

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS IN CREDIT COURSES AND PROGRAMS



**THOMPSON
RIVERS
UNIVERSITY**

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AUTHORITY	Senate
CATEGORY	Educational
PRIMARY CONTACT	Provost and Vice President Academic

POLICY

Curriculum content and educational standards are established for all credit courses, and students receive a final grade based on their performance, determined according to policy ED 3-5, Grading Systems (unless they have registered as an audit student).

Students are issued transcripts to document their achievement in credit courses. On successful completion of a program, students may apply for a certificate, diploma, associate degree, baccalaureate degree, or master's degree.

Credits serve as a form of academic currency in post-secondary institutions. They are designed to measure the duration, breadth and depth of study toward a specific program goal.

The purpose of this policy is to provide common standards at Thompson Rivers University (TRU) for defining the number of credits a course should attract within the context of a specific program of study.

REGULATIONS

I. GENERAL

A certificate will be awarded for the successful completion of a program less than 60 credits of study, or equivalent. An undergraduate diploma will be awarded for the successful completion of a program of 60 – 119 credits of study, or equivalent. An associate degree will be awarded for the successful completion of a program of 60 - 119 credits of study, or equivalent, and is in accordance with the definition in the Types of Undergraduate and Graduate Credentials policy. A baccalaureate degree will be awarded for the successful completion of a program that is equal to or greater than 120 credits of study, or equivalent. Post-baccalaureate certificates will be awarded for the successful completion of a baccalaureate degree and up to 30 additional credits of study, or equivalent. A post-baccalaureate diploma will be awarded for the successful completion of a baccalaureate degree plus 31 credits or more of study, or equivalent. A masters' degree will be awarded for the successful completion of a baccalaureate degree or the equivalent plus a minimum of 24 graduate credits, or equivalent.

To be eligible for a credential, a student must normally complete all courses within a period designated by the relevant program.

The criteria for the awarding of credentials are subject to the approval of the Vice-President, Academic, following advice from Senate.

When these criteria change, the criteria that apply to a particular student shall be those in effect when the student was admitted to the program.

II. RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

At least 50% of a program's requirement must be completed through TRU. This does not apply to Open Learning programs.

III. TRANSFER CREDIT

TRU encourages the recognition of credit for courses taught at other institutions.

GUIDELINES:

1. Comparison of course curriculum forms the basis for considering credit recognition at TRU.
2. Courses accepted by any two B.C. public universities and/or university colleges or institutes should be accepted by equivalent TRU programs.
3. Specific credit will be given for courses with a minimum 80% match in content and similar entrance requirements.
4. Credit may be given only for courses receiving a passing grade from the granting institution..

IV. PROGRAM CAPACITIES AND SECTION SIZES

In order to help maintain appropriate educational standards, program capacities and maximum course section sizes shall be determined by the Vice-President, Academic, or designate, in consultation with the relevant department.

V. COURSE VECTORING AND SCHEDULING

Semester-based courses shall be assigned vectoring by the Vice-President, Academic or designate, in consultation with the relevant department and Senate. The vectoring will specify the weekly hours of lecture, seminar and laboratory instruction. The vectoring will be designed to help maintain appropriate educational standards.

The schedule of semester-based courses for each semester shall be prepared by the Registrar, in consultation with the relevant departments.

VI. ASSIGNMENT OF COURSE CREDITS FOR ACADEMIC AND CAREER TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

- a. Main principles:

- i. Multi-semester course credits are assigned as the sum of each semester's credits.
 - ii. For courses of less than one semester duration, credits are assigned using the vectoring that would apply if the actual course contact hours were distributed in semesterized format.
 - iii. All courses must either be vectored (on a per-week basis) or have the total contact hours indicated in the calendar. When the total contact hour method is chosen, a reasonable breakdown among lectures, seminars, labs, practica should be chosen.
 - iv. A standard semester including the exam period is 15 weeks.
 - v. Fifteen credits are considered to be a 100% course load per semester. Students need Chair or designate permission in order to take an overload.
 - vi. The perceived difficulty of the course curriculum as compared to other course curricula at TRU will not be factored into the credit assignment standard.
 - vii. Credit assignment is based solely on derived contact hours of instruction.
- b. Definitions of instructional delivery methods:
- i. Lecture: instruction - standard format.
 - ii. Seminar: subset of lecture instruction - participative format.
 - iii. Lab: laboratory (hands on activity) instruction with laboratory equipment.
 - iv. Practica: related work experience or work-integrated learning, such as: practicum, clinical, shop, fieldwork, studio, internship, or co-operative education.
- c. Credit Calculations:
- i. Educational delivery method and instructional weighting factor for credit assignment purposes:

