

Non-Credit Courses and Approval Process

Background

When a learning experience is documented on a transcript, it is important to ensure that the accuracy, consistency and authenticity meet institutional standards. Doing so with credit coursework is easy because there is standards in place that guide the process (curriculum council being a major portion of that process). Non-credit coursework can be more difficult as OSU currently does not have a formalized process by which academic units can follow.

Universally, there are many "types" of non-credit coursework and they can be categorized into the following:

1. Community Education/Personal Enrichment (e.g. winetasting)
2. Professional Development/Continuing Education Units (e.g. accountancy coursework to keep license, or massage class for licensure hours)
3. Academic track coursework that is pre-college in skill level (e.g. INTO courses and developmental education courses)
4. Academic experiences that do not constitute credit toward a degree but are strongly academic in nature (e.g. research experiences that are not for credit)

Current state

OSU has drifted into listing Non-Credit (NC) coursework on the transcript but does not have a defined institutional process for approving the courses and their requirements. A process with definitions of standards is required and should be defined to ensure consistency for courses being listed on the transcript.

At this time, **OSU is only offering limited options on the non-credit transcript.**

Options 3 and 4 above are the options that need standards developed in order to better serve the current needs of the institution.

Proposed Standards for Non-Credit Academic Experiences

Non-Credit Standards

- A clear description of the course must be available via web and schedule of classes.
- Instruction shall be sufficient in breadth and length to meet the course objectives, proficiencies and competencies described.
- Course syllabus and objectives/outcomes shall be included in the curriculum system for record keeping.
- Curriculum Council approves non-credit offerings after they have the approval of the Office of the Registrar, if the intent is for them to be listed on the non-credit transcript.
- Coordination and support for these standards is provided by the Office of the Registrar.
- Equitable reflection on the transcript among courses must demonstrate parity of the offering to ensure that the outcomes are met.
- Only academic units may request course designators and courses.

Background information regarding continuing education and non-credit courses/programs

NWCCU Standards

Continuing Education and Non-Credit Programs (as of April 27, 2017)

2.C.16 Credit and non-credit continuing education programs and other special programs are compatible with the institution's mission and goals.

2.C.17 The institution maintains direct and sole responsibility for the academic quality of all aspects of its continuing education and special learning programs and courses. Continuing education and/or special learning activities, programs, or courses offered for academic credit are approved by the appropriate institutional body, monitored through established procedures with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and assessed with regard to student achievement. Faculty representing the disciplines and fields of work are appropriately involved in the planning and evaluation of the institution's continuing education and special learning activities.

2.C.18 The granting of credit or Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for continuing education courses and special learning activities is: a) guided by generally accepted norms; b) based on institutional mission and policy; c) consistent across the institution, wherever offered and however delivered; d) appropriate to the objectives of the course; and e) determined by student achievement of identified learning outcomes.

2.C.19 The institution maintains records which describe the number of courses and nature of learning provided through non-credit instruction.

Notes related to broader non-credit offerings but not currently offered at OSU

Guidance on the use of CEUs in NC curriculum

Contact Hours to CEU Determination - One Continuing Education Unit will be awarded for the successful completion of ten contact hours of instruction in a lecture format.

One CEU will be awarded for the successful completion of twenty contact hours of instruction in a lab format. The instructional contact hour is defined as 60 minutes.

Fractional CEUs may be awarded down to the minimum increment of .3 CEU for the successful completion of three lecture hours or six lab hours. The actual number of contact hours for which a CEU has been approved will determine the number of units awarded (i.e., eight lecture hours equal .8 CEU, 15 lecture hours equal 1.5 CEU). CEUs may not be awarded for anything less than what was originally approved for a given CEU number and title.

Non-credit certificates

Some types of non-credit coursework can constitute the requirements of a non-credit certificate. These typically require a more extensive curricular review (similar to the differences between a Cat 1 and Cat 2 at OSU).