new program implementation after that time, the institution must submit a New Program Application.

Figure 5.1: Sample Letter of Intent

[date]

Chair, Higher Education Regional Council
Chair, Local Workforce Development Board

Dear _____:

Please be advised that [name of college] intends to apply for a new workforce education program leading to a [certificate/associate of applied science or associate of applied arts degree/advanced technical certificate] in [name of major].

It is our intent to submit an application for program approval to the THECB staff by [applicable due date; see approval process deadlines]. If the program is approved, it is our intent to implement the program during [semester/year].

If members of the Higher Education Regional Council or the Local Workforce Development Board have questions about our intent to offer this program, please inform me as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

[Name of president]

[Name of college]

Chapter Six: Program Revisions

A. Need for Program Revisions

Once an AAS or AAA degree or certificate is approved and has been placed on the college's program inventory, changing the curriculum requires a formal program revision. Applications for revision of certificate and degree programs must be submitted through the [Workforce Education Inventory Access and Update](#).

A program revision will not be approved if it causes an associate degree to exceed 60 SCH, unless the program appears on the list of Programs Approved for Exemption From 60 Semester-Credit-Hour Requirements (see p. xx) or the institution provides an acceptable and compelling academic reason for the excess hours. See Chapter Three for more information.

Applications for program revisions must be submitted to THECB staff at least 30 days prior to the planned implementation date. Program revisions must receive THECB approval prior to implementation by the institution. Failure to submit a properly completed application or provide additional information as requested by THECB staff may delay the approval process.

Notice of receipt and/or approval of the application will be posted on the THECB Community and Technical Colleges Page. A program is considered approved only when an "A" is listed in the "Act" column and the date of approval is shown in the "Notif. Date" column. If any changes were requested by the institution or made by THECB staff, the changes will be described in the "Notes/Comments" column.

1. Changes That Require a Program Revision

A program revision is required for the following changes:

- a. to change the name of an AAS/AAA degree or certificate;
- b. to request a change in the CIP code of a degree or certificate to a different CIP code in the same program;
- c. to add a new credential to an existing program;
- d. to revise the curriculum of a credential if any of the following circumstances occur:
 - (1) Special Topics or Local Need courses are added to or removed from the curriculum (see Chapter Four for guidelines on using Local Need and Special Topics courses);
 - (2) The number of SCH in the credential is changed or, for a CE program, the length is changed by 100 or more contact hours;
 - (3) The length of the credential is changed by one semester or more; or
 - (4) The certificate level is changed from Level 1 (TSI-waived) to Level 2 (TSI-liable) or vice versa.
- e. to deactivate a credential (suspend new-student enrollment);

- f. to reactivate a credential (within three years of deactivation); or
- g. to close a credential (discontinue and remove from program inventory).

2. Changes That Do Not Require a Program Revision

Provided that none of the above changes are requested, a program revision is NOT required in the following circumstances:

- a. to make changes to CE programs that are less than 100 contact hours;
- b. to substitute WECM courses for other WECM courses (except when Local Need or Special Topics courses are being added or removed); or
- c. to substitute ACGM courses for other ACGM courses (provided SACSCOC general education requirements are still met).

It should be noted that even in cases when a program revision is not required, institutions are encouraged to submit program updates at any time prior to the planned or requested implementation date in order to keep their online curriculum outlines current.

3. Requests Not Allowable as Program Revisions

The program revision process may not be used under the following circumstances, which require a new program application:

- a. to add a new AAS or AAA degree;
- b. to add a new degree or certificate (credit or continuing education) in a program area that is not currently on the college's inventory;
- c. to reactivate a credential three years or more after it has been deactivated; or
- d. to make any changes that substantially alter a program's outcomes.

For information about new program applications, see Chapter Five.

B. Program Revision Procedures

The following actions are required to complete and submit a program revision:

1. Log into <https://www1.thecb.state.tx.us/CBPass/>. (Create a new account if necessary.)
2. Select the program to revise and select the Proposed Action. Options include:
 - a. Revise Award;
 - b. Close Award;
 - c. Deactivate Award; or
 - d. Reactivate Award.
 - e. (To Add an Award to the program, start the program revision by selecting "Revise Award". The "Add an Award" option will appear on the Program Revision application page.

