

10.7

Policies for Awarding Credit

The institution publishes and implements policies for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for its courses, regardless of format or mode of delivery. These policies require oversight by persons academically qualified to make the necessary judgments. In educational programs not based on credit hours (e.g., direct assessment programs), the institution has a sound means for determining credit equivalencies.

Judgment

Compliant Non-Compliant Not Applicable

Narrative

The University of South Carolina has policies and procedures for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for its courses. [ACAF 2.03 Creation and Revision of Academic Courses](#) governs the process. This policy and the procedures outlined therein apply to all programs and courses regardless of location (Columbia, regional Palmetto College campus, or off-campus site), format, or mode of delivery.

Definition of a Credit Hour

As stated in [ACAF 2.03 Creation and Revision of Academic Courses](#) "the University adheres to the IPEDS [Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System] definition of a credit hour as 'a unit of measure representing the equivalent of an hour (50 minutes) of instruction per week over the entire term.' Therefore, each single course credit requires a minimum of 700 minutes of continuous and ongoing instructional time. A minimum of one calendar week of instruction with a cumulative total of at least 700 minutes is required for each credit offered. This time excludes breaks and final exams." All courses offered at the University of South Carolina Columbia and the Palmetto Colleges are recorded in terms of semester hours.

The credit value of courses at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional level are also described in the following bulletins:

University of South Carolina Columbia

[Undergraduate Studies Bulletin | Course and Academic Credit Policies](#)

[Graduate Studies Bulletin | Course and Academic Credit Policies](#)

[College of Pharmacy | Course Descriptions](#)

[School of Law Bulletin | Credit Hour Policy](#)

[School of Medicine Bulletin](#)

Regional Palmetto College Campuses

[Lancaster Bulletin | Course and Academic Credit Policies](#)

[Salkehatchie Bulletin | Course and Academic Credit Policies](#)

[Sumter Bulletin | Course and Academic Credit Policies](#)

[Union Bulletin | Course and Academic Credit Policies](#)

In addition to traditional courses, other course types include variable credit courses, special topics courses, independent courses, internships and experiential learning courses, asynchronous distributed learning courses, laboratory courses, and non-standard session courses. The credit hours for these courses are determined by the faculty through the faculty governance process (e.g., approval by faculty Senate or the Graduate Council). Asynchronous distributed learning courses must include a schedule that shows the course incorporates an amount of work equivalent to the face-to-face version of the course and appropriate for the number of credit hours awarded and explain how provisions for Student-to-Instructor, Student-to-Student, and Student-to-Content interactions have been appropriately incorporated within the course (stated in the [criteria set by the Faculty Senate's Instructional Development Committee](#)).

Laboratory courses provide hands-on application of course content and students are expected to spend at least two hours in lab for every one credit hour earned (stated in the [Undergraduate Academic Bulletin](#)).

Course Naming and Numbering System

[ACAF 2.03 Creation and Revision of Academic Courses](#) describes course levels as follows:

Lower Division Undergraduate Courses (100-200 level courses): Typically, lower division or introductory courses are taken during the during the freshman and sophomore year.

Upper Division Undergraduate Courses (300-400 level courses): Typically, upper division undergraduate courses are taken during the junior and senior year.

Advanced Undergraduate/Entry Level Graduate Courses (500-600 level courses): These courses may be taken by advanced undergraduates or graduate students unless prohibited by specific campus regulations. Course syllabi must have clearly distinguished requirements for undergraduate credit and graduate credit and graduate students are expected to perform at a higher level with additional graduate level requirements.

Graduate Courses (700 level and above): These are graduate level courses. Undergraduate students may only enroll in these courses through the special permission processes managed by the Graduate School. Courses at this level may not be scheduled to meet with those at a lower level, e.g. 400/700 courses.

Professional Degree Courses: These are courses required as part of the professional degree curriculum taught in the professional schools. Only students who have been admitted into the professional school may enroll in these courses.

Course naming policies are determined at the college level and course titles are approved through the faculty governance process (e.g., approval by faculty Senate or the Graduate Council).

