

**Appendices to the *Rules of Practice and Procedure***  
**January 2017**

**Appendix #4 – Policy and Procedures Governing Measurement of Academic Programs**

1. Academic Measurement

Institutions accredited by the National Accrediting Commission of Career Arts and Sciences (NACCAS) may express their academic measurement in terms of:

- a. Clock Hours
- b. Competencies
- c. Credit Hours

2. Notification

The institution must notify NACCAS of its academic measurement at the following points:

- a. Application for Initial Accreditation (main campus or additional location)
- b. Before a change from one form of measurement to another or before adding a form of measurement
- c. Annual Report

3. Definitions

**Clock Hours:** Clock hour is defined as a minimum of 50 minutes of instruction during a 60 minute period.

**Competencies:** Competencies are skills and knowledge a person needs to acquire in order to obtain a license or certification to work in the field of cosmetology arts and sciences, massage, related or unrelated areas.

**Competency-based program:** A self-paced program measured by the student's acquisition of knowledge and skills (competencies) rather than seat time.

**Non-standard term semester credit hour:** At least 37.5 hours of instruction (theory, practical and laboratory).

**Non-standard term/semester program:** A student-centered program with many start dates throughout the year (e.g., the second Monday of every month) which may be shorter than one academic year in length, equal to one or more academic years, or longer than one or more academic years with the remainder more or less than one half of an academic year in length.

**Quarter:** An academic period of 10 to 12 weeks.

**Non-standard term quarter credit hour or quarter hour:** At least 25 clock hours of instruction (theory, practical or laboratory) = 1 quarter credit hour.

**Non-standard term quarter credit hour or quarter hour Quarter Credit Hour or Quarter Hour:** At least 25clock hours of instruction (theory, practical or laboratory) is equal to 1 quarter credit hour.

**Semester:** An academic period of approximately 15 weeks.

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### 4. Validity of Academic Measurement

A school must decide which of its academic programs will be offered on a clock hour basis, competency basis, non-standard term basis, semester basis, or quarter basis. While for many years institutions of cosmetology arts and sciences have generally measured their academic programs in terms of clock hours, as provided in state laws, more and more institutions are also measuring on the basis of competencies or credit hours. No matter which academic measurement a school uses, it must establish the educational validity of the program.

- a. A program measured in competencies must link acquisition or demonstration of knowledge and competencies to a curriculum developed around minimum state licensure or certification requirements, state minimum requirements augmented by recommendations from its Advisory Committee, or skills necessary for entry-level employment according to skills standards developed by a national body with recognized expertise in this area that go beyond minimum state requirements.
- b. Competencies must be linked to the curriculum through grades, a point system, or similar assessment measure. Methods for assessing competency may include:
  - i. Initial assessment of the student's knowledge and skills at time of enrollment, with advanced placement, if eligible;
  - ii. Written or oral examinations;
  - iii. Observation and assessment of practical skills;
  - iv. Observation and assessment of work performed in an externship, if applicable;
  - vi. Assessment of student portfolios;
  - vii. Assessment of special projects; and
- c. A program measured in credit hours must satisfy at a minimum, the following requirements:
  - i. Academic Program measured on non-standard term basis:  
1 credit hour = At least 37.5 clock hours of theory (academic learning), practice/demonstration, and/or laboratory experience.
  - ii. Academic Program measured on semester (approximately 15 weeks) basis (minimum):  
1 credit hour = At least 37.5 clock hours of theory (cognitive/lecture), practice/demonstration, and/or laboratory experience.
  - iii. Academic Program measured on quarter (10 – 12 weeks) basis (minimum):  
1 credit hour = At least 25 clock hours of theory (cognitive/lecture), practice/demonstration, and/or laboratory experience.
  - iv. If a state mandates a specific conversion rate, that conversion rate should be used.

### 5. Conversion to or Addition of Credit Hour or Competency-Based Programs

- a. An institution that measures its academic programs on a clock hour basis may convert to a credit hour or competency-based academic measurement, by complying with the procedure set out in [Section 4.8](#) (see page 87) of the NACCAS *Rules of Practice and Procedure*, the procedures set out in [Section 5b](#) (see page 149) of this policy, and the following conversion formula:

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- i. In establishing the appropriate conversion, a school must decide whether to organize its academic programs and the courses offered at the school in competencies, non-standard terms, semesters or quarters and how many weeks there will be in each semester or quarter. It must then divide the clock hours of the program by 37.5 (non-standard term semester) or 25 (non-standard term quarter) to determine the number of credit hours. Credits must be expressed in whole numbers and rounded down, as needed. A school must then develop curricula, lesson plans, and course schedules in conformance with the new measure of academic programs and NACCAS *Standards and Criteria*.
- ii. If a state mandates a specific conversion rate, that conversion rate should be used.
- b. Procedure to obtain approval for changes and conversions are outlined in the required application found on the NACCAS [website](#).
- c. Sample Conversions<sup>11</sup>

Non-Standard Term Sample: 1450-hour basic cosmetology program

- $1450 \div 37.5 = 38.66$ , which rounded down = 38 credits

Non-Standard Term Quarter Credits Sample: 1450-hour basic cosmetology program

- $1450 \text{ hours} \div 25 = 58$  quarter credits

6. Review

A change or conversion from clock hours to credit hours must be approved by the Commission according to [Section 4.8](#) (see page 87) of the *Rules of Practice and Procedure*.

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<sup>13</sup>Schools should take state and federal requirements into consideration when making conversions.