3. Select the Proposed Implementation Date for the revision from the list of choices offered.

Once the Program revision has been started, add a new credential to the program by clicking on “Add an Award”, and enter the following information:

4. Award Type. Select the type of credential from the list provided. See Chapter Three for characteristics that define each type of credential:
 - a. AAS Associate of Applied Science
 - b. AAA Associate of Applied Arts
 - c. C1 Level 1 Certificate
 - d. C2 Level 2 Certificate
 - e. ESC Enhanced Skills Certificate
 - f. ATC Advanced Technical Certificate
 - g. CE Workforce Continuing Education Certificate
 - h. OSA Occupational Skills Achievement Award
5. Award Name. Enter the title as it should appear on the institution’s inventory. Then click on “Add Award Data”.
6. Click on “Edit Program Information” to make any of the following changes:
 - a. Revise the Proposed Implementation Date
 - b. Update the contact information for the authorized institutional official and the contact person for the program.
 - c. Include comments about the overall program revision.
7. Click on “Edit Program Information” to make the following changes:
 - a. Revise the Proposed Implementation Date
 - b. Update the contact information for the authorized institutional official and the contact person for the program.
 - c. Add comments about the overall program revision.
8. To revise one of the approved credentials, click on the title and select “Modify Award.” (This will create an “In Progress” copy of the credential’s information.) Alternatively, click on the title of the credential if it is currently marked as “In Progress”.
9. Click on “Edit Award Information” to make any of the following changes:
 - a. Modify the Award Type
 - b. Modify the Award Title
 - c. Modify the Award CIP Code to another CIP code within the same program
 - d. Indicate if the credential is to be offered at a correctional facility. Revisions to credentials offered both at the main campus and at a correctional facility

must be submitted as separate entries

e. Add comments about the specific award

10. To revise the Curriculum Outline (Course Summary), click on the “Add or Modify Courses” button and enter the course information.
11. After all revisions have been made to the credential, click on “Mark as Complete” and repeat these steps revise another award, if applicable.
12. After all completed revisions have been marked as complete, click on the “Submit Revision” button. (Any revisions marked “In Progress” are available for further action and will not be reviewed until they are marked as complete and submitted to the THECB.)
13. To submit Special Topics or Local Need Courses, select “Special Topics/Local Need Courses” under “Other Options”. See Chapter Four for more information.

C. Program Actions

1. Program Deactivation

- a. Notice of Program Deactivation: an institution may deactivate a program by suspending new student enrollment and submitting an electronic Application for Program Deactivation to the THECB. Institutions should have on file and available for THECB staff review the institution’s provisions for teaching out currently enrolled students.
- b. Deactivation Time Limit: a program may remain deactivated no longer than three academic years. A program that is not reactivated by the institution within three years will be closed by the THECB.

2. Program Reactivation

To reactivate a deactivated program, the institution must submit an Application for Program Reactivation that includes the proposed curriculum outline. The institution must have on file and available for THECB staff review an explanation of how it has corrected or will correct the reason(s) for which the program was deactivated.

NOTE: A program may be reactivated within three years of being deactivated. If more than three years have lapsed, a new program application is required.

3. Institution-Initiated Closure

A program or credential may be closed voluntarily by an institution. If students are currently enrolled in a program that the college wishes to close, the program should be deactivated before being formally closed.

An institution must submit an electronic Application for Program Closure to notify the THECB staff of its intent to close a program. Institutions should have on file and available for THECB staff review the reason(s) for closure and provisions for teaching out currently enrolled students. Closed programs may be reopened only if they are resubmitted as new programs.

Chapter Seven: GLOSSARY

2+2 program. An articulated workforce education program that links the last two years of secondary education with the first two years of higher education to create a four-year academic and technical curriculum.

2+2+2 program. An articulated workforce education program that links a 2+2 program to the last two years of higher education and that results in a baccalaureate degree.

Academic. A term referring to courses and programs designed for transfer.

Academic Associate Degree. A type of degree program leading to the Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degree and intended to transfer to a four-year college or university.

Academic year. A 12-month period, which may vary from institution to institution, but which generally begins on September 1 and ends on August 31 for state reporting purposes.

Accreditation (Institutional). A process signifying that an institution has a purpose appropriate to higher education, and resources, programs, and services sufficient to accomplish its purpose on a continuing basis. Colleges in Texas should refer to [Principles of Accreditation](#) adopted by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The Principles are also linked on SACSCOC's [Accrediting Standards](#) page.