Course Development and Faculty Review

Course development normally begins with the academic unit and decisions regarding the number of credit hours and level of the proposed course are made at the departmental level according to the nature of the course and the requirement of the program for which it is designed.

As specified in [ACAF 2.03 Creation and Revision of Academic Courses](#), course actions for undergraduate courses (courses numbered 499 and below) are reviewed by the Faculty Senate's [Curriculum and Courses Committee](#) and then the [Faculty Senate](#). Course actions for advanced undergraduate/graduate courses (courses numbered 500-699) are reviewed by the Committee on Curriculum and Courses with a representative of the Graduate Council participating in the review to report the outcome to the Graduate Council; upon approval by this committee, such courses are considered by the Faculty Senate (minutes are published in the [meeting archives](#) page of the Faculty Senate website). Course actions for graduate courses (courses numbered 700 and above) are reviewed by the appropriate curriculum committee of the Graduate Council and then the [Graduate Council](#) for review and approval (minutes of these meeting are published on the Graduate Council website). If course actions involve the inclusion or addition of pedagogy such that 50% or more of the course may be delivered by distributed learning methods, then the proposal is also reviewed by the Office of Distributed Learning; such courses numbered 100 to 699 are also reviewed by the Faculty Senate's [Committee on Instructional Development](#). New or revised Palmetto College campus courses reviewed the same as the University of South Carolina Columbia undergraduate courses and are also approved by the appropriate campus faculty and then reviewed and approved by the regional [Palmetto College Campuses Faculty Senate](#). A list of committee membership for Curriculum and Courses, Instructional Development, Graduate Council and Faculty Senate can be [found here](#). Examples of course approval actions submitted for review by faculty governance are included below:

- [New Course Undergraduate \(BIOL 220\)](#)
- [New Course Carolina Core \(ENGL 280\)](#)
- [New Course Graduate \(ATEP 732\)](#)
- [New Course with Distributed Learning \(Online\) Delivery \(ITEC 785\)](#)
- [Course Change Undergraduate \(MGMT 425\)](#)
- [Course Change Graduate \(EDEX 691\)](#)
- [Course Change adding Distributed Learning \(Online\) Delivery \(JOUR 308\)](#)

Course actions for courses offered exclusively as part of professional degree (e.g., J.D., M.D., or Pharm.D.) are approved by the faculty of the professional college/school.

College of Pharmacy

The University of South Carolina College of Pharmacy (UofSC COP) Curriculum Committee serves as the faculty's representatives to assure that the college maintains a high-quality curriculum that is fully compliant with Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education standards. The committee's membership includes faculty from within the UofSC COP who hold either a Doctor of Pharmacy degree or a doctorate in a related biomedical field or pharmacy administration. Both the Associate Dean for Outcomes Assessment & Accreditation and the Senior Associate Dean serve as administrative liaisons to the Curriculum Committee. The committee conducts yearly review of the curriculum to ensure that each course meets the goals and objectives established for the course and acts on recommendations for curricular changes that arise from the faculty, administration, or alumni. The Curriculum Committee is also responsible for reviewing student evaluation and survey results related to the curriculum. The committee may identify curricular changes, including course additions and deletions, via these mechanisms. An example of a recent proposed curricular change can be found in the [minutes of the November 14, 2019 UofSC COP Curriculum Committee meeting](#). Contained within those minutes are notes explaining a recent [proposal for curricular change](#) and suggestions for change from the committee membership. The [minutes from the subsequent UofSC COP Curriculum Committee meeting](#) held on December 12, 2019 address the [finalized proposal](#) which was forwarded to the faculty for a final vote following Curriculum Committee approval. Upon approval by the full UofSC COP faculty, the change was put into place for the coming 2020-2021 academic year.

School of Law

The Law School's Curriculum Committee considers and makes recommendations to the Law Faculty regarding all curricular matters ([Faculty By-Law 4.1\(c\)](#)), including course proposals. The Curriculum Committee is a standing faculty committee composed of members of the Law School Faculty and one student representative. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the Law School Registrar serve as ex officio members on the Committee. All voting Curriculum Committee members are qualified to teach law school courses. Committee members are appointed by the Law School Dean and serve for the academic year; service on the committee rotates on a yearly basis.

