

Subject: Special Topics Courses

Revised: 01/04/05

Available within each six-digit CIP Code, a Special Topics course should be used only when course content does not exist in a current WECM course. The Special Topics course is provided for temporary use or transitional content. The college specifies discipline-specific learning outcomes for the Special Topics course. Topics may address recently identified current events, skills, and knowledge pertinent to the technical area and relevant to the occupational development of the student. Special Topics courses are identified by a "9" in the third digit of the course number. THECB approval is not required for the content of a Special Topics course. A College must submit Special Topics Courses to THECB prior to the end of the semester or quarter in which the course is offered.

A SCH Special Topics Course cannot have fewer than 16 contact hours or more than 112 contact hours. The course must follow the established ratios for contact hour and credit hour assignments. Allowable combinations are outlined in the following Table. A range of contact hours and lecture/lab components is specified for each SCH value.

Special Topics courses are an important source of information regarding occupational trends and workforce education needs. These courses were designed to be repeated multiple times with different course content to improve student proficiency. During WECM course review, Instructional Specialists evaluate Special Topics courses to determine if new courses should be added to or existing courses revised in the WECM.

**Credit/Contact Hour Combinations for
SCH Special Topics Courses**

COURSE RUBRIC	SCH	CONTACT HOUR RANGE PER SEMESTER	ALLOWABLE COMBINATIONS		
			Lecture /wk	Lab /wk	Contact /sem
XXXX 119X	1	16-64	0	2	32
			0	3	48
			0	4	64
			1	0	16
XXXX 129X	2	32-96	0	4	64
			0	6	96
			1	2	48
			1	3	64
			1	4	80
			2	0	32
			2	1	48
XXXX 139X	3	48-96	1	4	80
			2	2	64
			2	3	80
			2	4	96
			3	0	48
			3	1	64
XXXX 149X	4	64-112	2	4	96
			3	2	80
			3	3	96
			3	4	112
			4	0	64
			4	1	80

A CEU Special Topics Course cannot have fewer than 7 contact hours or more than 112 contact hours.

Subject: Local Need Courses

**Revised: 01/21/10
03/29/10
10/29/13**

Definition

A Local Need course may be used to respond to unique local or regional conditions or to regulatory changes. Content that will be offered repeatedly over several years is most appropriate for Local Need status. Evidence of need for this course must be substantiated by support from business and industry in a specified geographical area. A Local Need course must be submitted to the THECB and approved prior to instruction to qualify for state funding. Upon approval only that institution is authorized to use and report the specific Local Need course.

Local Need courses are identified by a “7” in the third digit of the course number.

- SCH Local Need courses cannot have fewer than 16 or more than 176 contact hours. The courses must follow the established ratios for contact hour and credit hour assignments.
- Unless it specifically addresses local, state, or national licensure, certification, regulatory, or accreditation requirements, a CEU Local Need course cannot have fewer than 7 contact hours. An institution that submits a CEU Local Need course for fewer than 7 contact hours must include specific information describing the requirement(s) addressed by the course.
- CEU lecture/lab Local Need Courses cannot have more than 176 contact hours. CEU external learning courses must follow the same contact hour limits as the SCH external learning courses. CEU Local Need courses may be submitted with a range of 24 hours. For example, if a course is to be offered for 24, 36, and 48 hours, the approved range of hours will be from 24 to 48 hours. The lower number of the range cannot fall below 7 hours unless approved by the THECB as meeting local, state, or national licensing, certifying, regulatory, or accrediting agency requirement.
- Emerging Technology Rubric Designation –Institutions submitting Local Need Course(s) that do not align with an existing WECM rubric should develop an appropriate rubric and submit the rubric as a component of the Local Need Course(s) or Program Application to THECB. (refer to Protocol 01-02-02 – Course Rubric and Number)

Local Need courses are an important source of information regarding occupational trends and workforce education needs. During WECM course review, Instructional Specialists evaluate Local Need courses to determine if new courses should be added based on the established triggers in Protocol 02-01-02 to or existing courses revised in the WECM.

Preferred and Allowable Contact Hour Ranges For Local Need courses

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

* "Preferred" contact hours and combinations are those that typically represent best practices or the most common course patterns. "Other allowable" patterns are not recommended but are available for special circumstances.

Subject: External Learning Experience Courses

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01/22/09
08/04/10

An external learning experience is a competency-based learning experience that enhances lecture and laboratory instruction and is provided at work sites appropriate to the discipline. Time used to present or apply knowledge in a workplace setting is classified as *external learning experience*. The integration of knowledge gained through the external experience with previously learned concepts or practices, regardless of setting, time, or evaluation, is included in the instructional design of the external learning experience and is classified as *external hours*. Advanced practice in a lab setting prior to performing an advanced or high-risk procedure may be included in this category. External hours may also include discussion of cases.