Accreditation (Program). A process of determining that a program of study within an institution meets standards set by a discipline-specific external agency, organization, or commission. Program accreditation verifies that a program of study is capable of training students to enter an occupation with the required knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Advanced technical certificate. A certificate that has a specific associate or baccalaureate degree (or, in some circumstances, junior level standing in a baccalaureate degree program) as a prerequisite for admission. It must consist of at least 16 and no more than 45 SCH. It must be focused, clearly related to the prerequisite degree, and justifiable to meet industry or external agency requirements.

Advisory committee. A group of business or industry representatives whose purpose is to advise the college on the needs for a particular program. The committee advises on matters of curriculum, instructor qualifications, and equipment and facility requirements needed to assure that graduates will have appropriate skills for employment in the business or industry upon graduation.

Affiliation agreement. Documentation between a college and a business/industry affiliate that defines an educational partnership, and specifies conditions, roles, and timelines.

Applied associate degree. A type of degree program designed to lead the individual directly to employment in a specific career. Refers to the associate of applied arts and the associate of applied science degrees. The term “applied” in an associate degree name is the distinguishing characteristic of the technical nature of the college work.

Apprenticeship training program. A training program that provides on-the-job training, preparatory instruction, supplementary instruction, or related instruction in a trade that has been certified as an apprenticeable occupation by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training. The program is a structured system of training designed to prepare individuals for occupations in skilled trades and crafts by combining training under the supervision of an experienced journeyworker with job-related classroom instruction.

Articulation. A planned process linking educational institutions and experiences to assist students in making a smooth transition from one level of education to another without experiencing delays or duplication in learning. Examples of articulation include Advanced Technical Credit, advanced placement, 2+2 programs, and 2+2+2 programs.

Articulation agreement. An agreement between two institutions, such as a high school and college or a technical or community college and a university, to promote the transfer and success of students through a non-duplicative sequence of progressive achievement.

Associate of Applied Arts (AAA) degree program. A program of study designed for immediate employment and/or career advancement that emphasizes the application of artistic principles and the humanities through an orderly, identifiable sequence of courses. The degree program is composed of technical courses, general education courses, related instruction courses, and, as appropriate, elective courses to prepare students for employment in the performing arts.

Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree program. A program of study designed for immediate employment and/or career advancement that is composed of an orderly, identifiable sequence of courses designed to meet specific occupational competencies and outcomes. The degree program is composed of technical courses, general education courses, related instruction, and, as appropriate, elective courses to prepare students for employment as technicians or professionals.

Award. The credential granted a student for successful completion of a set curriculum such as a degree or certificate.

Capstone experience. A learning experience that results in consolidation and synthesis of program competencies.

Career cluster. One of 16 occupational categories recognized by the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE). Each category provides industry-validated knowledge and skills statements that define what students need to know and be able to do in order to realize success in a chosen field.

Career development personnel. Professional staff members who are employed in the delivery of career development services, which include information and planning, placement, counseling, and guidance as well as testing and assessment.

Career guidance and counseling. Student services that allow students to evaluate and adjust career plans based upon information on employers, occupations, wages, job openings, skill qualifications, and education and training options.

Certificate program. A technical program designed for entry-level employment or for upgrading skills and knowledge within an occupation. Certificate programs serve as building blocks and exit points within AAS degree programs. Post-AAS certificates are also available.

Certification/licensure/registration. A process sponsored by an agency or association, designated by educators in cooperation with business, industry, and/or labor, that validates and/or certifies the skills and learning experiences of a candidate and enters the name of the successful candidate on a registry.

CIP code. The Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) is a federal taxonomy developed by the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education and used throughout the nation by government agencies and professional associations to establish standard terminology and recordkeeping for higher education programs.

Clinical education. A type of work-based learning experience whereby the student receives instruction in a sponsoring health professions setting. Clinical practice is supervised by qualified faculty members employed by the educational institution sponsoring the program or by preceptors employed by the clinical site.

Competency profile. A list of skills and abilities defined and validated by business/industry as necessary to perform tasks related to a particular occupation or cluster of occupations.

Completer. A student who completes a THECB-approved associate degree, certificate, core curriculum, or field of study curriculum.

Compressed semester. A semester in which the content of a 16-week course is delivered in a shorter period of time.

Contact hour. The basic instructional unit for funding purposes. A time unit of instruction consisting of 60 minutes, of which 50 minutes must be direct instruction.

