

11.99.99.R0.01 Standards and Criteria for Off-Campus and Self-Supporting Courses and Programs

Approved September 1, 1996

Revised November 21, 2011

Next Scheduled Review November 21, 2016



Procedure Statement

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students with access to off-campus and self-supporting (formerly extension and correspondence) courses and programs that meet their needs. The university will ensure course quality and adequacy of the technical and managerial infrastructure necessary to support such courses and programs.

Reason for Procedure

This procedure defines standard guidelines for offering, instructing, and accounting for courses offered in this mode, as identified in Chapter 4, Subchapter Q of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Rules and Regulations : Approval of Off-Campus and Self-Supporting Courses and Programs for Public Institutions.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1. TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD (THECB) STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

- 1.1 Each program shall be within the role and mission of Texas A&M University-Commerce and shall be on its inventory of approved programs.
- 1.2 Prior approval by The Texas A&M System, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) may be required before the university may offer programs in certain subject area disciplines or under other conditions specified by the Board or Commission.
- 1.3 The Commissioner of THECB or the Commissioner's designee may approve for delivery by other modes doctoral and special professional degree programs that have previously been approved by the Board.
- 1.4 An off-campus degree or certificate program shall comply with the standards and criteria of any specialized accrediting agency or professional certification board.

- 1.5 Each degree program offered off-campus shall be approved by the university's governing board or the governing board's institutional designee. Certification of approval shall be submitted to the Board upon request.
- 1.6 Students enrolled in an off-campus or self-supporting degree program (except for students in out-of-country programs) shall be required to satisfy the same requirements for admission to the institution and the program as required of regular on-campus students. Students in degree programs to be offered collaboratively shall meet the admission standards of their home institution. Out-of-country students shall meet equivalent standards for admission into programs. Out-of-country students shall be assessed for academic guidance purposes.
- 1.7 Study-in-America and Study-Abroad courses offered by A&M-Commerce, or by an approved consortium composed of Texas public institutions, must be reported to the THECB in the manner prescribed by the Commissioner in order for the semester credit hours or contact hours generated in those courses to receive formula funding.
- 1.8 All courses shall meet the quality standards applicable to on-campus courses.
- 1.9 The university shall report to THECB and notify all potentially affected area institutions of all off-campus courses and programs in accordance with THECB policy and procedures.
- 1.10 Except for students in out-of-country courses, students shall satisfy the same requirements for enrollment in an academic credit course as required of on-campus students. Out-of-country students shall be assessed for academic guidance purposes, including, but not limited to, language proficiency.
- 1.11 The instructor of record shall bear responsibility for the delivery of instruction and for evaluation of student progress.

2. FORMULA FUNDING AND FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

- 2.1 Off-campus courses shall be submitted for formula funding in accordance with the Board's uniform reporting system and the provisions of this subchapter.
- 2.2 Courses in out-of-state or out-of-country programs shall not be submitted for formula funding.
- 2.3 Self-supporting courses shall not be submitted for formula funding.
- 2.4 The university shall not submit non-state funded lower-division credit courses to Regional Councils.
- 2.5 The status of formula-funded on-campus courses and programs shall not be jeopardized or diminished in order to offer self-supporting courses. Self-supporting courses shall not be a substitute for offering a sufficient number of formula-funded on-campus courses. The university will not offer self-supporting courses that do not provide a positive financial return for the investment.

2.6 For courses not submitted for formula funding, A&M-Commerce shall charge fees that are equal to or greater than Texas resident tuition and applicable fees, and that are sufficient to cover the total cost of instruction and overhead, including administrative costs by the unit delivering the self-supporting course or program, **administrative costs assessed by the university Financial Services Division**, benefits, computers and equipment, and other related costs. Fees received for self-supporting and out-of-state/country courses **shall be reported** in accordance with general institutional accounting practices.

2.7 All self-supporting courses and programs must be cost efficient.

3. PRELIMINARY AND FINAL AUTHORITY TO OFFER SELF-SUPPORTING COURSES AND PROGRAMS

3.1 Prior to entering into any verbal or written commitment to deliver courses and programs, a prospectus must be developed and routed through the following entities: department head, dean, provost, director of undergraduate admission and/or dean of The Graduate School (depending on the courses and degree), director of financial aid and scholarships, university registrar, director of Emerging Financial Services, and comptroller/director of accounting. (See attached form)

3.2 In approving self-supporting classes, the administrators mentioned in section 3.1. will take into consideration such factors as: 1) appropriateness of course content for off-campus instruction, 2) duplication of on-campus courses by self-supporting courses, 3) possible reduction of resident enrollment that may result from self-supporting classes, and 4) public service and recruiting value that may be derived from self-supporting classes.