External learning experience courses—cooperative education, practicum (field experience), internship, and clinical experience—are included in the WECM in each six-digit CIP code area as appropriate.

Guides and parameters for external experience courses are summarized in the tables below. Instructional Specialists at WECM Course Review Workshops will determine the type(s) of external learning experiences that are appropriate for a particular discipline based on the following guides and industry standards.

If an institution has a Continuing Education (CE) program and offers an external learning course, the external learning experience course(s) should be submitted as a Local Need Course(s). THECB staff will review the actual contact hours being taught for existing external learning courses and prepare a list for WECM Leadership Committee analysis.

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

1. Students learn and apply program theory and management of the work flow.
2. Introductory, Intermediate, or advanced level
3. Students are closely supervised.
4. Lecture/lab theory instruction is provided concurrently.
5. Takes place in an actual or simulated health-care setting and is usually associated with health disciplines in CIP 51.
6. Involves actual direct or simulated patient care.
7. Students are not paid for the learning experiences.

Ratio of credit hours to external experience contact hours = 1:3, 1:4, 1:5, or 1:6

Course Number	SCH	Contact Hour Range per Semester
1160, 1161, 1162, or 1163 2160, 2161, 2162, or 2163	1	48-96
1260, 1261, 1262, or 1263 2260, 2261, 2262, or 2263	2	96-192
1360, 1361, 1362, or 1363 2360, 2361, 2362, or 2363	3	144-288
1460, 1461, 1462, or 1463 2460, 2461, 2462, of 2463	4	192-384
1560, 1561, 1562, or 1563 2560, 2561, 2562, or 2563	5	240-480
1660, 1661, 1662, or 1663 2660, 2661, 2662, or 2663	6	288-576

INTERNSHIP

1. Students learn and apply program theory and management of the work flow.
2. Intermediate or advanced level
3. Students are closely supervised.
4. Lecture/lab theory instruction is provided concurrently.
5. Takes place in any setting.
6. May involve patient care and can be used in health disciplines in CIP 51, if Internship is the industry norm.
7. Students may or may not be paid.

Ratio of credit hours to external experience contact hours = 1:3, 1:4, 1:5, or 1:6

Course Number	SCH	Contact Hour Range per Semester
2186, 2187, 2188, or 2189	1	48-96
2286, 2287, 2288, or 2289	2	96-129
2386, 2387, 2388, or 2389	3	144-288
2486, 2487, 2488, or 2489	4	192-384
2586, 2587, 2588, or 2589	5	240-480
2686, 2687, 2688, or 2689	6	288-576

PRACTICUM

1. Students gain practical experience in a discipline, enhance skills, and integrate knowledge.
2. Introductory, intermediate, or advanced level
3. Students work independently.
4. Application of previously learned theory.
5. Take place in any setting.
6. Health disciplines may or may not involve direct patient care.
7. Appropriate for students who are almost ready for career entry.
8. Students may or may not be paid.

Ratio of credit hours to external experience contact hours = 1:7, 1:8, 1:9, or 1:10

Course Number	SCH	Contact Hour Range per Semester
1164, 1165, 1166, 1167, 1168, or 1169 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, or 2169	1	112-160
1264, 1265, 1266, 1267, 1268, or 1269 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, or 2269	2	224-320
1364, 1365, 1366, 1367, 1368, or 1369	3	336-480
1464, 1465, 1466, 1467, 1468, or 1469	4	448-640
1564, 1565, 1566, 1567, 1568, or 1569 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, or 2569	5	560-640

COOPERATIVE WORK EXPERIENCE

1. Students gain practical experience in a discipline, enhance skills, and integrate knowledge.
2. Intermediate or advanced level.
3. Students work independently.
4. Application of previously or simultaneously learned theory.
5. Take place in any setting excluding health care.
6. Includes one-hour lecture per week (required).
7. Students may or may not be paid.

Ratio of credit hours to external experience contact hours = 1:7, 1:8, 1:9, or 1:10

1280, 1281, 1282, 1283, 1284, or 1285 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, or 2285	2	128-176
1380, 1381, 1382, 1383, 1384, or 1385 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, or 2385	3	240-336
1480, 1481, 1482, 1483, 1484, or 1485 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, or 2485	4	352-496
1580, 1581, 1582, 1583, 1584, or 1585 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, or 2585	5	464-656
1680, 1681, 1682, 1683, 1684, or 1685 2680, 2681, 2682, 2683, 2684, or 2685	6	576- 656