



## **POLICY FOR ASSIGNING COURSE CREDIT HOURS**

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico (PCUPR) uses acceptable and consistent methods to assign credit hours to all its courses and programs of study, independently of the form or modality of teaching-learning. The number of hours per credit assigned to the courses complies with the federal regulation concerning assignment of hours per credit of the *U.S. Department of Education, Office of Post-Secondary Education*<sup>1</sup>.

The Institution defines credit hours as follows:

*Normally one credit is granted for every fifteen (15) hours of class, one credit for every three hours of laboratory, and one credit for three hours of practice or internship.*<sup>2</sup>

In courses with laboratories and in internship and professional practice courses, the assignment of contact hours for credit hours varies according to the nature of the course or is assigned according to the requirements of professional accreditation agencies in programs they accredit.

Thus, the Institution validates contact hours for workplace experience, professional improvement, and military service for credits to those undergraduate students wishing to register in one of the programs offered for this purpose. It also validates credits for high academic achievement in the results of Academic Achievement Tests and Advanced Level Tests of the College Board. PCUPR also validates professional work experience and professional improvement for credit to eligible doctoral students.

### **I. NORMS FOR VALIDATION OF WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE, PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT, OR MILITARY SERVICE AT THE UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL**

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico (PCUPR), in the interest of offering options to new students who have not completed their undergraduate university studies and who are working, recognizes and validates in certain programs the knowledge acquired through workplace experience, professional development, or military service.

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<sup>1</sup> Guidance to Institutions and Accrediting Agencies Regarding a Credit Hour as Defined in the Final Regulations Published on October 29, 2010. This policy also reflects regulations specified in 34CFR 600.2, 602.24 and 668.8.

<sup>2</sup> From page 68 of the Undergraduate Catalog 2011-2014 and page 44 of the Graduate Catalog 2011-2014

1. In the Bachelor's in Business Administration in Business Experience, PCUPR validates as elective courses for the major up to 12 credits for experience and 6 credits for professional improvement, for a total of 18 concentration credits, as long as the student is eligible and complies with the criteria established which are described in the *Handbook of Norms and Procedures of the Bachelor Degree in Business Administration in Business Experience*.
2. In the Bachelor Degree in Science in Liberal Studies, PCUPR validates a maximum of 30 credits for experience and professional development as long as the student is eligible and complies with the criteria established to validate experience as described in the *Norm and Procedure to Register Credits for the Acceptance of: Workplace Experience, Continuing Education, and Military Training*.
  - a. For workplace experience, military training, or work accepted as practicum, the student must have had a significant experience of at least three (3) months. Fifteen (15) hours of workplace experience will be validated for one credit (fractions of credits will not be awarded).
  - b. For Professional Development or Continuing Education, the student should have a minimum of 15 contact hours, which will be equivalent to one (1) credit.

## **II. NORMS FOR THE VALIDATION OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR GRADUATE LEVEL COURSES**

PCUPR provides eligible doctoral level students with the possibility of validating courses for professional experience in the subjects considered appropriate and feasible by the Graduate Schools as long as the student has active status, requests it, and complies with the established criteria. The University can validate up to a maximum of six (6) credits of those required for the degree, and each Program will determine the courses that may be validated. The student shall be responsible for the specific knowledge and skills that he or she must demonstrate on the comprehensive examinations of his or her Graduate Program.<sup>3</sup>

1. In the Doctoral Program in Business Administration (D.B.A.), up to 3 credits equivalent to the internship experience in the School and 3 credits for Professional Development may be validated as elective courses of the Program, as long as the student is eligible and complies with the established criteria for the validation of experience as described in the syllabi of the courses BUAD 813, Seminar on Professional Studies, and BUAD 815, Professional Internship at the School.
2. In the Doctoral Program of Psychology, up to a maximum of six (6) credits of those required for the degree may be validated as long as the student is eligible and complies with the criteria for convalidation of experience established by the Graduate School of Psychology.

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<sup>3</sup> Taken from the *Guidebook of Criteria, Norms, and Procedures for the Validation of Courses by Professional Experience* (VPAA-CV- January, 2004).

The procedure and criteria are described in the *Guidebook of Criteria, Norms, and Procedures for the Validation of Courses by Professional Experience*.

### **III. NORMS FOR VALIDATION OF CREDITS ON THE COLLEGE BOARD TESTS**

PCUPR, in the interest of offering options to potential students, recognizes and evaluates the results of the Academic Achievement Tests (PACH, for its initials in Spanish) in the subjects of Spanish, Mathematics, and English, the Advanced Level Tests (PNA, for its initials in Spanish) of the College Board or the equivalent<sup>4</sup>, and of the Advanced Placement Program of the SAT to validate credits. The location of the level of the courses approved by validation will depend on the student's Academic Program.

#### **1.0 Norm on the Validation of Academic Achievement Tests (PACH) and Advanced Level Tests (PNA) of the College Board**

The Institution will evaluate the results of the Academic Achievement Tests (PACH) in the subjects of Spanish, Mathematics, and English. Tests on which the student has obtained a score of 700 or more will be convalidated for six (6) credits. Likewise, if the same student takes the Advanced Level Tests in the subject's equivalent to those of the PACH and obtains a score of 3, 4, or 5, six (6) credits will be convalidated for each subject. In cases where the student takes both examinations in the same subject, the one leading to higher placement will be accepted<sup>5</sup>. A maximum of 24 credits will be convalidated for a student who passes in all three subjects.

The procedures are described in the following documents:

- a. *Procedure for Convalidation of Advanced Level Tests (PNA) of the College Board*
- b. *Procedure for Convalidation of Credits for Results of Academic Achievement Tests (PACH) with Scores of 700 or More on the College Board*

#### **2.0 Norm on Validation of Advanced Placement Program Examinations of the SAT**

The Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico will evaluate the results of the examinations of the Advanced Placement Program of the SAT of the College Board up to a maximum of two examinations with scores of 3, 4, or 5 to convalidate courses in different subjects. In cases where the student passes the Academic Achievement Tests (PACH), the Advanced Level Tests, and the Advanced Placement Program examinations, the Institution will validate the corresponding subject matters up to a maximum of 24 credits.

The procedure for convalidation is described in: *Procedure for Validation of Examinations of the Advanced Placement Program (AP) of the SAT*

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<sup>4</sup> The SAT Tests (Scholastic Aptitude Test)

<sup>5</sup> Order of convalidation of English courses approved and certified by the Academic Council on December 13, 2012, and the Order of convalidation of Mathematics courses approved by the Academic Council on October 22, 2013.

*Revised by the Academic Council on November 5, 2013*