3.3 Contract negotiations will occur once the preliminary request is approved.

3.4 After the contract is negotiated, the provost has final approval authority. Once the request is approved, the Provost's Office will notify the appropriate administrators and staff of the decision. (See attached form)

4. INSTRUCTORS

4.1 Faculty teaching self-supporting and off-campus courses may be full-time, part-time, or adjunct. All faculty must be approved and appointed by the respective academic unit and meet the definitions and procedures related to faculty qualifications, including SACSCOC requirements.

4.2 General practice shall be that a full-time instructor may teach no more than one self-supporting class during each long semester. Faculty members and administrators employed full-time during the summer may not teach summer self-supporting classes. Any exceptions to this practice shall require prior approval of the department head, academic dean, and provost and vice president for academic affairs.

4.3 Self-supporting classes shall be considered volunteer assignments by the instructor beyond the regular teaching load, and no compensatory time shall be allowed.

4.4 All courses must be reported according to the university procedure for external consulting and outside employment.

5. SELF-SUPPORTING COURSES

5.1 The length of each class period, number of meetings per week, and number of weeks for duration of a self-supporting course shall be the same as that for residence credit courses. The spacing of clock hours of instruction must be arranged in a manner that is academically justified and fulfills the rules and regulations of the THECB.

5.2 Grades must be recorded according to the Registrar's Office normal deadline unless an exception has previously been approved by the registrar.

6. SPECIAL PROGRAMS, GRANTS AND SUB-CONTRACTING

6.1 All departments expecting participants to receive academic credit through grant-funded workshops or subcontracting arrangements with other agencies (such as regional service centers or independent school districts) should include in the cost of such programs funds to cover regular tuition and fees for participants.

6.2 All salary and travel payment should be handled as with any self-supporting class, including rate of payment for instruction, benefits, and travel.

7. ADMISSION CRITERIA

Procedures for enrolling in credit-generating self-supporting courses shall be generally the same as those for enrolling in undergraduate and graduate courses on campus. Students receiving graduate credit must file with The Graduate School an application for admission or a letter of standing from the graduate school where they have been accepted.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

System Policy [*11.04 Admissions Standards*](#)

THECB Rule [*Chapter 4 Subchapter Q Approval of Off-Campus and Self-Supporting Courses and Programs for Public Universities*](#)

Contact Office

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
903-886-5439

**PRELIMINARY AUTHORIZATION AND APPROVAL FORM
OFF-CAMPUS AND SELF-SUPPORTING
COURSES AND PROGRAMS**

I. Request for Preliminary Approval

Identify specifics of the request, including:

College: _____

Department: _____

Degree program or course(s): _____

Projected enrollment: _____

Delivery mode/Site: _____

Date/timeline: _____

Special Conditions (if the request is for a program, include a statement that demonstrates how it addresses the university's mission and strategic plans and goals):

Department Head

Date

Academic Dean

Date

II. Preliminary Approval Routing (Approvals to be simultaneous)

Please Sign, Date, and Return to the Office of the Provost

_____ Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs	_____ Date
_____ Director, Undergraduate Admissions	_____ Date
_____ Dean, Graduate Studies and Research (if applicable)	_____ Date
_____ Director, Financial Aid and Scholarships	_____ Date
_____ University Registrar	_____ Date
_____ Director, Emerging Financial Services*	_____ Date
_____ Comptroller/Director of Accounting	_____ Date
_____ Provost Approval (Deans Council)	_____ Date

*Prior to approval by the college dean, the financial projections shall be prepared by the Office of Emerging Financial Services to verify the economic feasibility of the program.

II. Contract Negotiation (when applicable)

Appropriate parties shall negotiate contracts with external agencies, companies, universities, etc. These contracts include such things as partnerships, facilities, etc., exclusive of adjunct or faculty contracts. All contracts must go through the appropriate A&M-Commerce and A&M System administrative and legal channels. **Only the president (or designee) has the authority to sign a contract for the university.**

_____ President (or designee)	_____ Date
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III. Final Approval

_____ Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs	_____ Date
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Notification Routing

Once final approval is granted, the Provost's Office will notify (when applicable) the following administrators and offices:

Proposal submitter

Dean, Academic College

Director, Undergraduate Admission

Dean, Graduate Studies and Research

Director, Financial Aid and Scholarships

University Registrar

Director, Emerging Financial Services

Comptroller/Director of Accounting

President or designee (in case of contract negotiation)