The course approval process is as follows. Proposals for new courses or course modifications are submitted to the Curriculum Committee using the Course Proposal Template. The Committee reviews new course proposals and course modifications at its regular meetings (noticed and open to faculty and students as permitted in the Faculty Bylaws). Upon Committee approval, the course proposals and modifications are forwarded to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs to be included with the agenda materials for the regular Faculty meetings. The Curriculum Committee Chair presents course proposals and modifications as business items for Faculty consideration and voting at regularly called Faculty meetings. Upon approval, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the Registrar submit necessary course information to the University for inclusion in the official bulletin.

Examples that document the development and approval process are provided below:

- [Course Proposal Template](#)
- [Course Modification Proposal for Interviewing Counseling and Negotiation](#)
- [Faculty Minutes Approving of the Course Modification Proposal for Interviewing Counseling and Negotiation](#)
- [Course Proposal for Free Speech and Democratic Theory Seminar](#)
- [Faculty Minutes Approving of the Course Proposal for Free Speech and Democratic Theory Seminar](#)

School of Medicine - Greenville

The faculty committee with primary responsibility for the oversight and management of the curriculum is the Curriculum Committee. See [Curriculum Committee Charge and Membership](#) for authority and membership of the committee. The Committee ensures that students develop the leadership, clinical and interpersonal skills essential to delivering the next generation of patient-centered health care with confidence and compassion. The Committee is guided by its commitment to compassionate patient care, innovative teaching and continuous improvement for the benefit of our students, faculty, administration and community we serve. Annually, the Chair of Curriculum Committee works in conjunction with the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Associate Dean for Curriculum to organize a retreat to review student performance in meeting the learning objectives of each curricular year, as well as to examine the integration and depth of the content of the entire curriculum. The Curriculum Committee has a regularly established process for horizontal and vertical integration of content. This process involves mapping of selected topics through review of the module delivery templates (MDTs) for all courses and clerkships by the Academic Affairs team. The group creates a quarterly formal presentation with recommendations to the Curriculum Committee.

Prior to the start of a medical school course (referred to as a module or clerkship), curricular and assessment documents must be reviewed and approved by various committees. The Module/Clerkship Director, in conjunction with other faculty, prepares several documents for review and approval through the curriculum committee structure:

- Syllabus: course overview, module objectives, list of teaching faculty, methods of assessment, exam dates, and pertinent school policies.
- MDT: sessions to be delivered, date and length of each session, method of pedagogy for session, maps session objectives to module objectives, methods of assessment for session and instructor for each session.
- Assessment plan: maps module objectives to program level objectives, provides method of assessment for each module objective, and provides a target for success on assessment method. Upon completion of the year, the assessment plan will state if objectives have been met.
- Change form: a summary of changes to the module for the upcoming year.
- End of module report: completed at the end of the module by the Module Director with assistance from assessment personnel in the Office for Academic Affairs.

The report contains student performance metrics from the previous year and data from the course evaluation surveys. The report is presented to the academic year subcommittee, the [Program Evaluation and Assessment Subcommittee](#), and the curriculum committee for review and approval is as follows. The respective Academic Year Subcommittee (i.e., M1, M2, or M3/M4) reviews syllabus, assessment plan, MDT, change form, and End of Module Report from the previous year. Then, the Program Evaluation and Assessment Subcommittee reviews the assessment plan and End of Module Report from the previous year. Finally, the Curriculum Committee reviews syllabus, assessment plan, MDT, change form and End of Module Report from the previous year. The Academic Year subcommittees are responsible for the review of objectives, content, student workload, student performance, evaluations, and integration of the academic year under their scope/focus within the curriculum. The Pre-clerkship Phase Director serves as the Chair of the M1 and M2 subcommittees. The Clerkship Phase Director (currently held by Associate Dean for Curriculum) serves as the academic director for the M3/M4 years and chairs the M3/M4 subcommittee. The Pre-clerkship Phase and the Clerkship Phase Director oversee the continuum and continuity of content and assessment across their assigned year and serves as the liaison with the directors of the other academic years. The Associate Dean for Curriculum sits on all Academic Year sub-committees to provide oversight. This subcommittee structure and intentional overlap provides a mechanism for effective communication across the curriculum for content, objectives, student performance, evaluations and identification of strengths and weaknesses.

