

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

CEU Reporting Policy

- Number** 02.01.
- Division** Academic Affairs
- Date** October 1, 2014
- Purpose** The purpose of this policy is to establish and maintain a well-defined and clearly understood administrative structure for the reporting and record-keeping process of non-credit continuing education programs and activities sponsored by the University.
- Policy** This policy establishes an administrative structure for the reporting and record-keeping of non-credit continuing education programs and activities sponsored by the University. Following this policy allows the University to maintain the administrative structure that meets the requirements for accreditation under Standard 3.4.2 of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). This includes the use of and record-keeping process for Continuing Education Units (CEUs). The policy 1) provides for uniform application of the CEU across the University, 2) outlines the foundation for a central records and reporting system, and 3) assures a uniform approach for quality assurance in non-credit continuing education programming.
- Procedures** I. Reporting and Record-keeping Process for Continuing Education Activities and Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

A. Definition of Continuing Education Activity

Continuing Education activity encompasses non-credit educational programs purposefully and deliberately initiated, planned, organized or hosted by a University academic or business unit. All continuing education programs must be consistent with the institution's mission and vision.

Programs seeking to improve work-related skills, provide personal learning enrichment, support community or economic development, or encourage civic engagement are recognized as Continuing Education activities. Programs may be delivered synchronously or asynchronously. Formats may include but are not limited to: Classroom instruction, online learning, conferences, workshops, and lectures.

Continuing Education Activity:

- Encompasses all educationally based outreach programs offered or hosted by the University;
- Documents outreach activities on behalf of the University;
- May, but does not necessarily, confer recognition of individual participation or successful completion through the issuance of CEUs; and
- Allows for recording and reporting of all forms of the University's continuing education effort.

The University of Alabama in Huntsville engages in significant non-credit continuing education activities and programs. All continuing education activity, regardless of type, must be documented and reported through The Division of Professional and Continuing Studies (PCS) to ensure University compliance with SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation. The guidelines for awarding *Individual* and *Institutional* CEUs are based on SACSCOC *The Continuing Education Unit: Guidelines*. These guidelines themselves are drawn from CEU criteria disseminated by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) and other continuing education authorities (www.iacet.org/standard-references-list).

B. Types of Continuing Education Records

The Division of Professional and Continuing Studies is responsible for maintaining two types of continuing education records: (1) documentation of each non-credit program and activity, and (2) documentation of each participant awarded *Individual* CEUs. Permanent participant records are made only for those who

successfully complete an approved program/activity and meet the established criteria for awarding *Individual* CEUs.

The two records are used to provide reports internally for University administration, externally for organizations such as the Alabama Commission on Higher Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, and to produce *Individual* CEU record transcripts for eligible participants.

C. Use of the Continuing Education Unit (CEU)

The CEU is a uniform unit that measures individual participation in non-credit continuing education. The CEU serves as the University's accepted format for reporting institutional compliance with **SACSCOC comprehensive standard 3.4.2, which requires that "continuing education, outreach, and service programs are aligned with the institution's mission."** All significant post-secondary level learning experiences for which degree credit is not earned should be recognized through the use of the CEU, reserving the term "credit" for those learning activities which generally lead to a degree or diploma.

Individuals may use personal records reported in CEUs to meet requirements for:

- Maintenance or improvement of professional competencies;
- Documentation of continuing qualifications for licensure, certification or registration;
- Evidence of personal and vocational growth and adjustment to meet changing career demands;
- Preparation for a new career by personal preference or as caused by the pressure of individual or technological obsolescence; and/or
- Demonstration of a conscious and persistent effort toward personal development.

D. Awarding of the Continuing Education Unit

Universities must adhere to the SACSCOC guidelines to award *Individual* and *Institutional* CEUs. The CEU is used to recognize adult participation in non-credit courses, workshops, and programs. One CEU is defined as 10-contact hours of participation in an **organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction and qualified instruction**. The number of contact hours and appropriate CEUs must be determined and approved prior to the beginning of the program, but only after the objectives, content, format, methods of instruction and program schedule have been established.

