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Continuing Education Unit

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## Summary

These guidelines are in accordance with the recommendations of the National Task Force on the Continuing Education Unit (CEU), and also draw upon the experience of other universities where this CEU is being used.

The guidelines are suggested for campuses of the State University of New York (University) which choose to adopt the continuing education unit as a method of recording student achievement in appropriate non-credit learning activities.

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## Policy

### I. Criteria

The CEU can be awarded to an individual only for those non-credit activities that have been organized to provide systematic instruction, are measurable in duration of time, and meet the criteria listed below.

- A. The non-credit activity is planned to meet the educational needs of a specific target population.
- B. The objectives for the non-credit activity are clearly identified and stated in written form.
- C. Content is selected and related subject matter is logically organized to achieve the stated objectives for the non-credit activity.
- D. There is evidence of preplanning which indicates that participation has involved those with instructional responsibility for the program, appropriate continuing education staff and the target public or external organizations, when feasible.
- E. The activity is of an instructional nature and is sponsored by a campus academic or administrative unit that is qualified to assess the quality of the program content and approve the resource personnel utilized.

F. There is provision for registration of individual participants. Evaluative criteria and procedures for awarding CEUs to individual participants must be established prior to the start of the non-credit activity.

## II. Limitations on Awarding Continuing Education Units

Activities for which CEUs are not to be awarded to individual participants include the following:

A. Credit programs - any program carrying regular academic credit.

B. High School Equivalency - programs leading to the high school equivalency certificate or diploma.

C. Orientation programs - educational programs which deal with such internal topics as orientation in rights, benefits, and responsibilities; organizational structure; or on-the-job methods, processes or procedures.

D. Committee meetings - committee activities.

E. Policy assignments - conferences, delegate assemblies, or similar meetings for policy-making purposes.

F. Meetings and conventions - meetings and conventions of societies and associations that do not qualify, per se, as continuing education. Educational activities programmed independently and held concurrently with these meetings may meet the criteria for awarding CEUs.

G. Mass Media programs - casual participation in programs delivered through the media, such as television, radio or newspapers does not merit the award of CEUs. However, instruction using mass media which is an integral part of an educational program does qualify under CEU guidelines.

H. Entertainment and recreation - attendance at lecture series, cultural performances, entertainment or recreational meetings or activities, and participation in travel groups does not qualify for CEUs unless these activities are an integral part of a larger educational program.

I. Work experience - on-the-job training, apprenticeships and other work experiences do not qualify for the award of CEUs unless structured as part of a planned educational experience that fulfills these program criteria.

J. Individual scholarships - the independent writing of articles or research reports or the presentation of papers outside a planned educational program does not qualify the individual for the awarding of CEUs.

K. Self-directed studies - individual, self-directed studies or other forms of independent learning experiences that are not subject to later verification by assessment of the acquisition of cognitive or affective skills do not qualify for the awarding of CEUs.

L. Associational membership and certification programs - non-educational activities of associational and professional societies that may otherwise be used to qualify for professional and occupational group membership or certification are not eligible for the awarding of CEUs. Examples of such activities are: (a) membership or service in a professional, occupational, or other society or organization; (b) attendance at annual, periodic, or special meetings, conventions, rallies and retreats; (c) writing or presentation of articles or research papers; (d) teaching or other program assignments; and (e) self-directed reading or study.

M. Programs involving less than ten contact hours of instruction should be evaluated very carefully before fractional CEUs are awarded to participants. Often, these shorter programs are not adequately planned to meet all program criteria.

N. Continuing education units may not be awarded for (a) meeting time devoted to business or committee activities; (b) meeting time devoted to announcements, welcoming speeches, or organizational reports; (c) time for study, assigned reading, reports, written assignments, and other related activities outside of the class or meeting schedule; or (d) scheduled time for social activities, coffee hours, luncheons, dinners, etc. However, luncheon or dinner presentations that are an integral part of the educational experience may be included.

## III. Administration of the Continuing Education Unit

A. Continuing education units will be determined for programs in advance and awarded to individual participants who meet the criteria for satisfactory completion. A permanent record of the student's participation in non-credit continuing education activity for which CEUs have been awarded will be maintained by all participating campuses, and a student may request and obtain an official University record of CEUs earned. An appropriate charge may be levied for the issuance of such transcripts in accordance with established University policy, Third Party Payment of Tuition, Fees, Rentals and Other Charges .

B. Appropriate mechanisms should be established on each participating campus to insure that the criteria for award of CEUs have been met and that students have fulfilled the obligations for award of CEUs.

C. The minimum record to be maintained should include: the name of the individual participant, social security number of the participant, title of the program activity, name of the instructor, starting and ending dates of the program activity and the number of CEUs awarded. Other information that might be retained as part of the record is a brief description of the program or activity giving some indication of content, level, objectives and format, location of the program, and cooperating organizations such as a company, agency or association. In any case the records should be so maintained as to allow periodic reporting of CEUs awarded in total during specific time periods such as a semester or a year.

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## Definitions

**Contact Hour** – a 50-minute classroom session, or its equivalent. The number of contact instructional hours is readily determined in the formal classroom situation. However, in more informal formats the director or coordinator of the program must exercise judgment in determining the equivalent number of instructional hours required to achieve the educational objectives. In still less structured activities, the director must determine whether or not the individual participation and educational benefits derived from a non-credit learning experience are of sufficient merit for the CEU to be awarded.

**Continuing Education Unit (CEU)** – ten contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction.

**Elements of capable direction** – (a) professional educational leadership in program planning and development; (b) a selection of the most effective educational format for the intended purpose and objectives; (c) assignment of qualified instructional staff; (d) adequate program management and administration; and (e) the design and implementation of evaluation techniques applicable both to individual participants and the total program.

**Organized educational experience** – presumes planning to meet a specific need. The essential elements of such planning include the determination of the program's educational objectives in terms of (a) the clientele to be served; (b) the new skill or understanding to be realized through the content or subject matter to be covered; and (c) the program format and instructional methodology to be employed. Adequately and properly responsive planning requires interaction among administrative personnel of the sponsoring organization, the instructor or other educational leaders, and representatives from the clientele groups to be served.

**Qualified Instruction** – assumes that the instructional staff has the following qualifications: (a) competence in the subject matter (may be evidenced by experience in which command of the subject matter is recognized by the individual's peers, by formal training, or by demonstrated knowledge through publication in professional journals or appropriate media); (b) ability to transmit the educational content to the participants; (c) understanding of the program objectives; and (d) knowledge and skill in the instructional methodology and learning processes involved.

**Responsible sponsorship** – includes the assignment of direct supervision of the activity to a professionally capable program chair and/or director and the maintenance of a permanent record system. The reputation and organizational integrity of the sponsor are reflected in the quality of the educational experience to be presented.

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## Other Related Information

There is no related information relevant to this policy.

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## Procedures

There are no procedures relevant to this policy.

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### **Forms**

There are no forms relevant to this policy.

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### **Authority**

Memorandum to presidents from the office of the chancellor, 75-21, dated December 3, 1975 regarding Guidelines on Use of Continuing Education Unit.

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### **History**

There is no history relevant to this policy.

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### **Appendices**

There are no appendices relevant to this policy.

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