Examples that document the approval process are provided below:

- [Module Clerkship Change Form Foundations AY 2020-2021](#)
- [2020-2021 Foundations Syllabus](#)
- [2020-2021 Molecular and Cellular Foundations Assessment Plan](#)

- [AY 2019-2020 Foundations End of Module Report](#)
- [2020-2021 Foundations MDT](#)
- [M1 Subcommittee Meeting Minutes June 2020](#)

Credit by Examination

As stated in the [Undergraduate Academic Bulletin](#), currently enrolled students may obtain credit by examination in a course in which they have had no class attendance or semester standing; permission must, however, be obtained from the dean of the college or department chair in which the course is offered. A grade of not less than B on the examination is necessary in order to receive credit for the course. Examinations are not permitted in courses in which a student previously has been enrolled regularly or as an auditor. The applicant must pay to the Office of Financial Services in advance of the examination a fee of \$25 per semester hour; this fee is not refundable. The Office of Financial Services will issue a receipt which must be shown to the head of the department conducting the examination, who shall immediately report the results of the examination to the Office of the University Registrar. Credits earned under this regulation are recorded with hours earned only.

No graduate credit is offered by examination only.

Sources

-  [ACAF 2.03 Creation and Revision of Academic Courses](#)
-  [ATEP 732 New Course Proposal APPS \(Page 6\)](#)
-  [BIOL 220 New Course Proposal APPS \(Page 6\)](#)
-  [COP Final Proposal](#)
-  [COP Minutes 1](#)
-  [COP Minutes 2](#)
-  [COP Syllabus](#)
-  [College of Pharmacy 19-20 Bulletin](#)
-  [College of Pharmacy 19-20 Bulletin \(Page 45\)](#)
-  [Committee Membership Faculty Committees](#)
-  [Curriculum & Courses Committee](#)
-  [EDEX 691 Course Change Proposal APPS \(Page 6\)](#)
-  [ENGL 280 Carolina Core Course Proposal APPS \(Page 7\)](#)
-  [Faculty Senate](#)
-  [Graduate Bulletin - Academic Regulations](#)
-  [Graduate Council](#)
-  [ITEC 785 New Course Proposal with DL APPS \(Page 11\)](#)
-  [Instructional Development Committee](#)
-  [JOUR 308 Course Change Proposal Add DL APPS \(Page 9\)](#)
-  [Lancaster Bulletin - Academic Regulations](#)
-  [Law 2.11.2020 Faculty Meeting minutes ICN](#)
-  [Law 3.17.2020 Faculty Meeting minutes Free Speech Seminar](#)
-  [Law Bulletin - Academic Regulations](#)
-  [Law Course Proposal Free Speech Democratic Theory](#)
-  [Law Course Proposal ICN 2020](#)
-  [Law Course Proposal Template 4 16 2019](#)
-  [MGMT 425 Course Change Proposal APPS \(Page 9\)](#)
-  [Palmetto College Faculty Senate](#)
-  [SOMG 2020-2021 Molecular and Cellular Foundations of Medicine Assessment Plan](#)
-  [SOMG AY 2019-2020_Foundations_End-Module Report June 2020](#)
-  [SOMG Foundations 2020-2021 MDT](#)
-  [SOMG Foundations Syllabus 2020-2021](#)
-  [SOMG M1 Subcommittee Meeting Minutes - 06.16.2020 Final](#)

 SOMG Module Clerkship Change Form_Foundations_AY 2020-2021 A

 Salkehatchie - Course & Academic Credit Policies

 School of Medicine Bulletin

 Sumter Bulletin - Academic Regulations

 Undergrad Academic Bulletin

 Undergraduate Bulletin - Academic Regulations

 Union Bulletin - Academic Regulations