Non-credit continuing education and outreach programs arise from a planned response to specific identified educational needs of a targeted group. This need is assessed and incorporated into the program (learning experience) through a structured planning process. The program's developer (faculty, subject-matter experts) should identify from the onset whether the design goal is a Category 1, 2, or 3 activity (listed below); the program is then developed to meet the appropriate criteria.

Category 1. - Individual CEUs recognizes formal, organized continuing education non-credit instructional activities that comply fully with national guidelines for administrative and program matters, and which award CEUs or other recognized units to individual participants. A permanent record is maintained of the program and for individuals who are eligible to receive the program's respective CEU awards.

The following program criteria is required to award *Individual* CEUs:

- The non-credit activity is planned in response to an assessment of an educational need for a specific target population and is aligned with the University mission.
- The non-credit activity is actively sponsored and directly coordinated by at least one UAH academic/business unit.

- The program has been approved and processed through the PCS Outreach Office for the awarding of Individual CEUs following the established PCS guidelines.
- There is a statement of learning objectives and rationale.
- The program content is well organized, presented in a sequential manner, and clearly documented.
- The activity is of an instructional nature and provided through an appropriate method of delivery.
- The instructional personnel are well qualified by education and/or experience, and such qualification is appropriately documented.
- The registration process for program participants to provide the necessary data for reporting and transcript maintenance is pre-arranged and coordinated through the PCS Non-credit Registration Office. (Fees will apply, unless waived by Provost and/or PCS Director.)
- Participants are asked to evaluate the program and a summary of the responses are maintained for record keeping.
- There is provision for assessment of learning of each individual participant appropriate to the materials presented (i.e. level of attendance, quizzes, projects, classroom participation).
- Individual attendance must be appropriately documented and provided to PCS for record keeping. (Partial CEUs may not be awarded.)
- Sponsors may not select to issue CEUs to some, but not all, participants who meet the established criteria.
- Approved CEU programs should normally be offered for no less than four contact hours (0.4 CEU credits).

Category 2 - Institutional CEUs recognizes formal, organized continuing education non-credit instructional activities that respond to the needs of participants, which represent a substantial investment of time and resources by the University, but which are not designed to comply fully with all CEU criteria. This category often includes personal and community development educational activities. Participants are not awarded CEUs but a permanent record of the program and a validated headcount of attendance is maintained and reported.

The following program criteria is used in awarding *Institutional* CEUs:

- The activity is a planned educational experience with a written statement of purpose.
- The activity is sponsored by a University academic/business unit qualified to determine the quality of the program content and to select and approve the resource personnel utilized.
- Record of attendance, required for institution reporting use, and a file of program materials are maintained by the academic/business unit, and reported to the PCS Non-credit Registration Office (reference Section II.A). Attendance records may be in terms of a validated headcount.

Category 3 – Outreach Only is a residual category for all non-credit activities which are not Categories 1 or 2 but which contribute to the outreach mission of the University, involve commitment of time and resources, and are officially sponsored by the University. These activities may or may not register individual participants; only a validated headcount is required for record-keeping. Evaluation is at the discretion of the responsible faculty/staff member of the sponsoring University academic/business unit. *Individual* and *Institutional* CEUs are not awarded but a permanent record of the program is maintained and reported by the PCS Non-credit Registration Office.

E. Calculating Contact Hours

The contact hour is defined as a typical 60 minute classroom instructional session or its equivalent. In informal formats, the clock hour should be used. When the appropriate number of instructional or contact hours has been determined, CEUs are assigned on the basis of one unit for each 10 contact hours and one-tenth unit for each additional full contact hour. Fractions of 50 minutes or greater may be rounded up. Fractions from 30-49 minutes round down to 30, and fractions less than thirty minutes are discarded.

When activities have been approved for the awarding of CEUs and the number of units for the activity has been determined, those

individuals who satisfactorily complete the activity will receive CEUs. Satisfactory completion is determined by the program director or instructor on the basis of criteria for completion developed by the planning group for the program or activity and in compliance with CEU standards.

