

**THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER INTERNAL POLICIES**

26.01.99.Z1.01 Excess Semester Credit Hours

Approved June 26, 2008

Revised November 4, 2009

Revised December 9, 2009

Revised February 3, 2010

Revised August 3, 2011

Supplements System Policy 26.01

1. OVERVIEW

The State of Texas does not provide funds to the Texas A&M University System Health Science Center (HSC) for semester credit hours (SCH) earned by resident Texas students (in-state) that exceed certain limits. To offset this loss, the HSC, as permitted by law¹, will charge tuition at the higher, non-resident (out-of-state) rate to all Texas resident students that exceed these limits. The non-resident tuition rate will be charged in the semester following the semester in which the limit is met. The only exception to the higher, non-resident rate is when the higher rate would create an economic hardship for undergraduate students.

This policy outlines the criteria for these limits, who is affected by them, under what conditions the limits do not apply, and the consequences of exceeding these limits for the institution and/or the student.

2. CRITERIA

2.1. Limits Set for Excess Hours for Undergraduate Students

2.1.1. Hours earned in a course taken by a student more than twice (known as the “Three-Peat” rule) exceeds the limits set by State law² and may not be reported by the HSC for state funding. Exceptions to this law include:

1. Thesis and dissertation courses;
2. Courses that may be repeated for credit because they involve different or more advanced content each time they are taken;
3. Independent study courses;
4. Special topics and seminar courses; and
5. Continuing education courses that must be repeated to retain professional certification.

¹ Texas Education Code §61.059 and 54.014

² Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part I, Chapter 13, Subchapter F, Rule 13.105

2.1.2. Hours that exceed the number of hours for completion of the degree program in which a resident undergraduate student is enrolled by 45 hours (students enrolled in fall 1999 and subsequent terms) or by 30 hours (students initially enrolling in fall 2006 and subsequent terms) may not be reported by the HSC for state funding³. This limit also applies to non-resident students who are permitted to pay resident tuition who exceed these limits. The semester credit hours counted toward the limitation include all hours attempted by the student **except:**

- Semester credit hours earned by the student before receiving a baccalaureate degree that has been previously awarded;
- Semester credit hours earned by the student by examination or other procedure by which credit is earned without registering for a course for which tuition is charged;
- Credit for remedial education courses, technical courses, workforce education courses funded according to contact hours, or other courses that would not generate academic credit that could be applied toward a degree program at the HSC;
- Semester credit hours earned by the student at a private or out-of-state institution; or
- Hours which are ineligible for generating state funding.

The non-resident tuition rate will be charged in the semester following the semester in which the limit is met. Students are exempted from the payment of that higher tuition rate if the payment of the higher tuition rate would result in an economic hardship for the student. Economic hardship is defined as any undergraduate student who would have an expected family contribution low enough to be eligible for a Federal Pell Grant, regardless of whether they actually receive the funding due to enrollment status or non-satisfactory progress for financial aid. The expected family contribution is established by the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

2.2 Limits Set for Excess Hours by Doctoral Students

Hours taken at the HSC (other than those taken for the MD/DDS professional programs) that exceed 130-hours at the doctoral level may not be reported by the HSC for state funding⁴. All doctoral students exceeding this limit will be charged the non-resident tuition rate (effective with students admitted in Fall 2008) regardless of their residency status or any appointment, fellowship, or other circumstance that would normally entitle them to resident tuition rates. The non-resident tuition rate will be charged in the semester after the semester in which the 130 hour limit is met.

³ Texas Education Code §61.0595

⁴ Texas Education Code §61.059(1)(1) (Excess hours exemption approved by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.)

OFFICE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Vice President for Academic Affairs