

# **Extra-institutional Learning Experiences in the BAAS Degree**

**Original Implementation:** October 26, 1999

**Last Revision:** April 14, 2015

## **Role and Scope**

The purpose of this policy is to define a procedure to award credit for extra-institutional learning experiences in the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences (BAAS) degree. This policy provides a rationale for the credit awarded and definitions of the significant elements of the process, establishes guidelines for the occupational portfolio, and provides a means for monitoring the policy.

## **Review**

The dean of the College of Liberal and Applied Arts will review and implement this policy.

## **Rationale**

Awarding degree credit for extra-institutional learning experience is based on the higher education practice of granting academic credit for educational attainment comparable to the college level. The granting of credit is carried out in a variety of ways including, but not limited to, credit by examination, Advanced Placement (AP) credit, College Level Examination Program (CLEP) credit, occupational portfolio review, and Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA) departmental examination. The credit awarded must be appropriate to an individual's BAAS degree program.

## **Authority and Oversight**

The authority granted to SFA by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) (July 16, 1974) to offer the BAAS degree contains the following statements: "Semester hour credit for experience and/or exhibited competency is permissible in both Academic Foundations (up to 12 hours) and Academic Specialization (up to 24 hours). An expanded innovative program of advising and counseling will be necessary to administer the program."

The College of Liberal and Applied Arts will maintain oversight of the BAAS degree and administer the extra-institutional learning credit program. The dean of the college will develop procedures to implement all aspects of the BAAS degree.

## **Definitions**

**BAAS Degree** - The Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree is designed to offer students an opportunity to receive college credit for extra-institutional learning experiences and to apply these credits toward a baccalaureate degree. The degree is designed to provide both academic and professional depth to individuals who have recognized competency in occupational or technical fields.

**Extra-institutional Learning** - Documented learning experience that accrues to the student outside the sponsorship of an accredited institution of higher education. Such experience may include learning sponsored by non-accredited associations, business, industry, or military units to develop knowledge, skills, and values. If the learning experience occurred outside of a training program related to professional licensure or certification, the student must submit an occupational portfolio.

**Occupational Portfolio** - A compilation of pertinent documents and third party verification that develops a history and basis for the levels of competency submitted for evaluation. Documentation will verify that skill levels and occupational competencies are equivalent to college work.

## **Procedure for Credit Awards**

The evaluation of extra-institutional learning experience depends on an examination process. The measure of equivalency is determined by three factors:

1. **The Curriculum of the Learning Experience** - The learning experience must meet the standard of currency and relevance of contemporary institutions of higher education.
2. **The Qualifications of the Instructor/Supervisor** - Instruction and supervision must be provided by an individual or individuals whose credentials have been reviewed and accepted by authorized peers, an appropriate sponsoring professional organization or corporation, or an institution of higher education.
3. **Evaluation of Student Achievement** - The validation process must use a means of evaluating the learning process that is appropriate to the subject matter and the manner of transmission.

All requests for credit for extra-institutional learning experiences must be submitted by the student at the time of application to the BAAS degree program. Requests must be accompanied by documentation of the learning experiences, including the occupational portfolio (if required). The BAAS program director, or a designee, will review the documentation, including credit recommendations, and make a final determination on the amount of credit to be awarded. Credit awarded will be submitted to the Office of the Registrar. Credit awarded for extra-institutional experiences is only applicable to the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences Degree.

## **Appeals**

Appeals of credit awards must be in writing to the dean of the College of Liberal and Applied Arts for resolution. The dean may either affirm the decision of the BAAS program director or make a different credit recommendation.

**Cross Reference:** SFA General Bulletin/Advanced Placement & Credit by Examination

**Responsible for Implementation:** Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

**Contact for Revision:** Dean of the College Liberal and Applied Arts

**Forms:** None

**Board Committee Assignment:** Academic and Student Affairs