In calculating the contact hours, the following factors may be included:

- Classroom or meeting session hours with direct participation between the learner and instructor or discussion leader are counted as contact hours.
- Laboratory sessions, clinical experiences, field trips and activities using non-traditional methods of instruction may be awarded CEUs, but the contact hours must be based on the equivalent instructional class hours.
- For correspondence or self-study courses, the number of CEUs to be applied should be based on the time that the sponsor estimates is required by students to complete the course at a satisfactory level.

Time devoted to the following and similar activities may not be included when calculating contact hours for CEUs:

- Meeting time devoted to business or committee activities;
- Meeting time devoted to announcements, welcoming speeches, or organizational reports;
- Time for study, assigned reading, reports, written assignments, and other related activities outside of the class meeting schedule;
- Scheduled time allocated to social activities, entertainment, coffee breaks, luncheons, dinner, etc. (Luncheon or dinner presentations which are an integral part of the educational experience may be included).

F. Alternatives to the CEU

National CEU guidelines were first disseminated in 1968 by the Council on the Continuing Education Unit, the original entity which became the International Association for Continuing Education and

Training (IACET), and is regarded as the national caretaker of the CEU. The CEU continues in general use by institutions of higher education as the standard measure of continuing education. In the intervening years, many professional organizations, state professional regulatory agencies, and other entities have created additional requirements or alternative measures (CLEs, CFEs, PDUs, etc.) for their constituent members in completing requisite professional development. Many of these accept the standard CEU at face value; others require a program-by-program review process, and even approval as a “certified CE provider.” UAH’s CEU is generally accepted across the professions because of its conformance to national guidelines and the good academic reputation of the University. However, individuals are responsible to research the licensure or continuing education requirements of their specific professional area to determine if there are additional requirements.

II. Application and Program Reporting Procedure

Each University academic or business unit is responsible for the timely and accurate reporting of all non-credit educational programs and outreach activities each term. This information is used to provide central documentation and reporting of all University-sponsored non-credit educational activities, meet the requirements for awarding *Individual* and *Institutional* CEUs as stated in Section I.D. and to adhere to SACSCOC standards. (Details and forms are available on PCS.uah.edu/Outreach.)

To provide clear language, non-credit continuing education programs and outreach activities are divided into the three categories defined in section I.D. All programs require the submission of a completed *Program/Activity Record* form. Programs which meet Category 1 criteria also require the submission of an *Individual CEU Application* form per the guidelines listed below.

A. Category 1, 2, and 3 - Program/Activity Report

Program/Activity Record form must be submitted for each individual program, course, activity, or event. A permanent record of the program and a validated headcount of attendance is maintained and reported. For Category 2 or 3 programs, a completed and signed form must be submitted at least 10 business days prior to the program start date. Upon program completion, the actual number of participants or notice of cancellation must be sent to PCS Non-credit Registration Office to allow accurate record keeping.

Category 1 programs complete the *Program/Activity Record* form as well as follow the additional requirements listed below.

B. Category 1 - Individual CEU Application

Individual CEU Application form must be completed for each Category 1 program to request the awarding of *Individual* CEUs, in addition to the *Program/Activity Record* form. These forms must be submitted for approval and processing by PCS at least 30 business days prior to the start date of the program and prior to any public statement of the awarding of CEUs. All required documentation must be provided in an approved format.

A PCS representative will contact the unit upon receipt of the application and set up a meeting to discuss the program criteria and process. Fees for establishing the *Individual* CEU program files and registration will apply, unless a waiver has been obtained through the Director of Professional and Continuing Studies and/or the Provost. Fees vary based on the enrollment size, method of registration, and other required services.

Approved programs are given written approvals, which include a PCS Session Number, method of registration for participants, and the number of CEUs and contact hours approved by PCS.

Documentation of program participants and related attendance record, CEU award status, and an evaluation summary must be submitted to

PCS within fourteen days of program completion. Submissions may be completed electronically or via an alternative approved format.

Review

Academic Affairs will review the policy every five years or sooner as needed.

Approval

Chief University Counsel

Date

Provost and Executive Vice President
for Academic Affairs

Date

APPROVED:

President

Date