

B. Development and Organization of *WECM* Courses

The *WECM* is organized by six-digit CIP codes that represent instructional program codes, titles, and descriptions for academic and occupational programs offered at postsecondary levels. The THECB assigns CIP codes and rubrics to courses for the purpose of classifying, recording, and reporting statistics for workforce education courses. The CIP codes or rubrics are not intended to drive the choice of SCH or CEU course offerings but to serve as a guide once a college has identified the learning outcomes for a course and/or program.

Courses with different CIP codes may be included in an approved program. The decision to use a *WECM* course should be based primarily on the intended learning outcomes of the course rather than the CIP code or rubric.

To assure success of a workforce education course, universally accepted course design practices must be considered prior to offering a course, including: identifying qualified faculty, designating appropriate prerequisite courses (if applicable), establishing pre- and post-assessment strategies, choosing instructional delivery systems, and designing evaluation strategies.

C. Explanation of Course Entries

WECM SCH and CEU courses are designed with an array of course options and are governed by consistent protocol. Courses allow flexibility for colleges in awarding certificate and degrees and in responding to the immediate needs of students, business, and industry. Both SCH and CEU courses provide an opportunity for students to obtain skills, knowledge, and behaviors needed for career exploration, entry, and specific job upgrades. An explanation of SCH and CEU course options and protocol follows:

Learning Outcomes: Learning outcomes are the distinguishing feature of each *WECM* course. Minimum learning outcomes are intended for student attainment of specific competencies and are meant to be taught and measured for the award of either SCH or CEU. Colleges must not eliminate but are encouraged to enhance or add learning outcomes. Enhancements or additions must not be so extensive that they result in a substantially different course. Local need or business/industry standards, state/national credentialing requirements, employer-defined skill requirements, national industry-defined skill requirements or standards, and/or Texas Skill Standards Board (TSSB) recognized skill standards may serve as resources for enhancement or addition of learning outcomes.

Course Description: Course descriptions provide an overview of course content or subject matter. Colleges must use the complete *WECM* course descriptions for all SCH courses and CEU “mirror” courses, but they may enhance or add to the course descriptions as long as the enhancements are consistent with *WECM*-approved learning outcomes. The enhancements must not be so extensive that they result in a substantially different course. Colleges

may revise the description of a course offered only for CEU provided that the integrity and intent of the course remains intact and the description is consistent with *WECM*-approved learning outcomes.

Contact Hour Range: Each SCH course in the *WECM* has a suitable range of contact hours necessary to master minimum learning outcomes and to afford each college a choice of instructional strategies via lecture/lab components. SCH courses are assigned contact hour ranges based on the ratios outlined in Table 4-1 of this Chapter. Colleges must follow the established ratios for credit and contact hour assignments.

A CEU course with fewer than 7 contact hours of instruction will not receive state funding unless the specific type and length of instruction are required by local, state, or national licensing, certifying, regulatory, or accrediting agencies. The requirements for adding a course with fewer than 7 contact hours are discussed later in this chapter. No lecture/lab CEU course can have more than 176 contact hours. CEU external learning courses must follow the same contact hour limits as the SCH external learning courses

Suggested Prerequisite: If instructional specialists at a *WECM* Course Review Workshop agree on a course prerequisite, a specific list of prerequisite course(s), skill(s), or knowledge is included in the description.

Course Level: The course level indicates whether the course is introductory, intermediate, or advanced, as recommended by instructional specialists. The first digit in the course number specifies the course level, as described below in the section titled “Course Rubric and Number.”

Course Title: The published *WECM* title for SCH courses must appear in college publications and on transcripts. For CEU courses, workforce marketing titles may be used to better describe the nature of the courses being offered. For CEU courses, workforce marketing titles may be listed in transcripts. However, all CEU mirror courses must use the published *WECM* title for the course.

Course Rubric and Number: Rubrics (prefixes) provide a common set of unique course designations for each occupational discipline. Each four-letter rubric (e.g. DFTG) identifies a cluster of skills and knowledge to be used in determining both course equivalency and degree applicability for transfer on a statewide basis. Using a common rubric will enable students to link their portfolios of skill attainment to the occupational needs of business and industry. However, the rubric does not identify the only discipline eligible to use a course. Courses should be chosen based on course descriptions and learning outcomes, not on rubrics. Any program may involve courses with several different rubrics as long as the course content is appropriate.

The four-digit number after the rubric indicates the course level, the SCH and/or CEU value, the course type, and the suggested sequence.

- The **first digit** identifies course level. For SCH and CEU courses, an

introductory course is denoted by a “1,” and an advanced course is denoted by a “2.” An intermediate course may be denoted with either a “1” or a “2.”

- The **second** digit defines the SCH or CEU value. For example, a “3” indicates a three SCH course and a “0” denotes a non-credit course (that is, a CEU course.) Courses must follow the established ratios discussed in Chapter Three. Approved contact hour and credit hour combinations can be found in Table 4-1 of this chapter. The number of Continuing Education Units (CEU) awarded is calculated by setting ten instructional contact hours equal to one CEU.
- The **third and fourth** digits establish the type of course and course sequence.
 - 00-59 Lecture-Lab
 - 60-63 Clinical
 - 64-69 Practicum
 - 70-79 Local Need
 - 80-85 Cooperative Education
 - 86-89 Internship
 - 90-99 Special Topics

For both SCH and CEU courses, the published *WECM* rubric and number must be used in official college publications.

D. Using the *WECM*

1. Guidelines for All Course Types

WECM courses are created and maintained by teams of instructional specialists with expertise in the relevant subject areas. The specialists are selected from colleges around the state. The allotted range of contact hours and/or credit hours represents the instructional specialist teams’ professional judgment about the appropriate amount of time needed to cover the minimum course outcomes.

When a *WECM* course is already available to cover specific content, the college must use the range of credit and contact hours as well as the minimum learning outcomes specified in the *WECM* course listing. The parameters in Tables 4-1 or 4-2 should only be used when creating a completely new course at a *WECM* workshop or when designing a Special Topics or Local Need course. Remember that sometimes the needed content may be found in a course with a different CIP code or rubric.

2. Special Topics Courses

Available within each six-digit CIP Code, a Special Topics course should be used only when course content does not exist in a current *WECM* course.