Continuing education certificate. A THECB-approved workforce education certificate containing a coherent sequence of continuing education courses totaling 360 or more contact hours and listed in the college's approved inventory of programs.

Continuing education course. A THECB-approved higher education technical course offered for continuing education units and conducted in a competency-based format. Such a course provides a quick and flexible response to business, industry, and student needs for intensive preparatory, supplemental, or upgrade training and education and has specific occupational and/or apprenticeship training objectives.

Continuing education unit (CEU). Basic unit for continuing education courses. One continuing education unit (CEU) is 10 contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction.

Contract instruction. The delivery of a course or courses to meet the needs of a contracting entity, which may be a business, industry, or external agency. Refer to THECB [Rules Chapter 9, Subchapter G](#).

Cooperative education. A type of work-based learning experience in which students receive both lecture instruction and practical experience at a worksite.

Course inventory. A list of courses approved by the THECB for use by a specific college.

Credential. A license, certificate, registration, or other formal recognition that is legally required in order for a person to practice a specific occupation.

Developmental courses. Courses designated as remedial or compensatory to help students develop basic skills such as reading, writing, oral communication, and mathematics. Developmental courses approved for state funding are listed in the *Lower Division Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM)*.

Dual credit. A process by which a high school student enrolls in a college course and receives simultaneous academic credit for the course from both the college and the high school.

Enhanced skills certificate (ESC). A certificate consisting of at least six and no more than 12 semester credit hours and attached to an applied associate degree that provides the student with skills beyond career entry as identified by business and industry. An ESC may extend an AAS or AAA degree to an overall total that must not exceed 72 SCH.

Exit points. Specified points in the sequence of courses in a program at which a student may exit the program, receive a certificate or degree, and possess the competencies required for employment in an identified occupation.

Field-of-Study Curriculum (FOSC). A set of academic courses that will satisfy the lower-division requirements for a baccalaureate degree in a specific academic area at a general academic teaching institution. A field-of-study curriculum affects academic degree programs at public colleges or universities as designated within the particular field-of-study curriculum.

General education. Academic coursework designed to give students a broad general background in selected disciplines.

Graduate. A student who completes a THECB-approved associate degree or certificate program.

Graduate guarantee. College certification of student competencies. A college Graduate Guarantee policy allows graduates who are judged by an employer to be lacking in technical job skills identified as exit competencies for their specific degree or certificate program to return to the college for up to nine tuition-free hours of education.

Higher Education Regional Council (HERC). A group composed of representatives from all public higher education institutions within one of the state's ten Uniform State Service Regions. Its purpose is to coordinate planning among institutions by reviewing and recommending to the THECB institutional plans for out-of-district or distance education offerings.

Institutional credential. A course or series of courses with fewer than 15 SCH or 360 CE contact hours that is not part of the THECB maintained Program Inventory, representing achievement of an identifiable skill proficiency or meeting a student's self-defined educational objective.

Internship. A supervised, work-based learning experience for students in non-health professions programs. Students may be paid or unpaid.

Labor market information. Documentation pertinent to local, regional, state, and/or national workforce demand for the program, i.e., targeted occupations identified by an appropriate state or federal agency or committee.

Letter of intent. A written declaration of intent to offer a new program submitted to the Higher Education Regional Council and to the appropriate local workforce development board(s), prior to submitting a formal application for program approval, which serves notice that the program is under development and gives the expected date of formal submission.

Level One Certificate. A program of study of no more than one year that consists of at least 15 and no more than 42 semester credit hours. Level one certificate programs are exempt from the requirements of the Texas Success Initiative, but certificate programs may perform local assessment and remediation of students, provided that these activities do not exclude the student from enrollment in the certificate program.

Level Two Certificate. A program of study that consists of at least 30 and no more than 51 semester credit hours. Level two Certificates are subject to the requirements of the Texas Success Initiative.

Licensing. Legal authorization to practice in an occupational field, granted by a state agency after passage of a formal examination.

Local Need Course. A workforce education course approved for a specific college.

Local Workforce Development Board. Entity authorized by the Texas Legislature and used by a local governmental or economic development body to determine the workforce development needs of the area. See link to [Workforce Development Boards](#) for a listing of local boards.

Lower Division Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM). The THECB’s official statewide inventory of lower division academic courses that may be offered for state funding by any community college.

Marketable Skills Achievement Award. See Occupational Skills Award.

Mirror course. A *Workforce Education Course Manual (WECM)* course that may be offered in both a SCH and a CEU format.

