

Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual (Revised 2003)

Upper-division courses at community and technical colleges will not be funded by the state and may not be added to the *ACGM*. However, if regional universities decline to offer an upper division course and if that course also meets the two criteria above, a community college may request approval to add the course to its inventory of Unique Need Courses and to receive funding as such. The prerequisites of the proposed course must meet both institutions' prerequisites.

The procedures for Unique Need Approval are:

1. The application for each Unique Need Course submitted to the Coordinating Board must be accompanied by a proposal that states the various needs for the course and a syllabus that includes a course description, detailed course outline, and objectives. This proposal must also document that the course is transferable to two public universities and that it meets the requirement for college and university rigor.
2. Colleges must reapply for approval of Unique Need Courses annually. At the institution's request upon the third consecutive approval, a course may be considered for continued placement in that institution's course inventory. Requests must include the enrollments and frequency with which the course was offered during the preceding two years.
3. Exemptions to the three year approval procedure may be requested if a Unique Need Course is transferable as part of the state's and the Coordinating Board's mandated Core Curriculum. An institution may request that such a course be considered for inclusion after the course has been taught the previous academic year. These requests must include the enrollments and frequency with which the course was offered during the preceding years.

The Coordinating Board staff is currently reviewing its unique need request procedures. If you have suggestions or comments, please send them to Dr. James Goeman at James.Goeman@the cb.state.tx.us.

Distance Learning

For community colleges, distance learning may take the form of instruction offered at distant sites -- out-of-district, out-of-state, or out-of-country -- or instruction delivered primarily by telecommunications technology. Unless specifically exempted by the Coordinating Board, all state-funded distance learning courses and programs must be submitted for annual review to the appropriate Higher Education Regional Councils (Subchapter H, Approval of Distance Learning for Public Colleges and Universities, of the *Coordinating Board Rules and Regulations*, Chapter 5.) The text of Subchapter H is included in the appendix of this manual.

An "Annual Plan" for Distance Learning consists of a listing by location of distance learning courses and programs planned to be taught during an academic year by an

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institution. The Annual Plan must include a signed statement of institutional commitment to Distance Learning Standards (see appendix for this form). Each college must prepare an Annual Plan in January for the following academic year. For example, the Annual Plan for 2001-2002 must be prepared in January 2001. The Annual Plan will be submitted by the college to the appropriate Higher Education Regional Council(s) for approval during council meetings in January or February. The Higher Education Regional Councils thereafter make recommendations to the Commissioner of Higher Education regarding the Annual Plans. The Commissioner in turn makes recommendations regarding the Annual Plans to the Coordinating Board at its April meeting.

Colleges wishing to offer academic courses for state funding for which all or part of the courses would be taught outside Texas must obtain prior approval from the Coordinating Board staff. The form needed to request approval for an out-of-state (or out-of-country) academic course appears in the Appendix.

Developmental Courses

Developmental course work may be reported for state reimbursement but does not result in degree credit. Because developmental courses do not transfer, no common courses are listed for developmental approval numbers. Colleges may designate their own course titles but should follow the specified restrictions for number of SCH per student, maximum SCH, and maximum contact hours. The first digit developmental course numbers should be “0” to indicate that the course does not carry credit.

Developmental course approval numbers are listed in a separate chapter of this manual (See Table of Contents).