

WEIGHTED SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS

Background

For many years, the State of Texas has used a system of formulas to fund higher education. *In 1997, the Legislature decreased the number of variables used in formula funding of higher education. Weighted semester credit hours became the primary factor for formula funding.*

When our students are officially enrolled in courses (as of the official census date), the semester credit hours (SCH) generated are reported to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). The semester credit hours are then multiplied by two factors:

1. One multiplier is determined by the THECB program area (not department or college), level of the courses (lower division, upper division, masters, doctoral, professional) and student level. The SCH are multiplied by the applicable number in the table on page 5.
2. The second multiplier is applied if the instructor of record for an undergraduate course is tenured or on tenure track. In this case, the SCH are multiplied by a factor determined by the legislature. In the 1998-99 biennium the factor was 1.05. That is a 5% premium was placed on undergraduate courses taught by tenured or tenure track faculty. For the 2000-01 biennium the factor was originally scheduled to increase to 1.15, but was finally funded at 1.05. However, we believe this factor will increase in future biennia.

Using the multipliers above, the THECB calculates the weighted semester credit hours (WSCH) for each institution. Each institution receives a general revenue appropriation based on a designated dollar amount multiplied by the WSCH. For example, the dollar amount for each WSCH was \$51.12 for the 1998-99 biennium. The dollar figure will change for each biennium depending on the total dollar amount set by the Legislature to fund higher education.

Weighted SCH Rules		
(except for some technical cases)		
Course Level	Student Level	Funding Level
Lower division	Lower division	Lower division
Lower division	Upper division	Lower division
Lower division	Post-baccalaureate	Lower division
Lower division	Master	Lower division
Lower division	Professional	Lower division
Lower division	Doctoral	Lower division
Upper division	Lower division	Lower division
Upper division	Upper division	Upper division
Upper division	Post-baccalaureate	Upper division
Upper division	Master	Upper division
Upper division	Professional	Upper division
Upper division	Doctoral	Upper division
Master	Lower division	Lower division
Master	Upper division	Upper division
Master	Post-baccalaureate	Master
Master	Masters	Master
Master	Professional	Master
Master	Doctoral	Master
Doctoral	Lower division	Lower division
Doctoral	Upper division	Upper division
Doctoral	Post-baccalaureate	Master
Doctoral	Masters	Master
Doctoral	Professional	Master
Doctoral	Doctoral	Doctoral

Key Factors in WSCH Calculation

The weight assigned to a SCH depends on a combination of three factors:

1. The program area to which the course has been inventoried by the Coordinating Board.
2. The level of the semester credit hour: lower division, upper division, masters, doctoral or professional.
3. For undergraduate courses, whether the instructor is tenured or tenure-track.

The weight corresponds to the lower of the student level or course level. Consider the following examples:

- A freshman or sophomore (lower division student) takes a 300 or 400 level (upper division) course. The SCH are considered lower division and are assigned the lower weight.
- A junior, senior or graduate student takes a 100 or 200 level course. The SCH are considered lower division and are assigned the lower rate.
- A junior or senior takes a graduate course. The SCH are considered upper division rather than master's level and are assigned the upper division weight, which is lower than the master's level rate. However, if the student is within 12 hours of graduation, the master's weight is assigned.

The level of a course is assigned by the THECB. Although our undergraduate course numbering system is transparent, the graduate course numbering system is not. We have no distinctive number system for master's level courses. Most of our 600 level courses are considered doctoral by the THECB.

Another factor in WSCH calculation is program area weight. For example, a course in the teacher education program area has a lower weight than a course in the science program area. Program areas are assigned to our courses by the THECB based on the descriptions we provide. The course is assigned a CIP (Classification of Instructional Programs) code and funding code.

In summary, course level, course program area, enrolled student level and, for undergraduate courses, whether the instructor is tenured or tenure track, are the key factors in calculation of WSCH.

The following examples are based on the original weights determined by THECB. For the 2006-07 biennium and thereafter, the weights will be updated based on current actual cost studies by program area for each state supported institution. See table for revised rates for 2006-07.