Lectures and Seminars 1 actual hour = 1 derived instructional hour

Labs 1 actual hour = $\frac{1}{4}$ of a derived instructional hour

Practica 1 actual hour = $\frac{1}{2}$ of a derived instructional hour

Note: Once the total program credits are derived using the formula, the credits are to be distributed in proportion to the contact hours of each course. Any partial credit should be rounded down to the nearest whole credit.
 - ii. Calculation of derived hours:

Hours of instruction per week x (Weeks of instruction + Assessment) x instructional weighting factor = total derived hours

$$\underline{\text{total derived hours}} = \text{derived hours per week}$$

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Use (iii) below to equate course derived hours per week to credits.

Examples of Credit Assignment to Credit Courses

Course	Total Derived Hours	Derived Hours Per week	Credits
ENGL 110 (4,0,0)	Lec (4)(15)(1) = 60	60/15 = 4	3
BIOL 310 (3,0,2)	Lec (3)(15)(1) = 45 Lab (2)(15)(¼) = 7.5	45/15 = 3 7.5/15 = .5 = 3.5	3
NURS 218 (0,4,12P)	Sem (4)(15)(1) = 60 Pract (12)(15)(½) = 90	60/15 = 4 90/15 = 6 = 10	5

iii. Derived hours per week equate to the following credits:

< 1 hour	=	0 credits
1 hour	=	1 credit
2 hours	=	2 credits
3 -5 hours	=	3 credits
6 - 9 hours	=	4 credits
10 - 11 hours	=	5 credits
12 – 13 hours	=	6 credits
14 – 15 hours	=	7 credits
16 – 17 hours	=	8 credits
18 – 19 hours	=	9 credits
20 – 21 hours	=	10 credits

iv. Distributed Learning Refer to Section d. below

d. For courses delivered with no or few direct contact hours (e.g. Distance or Open Learning), credits are assigned using one of the following methods:

- i. Where the same TRU course is delivered in a vectored format, the credits assigned to the no-direct-contact-hours course must be the same.
- ii. Where there is no TRU equivalent, then the credits assigned should be based on a reasonable estimate of the equivalent contact hours of instruction that would be

needed to deliver the curriculum under a vectored delivery model. Once the contact hour equivalent is determined, the contact hour/credit relationship defined in c) above should be applied.

- iii. Credit assignment for co-operative education courses is assigned a three credit value.

VII. ASSIGNMENT OF COURSE CREDITS FOR VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

- a. A full-time vocational (non-semesterized) program normally has 25 contact hours per week of instruction. The equivalent (to a semesterized delivery model) 100% (15 credit) load equals 15 weeks of full-time instruction. A vocational (non-semesterized) program has one credit assigned for every week of full-time instruction. A program that is less than full-time will have credits distributed proportionally to the equivalent number of full-time weeks.

Examples of Credit Assignment to Vocational Programs:

Program	Total Weeks		Credits
Automotive Service Technician Foundation Certificate	27 weeks		27
Water and Wastewater Technology Diploma	63 Weeks		63

Note: Once the total program credits are derived using the formula, the credits are to be distributed in proportion to the contact hours of each course. Any partial credit should be rounded to the nearest whole credit.

VIII. UNIVERSITY PARTNER AGREEMENTS

Credit assignments for courses involved with university partner baccalaureate degree programs are to remain assigned as per each university's credits. Once the partner arrangements are terminated, each course credit assignment must be revised where needed to meet TRU policy.

IX. PREREQUISITES AND PROMOTION

Subject to the approval of the Vice-President, Academic (or designate), specific grade or grade point average requirements may be set for progression from one course into another, or for promotion from one semester of a program into another.

X. AUDIT STUDENTS

Students who register to audit a course must satisfy the instructor that they are taking reasonable steps to complete course requirements, although no formal evaluation procedures are required. If in the judgment of the instructor a student is not doing this, a grade of W will be recorded.

Students must meet with the instructor at the commencement of the course, or prior to a change to Audit status, to agree on what constitutes reasonable steps to complete course requirements.

Students who wish to change from Credit to Audit status must do so by the end of the second week of the semester.

Departments have the right to refuse an audit student's participation.