Occupational Skills Award. A credit program of 9 to 14 SCH or a workforce continuing education program of 144 to 359 contact hours that meets the minimum standard for program length specified in the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Formerly “Marketable Skills Achievement Award.”

Portfolio. A collection or verification of student work, e.g., papers, videos, and assessments, that demonstrates a student’s competencies or skills.

Practicum. A type of work-based learning experience whereby students receive practical experiences in the workplace.

Prerequisite. A course or competency required prior to entering a program or a course.

Program. An organized curriculum directly related to the acquisition and/or upgrading of technical skills that may include several credentials. Programs are defined by CIP codes.

Program closure. The process whereby an institution officially discontinues a program and removes it from the institution’s program inventory.

Program deactivation. The process whereby an institution suspends all new student enrollments for a maximum of three years to assess program vitality and make revisions without loss of eligibility for state funding or dropping the program and its courses from the program/course inventory.

Program linkage. Arrangements that facilitate transfer of courses or course credits and promote a seamless educational pathway. Linkages may be demonstrated by articulation agreements that provide for student transfer, inverted degree plans, and advanced standing opportunities. (See **Articulation Agreement**.)

Program of Study. A sequence of secondary and postsecondary courses within a discipline that begins with introductory courses at the secondary level that teach broad foundational knowledge and skills, and progress to more occupationally specific courses at the postsecondary level that provide knowledge and skills required for entry into and advancement in a chosen Program of Study.

Program reactivation. The process whereby an institution reinstates a program that has been deactivated within the previous three years.

Program revision. The process whereby an institution requests a change to an existing approved program.

SCANS skills. Skills identified by the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills as needed by American workers for entry-level employment.

Skill standard. A standard that specifies the level of knowledge and competence required to successfully perform work-related functions within an occupational cluster.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The recognized regional accrediting body in 11 U.S. southern states, including Texas.

Special populations. The *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act* (Perkins V) defines special populations as (1) individuals with disabilities; (2) individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including low-income youth and adults; (3) individuals preparing for non-traditional fields; (4) single parents, including single pregnant women; (5) out-of-workforce individuals; (6) English learners; (7) Homeless individuals described in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C 11434a); (8) Youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system; and (9) Youth with a parent who is a member of the armed forces (as such term is defined in section 101(a)(4) of title 10, United States Code) and on active duty (as such term is defined in section 101(d)(1) of such title).

Special Topics course. A WECM course that should be used only when course content does not exist in any other WECM course. The Special Topics course is intended for temporary use or transitional content.

Specialization. A concentration within a certificate or applied associate degree program that reflects the training required for a specific occupation within a broad career field and results in the same credential. Specializations within a career field must share a common core of courses.

Targeted occupations. Occupations for which a workforce demand exists as identified by regional labor market information or local workforce development boards.

Technical. A term referring to workforce education courses and programs.

Texas Education Code (TEC). The statutes of the State of Texas dealing with education. In general, the statutes dealing with higher education are contained within Title III of the code.

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board *Rules and Regulations*. The policies and procedures that regulate the operation of public higher education institutions within the state of Texas. The rules and regulations may be accessed electronically via the THECB's [Rules/Statutes](#) page.

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Staff. Professionals employed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to implement its policies.

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). The agency authorized by the State Legislature as the highest authority in the state in matters of public higher education. THECB is charged with the duty to take an active part in promoting quality education throughout the state.

Texas Success Initiative (TSI). A comprehensive program of assessment, advising, developmental education, and other strategies to ensure college readiness. THECB [Rule 4.56](#) specifies that the TSI Assessment shall be the sole assessment instrument. THECB [Rule 4.57](#) sets subject-area passing standards. More information about the TSI is available in THECB [Rules Chapter 4, Subchapter C](#).

Texas Workforce Commission. The agency established by the Texas Legislature to address welfare reform and workforce development program consolidation.

TSI-waived. Refers to certificate programs that are not subject to state-mandated assessment and remediation requirements.

Unique Need Course. An academic course approved for a specific college or university.

Work-based experiences. Competency-based learning experiences, paid or unpaid, that supplement lectures and laboratory instruction and that are offered in business and industry (examples: cooperative education, clinical experience, practicum, internship, or apprenticeship).

Workforce Education Course Manual (WECM). The THECB's official statewide inventory of workforce education courses.

Workforce demand. The documented need for a program to provide education and training for specific businesses and industries.