Example One of Calculating Weighted Credit Hours

ANTH 205 CIP Code 45020100.01			
LD Students	UD Students	Masters Students	PhD Students
66	314	0	0
<u>x 3 SCH</u>	<u>x 3 SCH</u>	<u>x 3 SCH</u>	<u>x 3 SCH</u>
198 SCH	942 SCH	0 SCH	0 SCH

To calculate WSCH:

- A lower division course, so all weights are at the lower division regardless of student level
- The last two digits of the CIP show that an 01 meaning it is funded at the Liberal Arts level
- The multiplier for Liberal Arts at the lower division level is 1.00

Therefore: $(198 \text{ SCH} \times 1.00) + (942 \text{ SCH} \times 1.00) = 198.00 + 942.00 = 1140 \text{ WSCH}$

To calculate funding, multiply the weighted SCH by the current rate (around \$54 now):

$$1140.00 \times \$55.72 = \$63,520.80$$

To determine the amount for a BIENNIUM, YOU MUST MULTIPLY THIS TIMES 2:

$$\$63,520.80 \times 2 = \$127,041.60$$

Example Two of Calculating Weighted Credit Hours

MATH 431 CIP Code 27010100.02			
LD Students	UD Students	Masters Students	PhD Students
0	11	11	0
<u>x 3 SCH</u>	<u>x 3 SCH</u>	<u>x 3 SCH</u>	<u>x 3 SCH</u>
0 SCH	33 SCH	33 SCH	0 SCH

To calculate WSCH:

- An upper division course, so all weights are a combination of student level and course level: since you always take the lower of either the student level or the course level, both upper division and masters students get funded at the upper division rate
- The last two digits of the CIP show that an 02 meaning it is funded at the Science level
- The multiplier for Science at the upper division level is 3.00

Therefore: $(33 \text{ SCH} \times 3.00) + (33 \text{ SCH} \times 3.00) = 99.00 + 99.00 = 198.00 \text{ WSCH}$

To calculate funding, multiply the weighted SCH by the current rate of \$55.72:

$$198.00 \times \$55.72 = \$11,032.56$$

To determine the amount for a BIENNIUM, YOU MUST MULTIPLY THIS TIME 2:

$$\$11,032.56 \times 2 = \$22,065$$

**The THECB Instruction & Operations Formula Funding Recommendation
Rate and Weighting Matrix (Adjusted to include Cost Analysis for FY2004)
Draft for Submission on March 4, 2005**

\$53.15000000 2006 – 2007 THECB Recommended Funding Rate
\$55.11655000 Base rate increased by actual SCH growth of: 3.70%

Teaching Experience Supplement
10.00% Tenure and Tenure Track
0.00% Non-Tenure – Special Qualifications

		Lower Division	Upper Division	Masters	Doctoral	Professional
1	Liberal Arts	1.00	1.86	4.07	10.89	
2	Science	1.66	3.00	7.63	19.72	
3	Fine Arts	1.63	2.74	5.91	12.31	
4	Teacher Ed	1.34	1.91	2.89	8.41	
5	Agriculture	2.06	2.62	7.14	13.43	
6	Engineering	2.43	3.28	7.21	18.35	
7	Home Economics	1.32	1.97	3.70	8.47	
8	Law					3.39
9	Social Services	2.01	2.30	4.59	12.10	
10	Library Science	1.28	1.33	3.59	8.85	
12	Vocational Training	2.14	2.52			
13	Physical Training	1.35	1.30			
14	Health Services	2.10	2.80	6.10	12.75	
15	Pharmacy	2.45	3.98	13.75	22.72	6.37
16	Business Admin	1.24	1.61	3.95	16.59	
17	Optometry			5.46	19.12	7.00
18	Teacher Ed Practice	1.75	2.19			
19	Technology	1.93	2.46	5.59		
20	Nursing	3.58	4.96	5.89	13.49	
21	Developmental Ed.	1.00				
	Veterinary Med. *					15.44

*Veterinary Medicine professional SCH are funded differently than regular academic SCH.

NOTE: This table represents the final cost study for 2006-07 but the weights have not been approved (as of May 24, 2005). The final approved rates may vary from those on this page.