

TRANSFER OF CREDIT

The following guidelines and definitions pertain to the *Transfer Curricula and Resolution of Transfer Disputes for Lower-Division Courses* ([https://texas-sos.appianportalsgov.com/rules-and-meetings/?\\$locale=en_US&interface=VIEW_TAC_SUMMARY&queryAsDate=03%2F26%2F2025&recordId=218088](https://texas-sos.appianportalsgov.com/rules-and-meetings/?$locale=en_US&interface=VIEW_TAC_SUMMARY&queryAsDate=03%2F26%2F2025&recordId=218088)) established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

The definitions listed below were established by the Coordinating Board and will serve as criteria to resolve disputes. The publications *Transfer of Credit Policies and Curricula of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board* and *Community College General Academic Course Guide Manual: A Manual of Approved General Academic Transfer Courses for State Appropriations to Texas Public Community Colleges* are the references for this issue: **The following criteria for lower-division and upper-division course credit were adopted by the Task Force to Update the Academic Course Guide Manual.**

1. Criteria for Lower-Division Course Credit

Lower-Division (Baccalaureate/Associate Degree) Courses

Courses offered in the first two years of college study are generally those which:

- Are identified by a majority of public 4-year undergraduate institutions in the state as courses intended to comprise the first two years of collegiate study.
- Stress development of disciplinary knowledge and skill at an introductory level.
- Include basic principles and verbal, mathematical, and scientific concepts associated with an academic discipline

Lower-division courses, designated as 1000- or 2000-level, taken at an institution other than a senior four-year institution do **not** satisfy the advanced hours requirement at Sam Houston State University. While these credit hours may be recorded on the student's academic record, and may satisfy a specific course requirement, they **will not** meet the **advanced** credit hour requirements. Advanced credit hours are only granted from four-year, baccalaureate-granting institutions.

2. Criteria for Upper-Division Course Credit

Upper-Division (Baccalaureate) Courses

Courses offered only in the third or fourth years of a baccalaureate program are those which:

- Are identified by a majority of public 4-year undergraduate institutions in the state as courses intended to comprise the third and fourth years of post-secondary study.
- Involve theoretical or analytical specialization beyond the introductory level.
- Require knowledge and skills provided by previous courses for successful performance by students.

Upper-division courses, designated as 3000- or 4000-level, taken at community, junior, or "two-year" colleges do **not** satisfy the advanced hours requirement at Sam Houston State University. While these credit hours may be recorded on the student's academic record, and may satisfy a specific course requirement, they **will not** meet the **advanced** credit hour requirements. Advanced credit hours are only granted from four-year, baccalaureate-granting institutions.

3. Free Transferability

Lower-division courses included in the *Academic Course Guide Manual* and specified in the definition of "Lower-Division Course Credit" shall be freely transferable to and accepted as comparable degree credit by any Texas public institution of higher education where the equivalent course is available for fulfilling baccalaureate degree requirements. It is understood that each Texas institution of higher education may have limitations that invalidate courses after a specific length of time.

For Texas community colleges, these freely transferable courses are identified in the latest revised edition of Coordinating Board publication Lower Division Academic Course Guide Manual (<https://www.highered.texas.gov/lower-division-academic-courses/>), (revised 2021). Specifically excluded are courses designated as vocational, English as a Second Language, ESL/ESOL, technical, developmental or remedial, and courses listed as "basic skills."

For senior four-year institutions, lower-division courses that have the same course content and CIP codes as approved by the Coordinating Board shall bear equivalent credit. Specifically excluded are courses designated as ESL/ESOL, technical and developmental/remedial courses.

Within the spirit of the law, it is realized that differences in interpretation of "same course content" may generate disputes. Courses taken at community, junior, or "two-year" colleges (1000-, 2000-, 3000-, or 4000-level) do **not** satisfy the advanced hours requirement at Sam Houston State University. While these credit hours may be recorded on the student's academic record, and may satisfy a specific course requirement, they **will not** meet the **advanced** credit hour requirements. Advanced credit hours are only granted from four-year, baccalaureate-granting institutions.

WECM Courses are designated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as workforce education (technical) courses offered for credit and CEUs (Continuing Education Units). While these courses are designed to transfer among state community colleges, they are not designed to automatically transfer to public four-year colleges and universities. For more information, visit Career & Technical Education/Workforce Initiatives (<https://www.highered.texas.gov/workforce-education-overview/>).

4. Field of Study Curriculum

The Field of Study Curriculum is a set of courses that generally apply toward the lower-division requirements for a baccalaureate degree in a specific academic area at a general academic teaching institution.

5. Core Curriculum

The curriculum in liberal arts, humanities, sciences, and political, social, and cultural history that all undergraduate students of an institution of higher education are required to complete before receiving an academic undergraduate degree.

6. Disputes

Transfer disputes may arise when a lower-division course is not accepted for credit by a Texas institution of higher education. To qualify as a dispute the course(s) in question must be offered by the institution denying the credit (receiving institution), or in the case of upper-level institutions, must be published as a lower-division course accepted for fulfilling lower-level requirements. For community colleges, the course(s) must be listed in the *Lower Division Academic Course Guide Manual*, and be offered at the receiving institution. Additionally, the sending institution may challenge the receiving institution's denial of credit.

Students at Sam Houston State University who require additional information/clarification regarding Transfer Dispute Resolution Guidelines should contact Undergraduate Admissions, telephone (936) 294-1828.

The University reserves the right to refuse to accept transfer credit when the instructor of record does not meet the requisite academic credentials. Courses taken at community colleges do not satisfy the advanced hours required at Sam Houston State University.

The Texas Common Course Numbering System was developed in part to assist students in identifying which courses at one college will meet specific course requirements at another college. In other words, the common course numbering system promotes the successful transfer of course work among colleges and universities in Texas, making the transfer process easy for students.

The common course number has a standardized four-letter prefix followed by a four-digit number —example, ENGL 1301. The four-letter prefix identifies the subject area. Each digit in the four-digit sequence gives additional information about the course. The first digit identifies the course as either freshman level (1) or sophomore level (2). The second digit identifies the number of credit hours a student will earn upon completion of the course. Most often this digit will be a 1, 2, 3, or 4. The final two digits serve to establish the sequence in which courses are generally taken.

The following is a website listing the Sam Houston State University equivalents for common course numbers. TCCN (<http://www.tccns.org>)