

# Augusta University

## Policy Library

### Zero Credit Hour Courses

**Policy Manager: Office of the Vice Provost**

#### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Courses offered at Augusta University (AU) as required parts of a degree program must be offered for academic credit unless they meet the conditions for a zero-credit course. When zero-credit hour classes are offered, they must be designed to provide students with access to a learning experience or environments that allows them to advance their educational goals.

#### **AFFECTED STAKEHOLDERS**

*Indicate all entities and persons within the Enterprise that are affected by this policy:*

- Alumni     Faculty     Graduate Students     Health Professional Students  
 Staff     Undergraduate Students     Vendors/Contractors     Visitors  
 Other: *Academic Administrators*

#### **DEFINITIONS**

These definitions apply to these terms as they are used in this policy:

- *Learning Environment:* A physical environment or setting that enables our students to gain access to the equipment and expertise needed to advance their learning within an identified field. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following: labs (scientific, artistic, and clinical), musical recitals and ensembles and other spaces that provide students with the environment needed to advance their skills.
- *Learning Experience:* A planned educational experience with defined goals that enables our students to advance their understanding of a particular field beyond that offered as a part of a degree program. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following: undergraduate research experience, internships that are not elements of a degree program, ongoing capstone experiences, remedial opportunities, or orientations.
- *Credit Hour:* Except as provide in CFR 668.8(k), a credit hour is an amount of student work defined by an institution, as approved by the institution's accrediting agency or State approval agency, that is consistent with commonly accepted practice in postsecondary education and that reasonably approximates not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks.

#### **PROCESS & PROCEDURES**

Courses offered as required elements of any authorized degree program usually provide AU student with 1 or more academic credit hours. Zero credit hour classes must be approved through AU's curriculum approval process and meet the conditions outlined in this policy. A zero credit course must be approved by the curriculum committee of the college/school/ or Academic Affairs unit exercising ownership over the course. The proposal must then be submitted for university wide approval through Curriculog along

with all supporting documentation. When the proposal impacts more than one college or school, the proposal will also be vetted with the University Faculty Senate.

For zero credit courses to be approved they must be designed to:

- 1) Offer AU students access to learning environments that enable them practice and advance the skills and techniques learned in their academic courses. Examples include, but are not limited to scientific, artistic and music lab spaces and clinics settings, and/or
- 2) Provide students with access to a planned educational experience with defined learning goals that enable them to advance their understanding of a particular field beyond that offered as a part of an authorized degree program. Examples include, but are not limited to professional remediation courses, program orientations, research experiences, experiential learning events, skill presentations, and capstone completion.

## **REFERENCES & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

Department of Education Definition (34 CFR 600.2)- Federal Credit Hour Definition:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/09/02/2020-18636/distance-education-and-innovation>

Sothern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges Credit Hour Policy Statement:

<https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/Credit-Hours.pdf>

## **RELATED POLICIES**

Augusta University Definition of a Credit Hour:

<https://www.augusta.edu/services/legal/policyinfo/policy/definition-credit-hour.pdf>

Augusta University Curriculum Approval Policy:

<https://www.augusta.edu/services/legal/policyinfo/policy/curriculum-approval-policy.pdf>

## **APPROVED BY:**

Interim Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Augusta University

Date: 10/7/2024

President, Augusta University

Date: 10/7/2024