

# Policy on Zero-Credit Academic Courses

## I. PURPOSE

To clarify when a course may be offered for zero credit hours for consistency across colleges and schools.

## II. SCOPE

All academic courses at the University of Miami (UM) should be offered for academic credit unless they meet the conditions established in this policy.

## III. POLICY

All academic courses should be offered for academic credit to reflect the instructional time and student effort required. The amount of credit to be earned should follow the guidelines in the University's federal credit hour policy as published in the Academic Bulletin. Per said policy, each college/school within the University is responsible for reviewing and approving academic course credit.

All courses offered by the University for academic credit must have direct instruction by a designated faculty member (or teaching assistant) and involve regular and substantive interaction and engagement with students.

Academic courses offered for zero credit hours may be approved only if they meet the following conditions:

- The course is primarily student-driven and/or experiential in nature such as an independent study, practical experience, or creative expression.
- The course does not have class meetings on a regular basis.
- The course requires minimal faculty involvement and minimal use of other university resources.
- The course has designated learning objectives that would distinguish it as an academic course.
- Grading is accomplished with minimal assessment.

In addition, UM summer research courses in which UM undergraduate students work with UM faculty in UM facilities may be offered for zero credit hours.

Academic courses which may not be offered for zero credit even if they meet the conditions above include the following:

- Any type of program capstone requirement (project, research, practicum, etc.)
- Master's thesis courses
- Doctoral dissertation courses (including Research in Residence courses)

If an academic course does not meet the minimum requirements for one credit hour per the federal credit hour policy, the course cannot be offered for zero credit unless it meets the conditions above. Otherwise the course cannot be offered at all or must be revised to meet the minimum requirements for one or more credit hours.

## **Non-Academic Courses**

Other courses may be offered for zero credit hours if they are not academic in nature such as advising/orientation courses, DCIE continuing education courses, executive education courses, etc. Such courses may only be offered for academic credit if approved through a college or school as an academic course. The University Registrar's Office determines whether such courses may appear on a student's transcript.

## **Audited Courses**

This policy does not apply to credit-bearing courses which students take as auditors.

## **Related Policies**

Federal Definition of the Credit Hour Policy

<https://bulletin.miami.edu/general-university-information/university-policies/course-information/>

## **IV. DEFINITIONS**

**Academic Course:** A formal organized unit recognized by the University that meets an educational requirement that has a credit equivalent to the hours of instruction. Academic courses focus on the essential concepts relating to academic or professional disciplines. Academic courses develop students' knowledge and skills by emphasizing theoretical, applications of the essential concepts of the discipline/profession and incorporating practical applications as appropriate. Academic courses appear on student transcripts.

## **V. PROCEDURE**

Follow the same procedure in CIM Course Inventory Management to either create a new course offered for zero credit or to edit an existing course to revise the credit hours to zero. A course syllabus must be attached to the proposal.