



ANSWERS TO COMMON QUESTIONS The Advanced Technical Credit Program

PARTICIPATION

1. **Must all public schools and/or two-year colleges participate in the Advanced Technical Credit Program (statewide articulation)?**

No. Participation in the Advanced Technical Credit Program is voluntary.

2. **Must all colleges participating in the ATC Program award credit for any ATC statewide-articulated course a student takes?**

No. A participating college awards credit based on the following criteria:

- Student grade of 80 (3.0) or higher) on the high school course, courses in a required sequence, and any required prerequisites;
- Articulated course, or final course in a required sequence, taken with junior or senior standing;
- Enrollment within 15 months of high school graduation; and
- The course(s) may be applied to the college certificate or degree plan.

NOTE: Colleges may elect to waive one or more of these requirements. Colleges may require completion of six (6) additional non-developmental college credits (credit awarded by dual credit, or qualifying scores on College Board Advanced Placement or CLEP examinations count toward this requirement).

3. **Must a student participate in a coherent sequence of career and technology courses to be eligible for college credit for ATC statewide-articulated courses?**

No. Although students are encouraged to participate in a coherent sequence of courses comprised of two or more career and technology courses for three or more credits, a student may take an ATC articulated course as a single elective and/or to count as an advanced measure for the Distinguished Achievement graduation plan.

ARTICULATED COURSES

4. How are ATC statewide-articulated courses different from other career and technology courses with the same name?

ATC articulated courses are content-enhanced, providing instruction beyond, or in greater depth, than the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), and are equivalent to specific, college technical courses. This college-level content is outlined in course content profiles.

5. How are ATC statewide-articulated and locally articulated courses differentiated on the high school transcript?

Both statewide and locally articulated courses are noted on the high school transcript (Academic Achievement Record, AAR) with the “A” special explanation course code.

Locally articulated courses also include on the reverse side of the transcript (local use area) a notation of the participating college(s) and the equivalent college course(s).

6. Do ATC statewide-articulated courses apply only to two-year technical certificates and/or degrees?

The Advanced Technical Credit Program, or statewide articulation, is a form of advanced placement that prepares students for college and for technical careers. In most cases, technical credit is awarded for ATC statewide-articulated courses from the postsecondary Workforce Education Course Manual (WECM).

Under specific circumstances a college may, at its discretion, award academic credit from the postsecondary Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM). A student may be required to demonstrate course proficiency by taking an examination.

7. Will additional courses be approved for the ATC Program?

Yes. Additional courses will be added over the next few years. In the future the ATC Program will likely be organized around the 16 Career Clusters as developed by the National Association of State Directors of Career and Technical Education Consortium and the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education. Career clusters provide a way for schools to organize instruction and student experiences around sixteen broad categories that encompass virtually all occupations from entry through professional levels. PEIMS Code Table C022 and the ATC Articulated Course Crosswalk will be updated annually.

8. Who is responsible for verifying that a student has met requirements for award of college credit by ATC statewide articulation?

It is the responsibility of the school district to ensure that course content presented to students meets college-level requirements, and that teachers have the ATC-required credentials and have met TEA-required staff development requirements.

It is the responsibility of the college to verify that a student has met terms of the ATC Standard Articulation Agreement for award of college credit.

9. How does a college recognize ATC statewide-articulated courses?

Career and technology courses included in the Advanced Technical Credit Program have unique PEIMS course numbers that include the letter “T” and abbreviations that end in “TP.” All articulated courses (statewide and local) are noted on the high school transcript with the “A” special explanation course code.

10. Our local college does not participate in the ATC program and we have several local articulation agreements with them, but we want to offer ATC statewide-articulated courses to our students, as well. How can we do both?

In courses covered under a local articulation agreement where you have ATC qualified and trained teachers, simply use the ATC statewide articulated course numbers in the local articulation agreement.

For example, if you have a local articulation agreement with your college for Business Computer Programming I, and you have an ATC qualified and trained teacher, use the PEIMS course abbreviation BCP1-TP and course code 1203140T rather than the regular course abbreviation and number. Students in the course receive the ATC enhanced instruction.

This way, the local college can give credit under the terms of the local agreement and colleges participating in the ATC Program can give credit for Introduction to Computer Programming under the terms of the ATC Statewide Articulation Agreement.

11. Can a high school mix students enrolled in different high school course numbers in the same classroom?

Yes, but only under special circumstances.

- Dual Credit and ATC (statewide articulation) - A class may be composed of students enrolled in an ATC statewide-articulated course and students concurrently enrolled in college for purposes of earning dual credit because all students in the class are receiving college-level instruction.
- High School Credit and ATC (statewide articulation) - A class may be composed of students enrolled in an ATC statewide-articulated course (course

noted with “A” code and unique C/T course number and abbreviation) and students enrolled in the non-ATC articulated course with the same name (no “A” code, non-ATC articulated C/T course code). In this instance, the students enrolled in the ATC articulated course MUST receive more in-depth instruction and the teacher must have participated in TEA-required ATC staff development activities.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

12. What qualifications must high school teachers possess in order to teach ATC statewide-articulated courses?

Courses articulated in the Advanced Technical Credit Program are designed for award of technical credit for courses in the postsecondary Workforce Education Course Manual (WECM).

Consequently, a high school teacher must complete TEA-required staff development and must meet requirements outlined by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges, and by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in the Guidelines for Instructional Programs in Workforce Education (GIPWE).

Teachers must meet the one of the two following requirements to be approved to teach a course for Advanced Technical Credit:

Requirement 1: The teacher must have a baccalaureate degree or higher in the teaching discipline.

OR

Requirement 2: The teacher must have a minimum of an associate degree and 3 years verifiable non-teaching work experience directly related to the teaching discipline.

NOTE:

Teachers who are not fully certified in the teaching discipline by the State Board for Educator Certification (i.e. state teaching certification) will be asked to provide the ATC Office with proof that they meet the above requirements. For proof of their degree, they must have official transcripts sent directly to the ATC Office from the college or university. For proof of work experience, they will be asked to submit full work history information to the ATC Office. Teachers of courses eligible for inclusion in a postsecondary workforce education program that is subject to accreditation by external agencies and/or that prepare students for licensure or certification must meet the qualifications required by the external agency.

Non-degreed individuals will not be eligible for ATC approval.

13. What staff development is required by TEA before a teacher can teach ATC statewide-articulated courses?

A high school teacher that meets the faculty qualifications listed above must also complete a training program every three school years. The training program consists of:

- Part I – general information on articulation and Tech Prep programs; and
- Part II – specific instruction provided by college faculty on course content enhancement that is required to meet college-level competence.

14. If a teacher has completed Part I and Part II of state-approved ATC teacher training, what courses can he/she teach?

A teacher can teach only the courses listed on the official Certificate of Eligibility provided by the Advanced Technical Credit Program office. Lists of trained teachers and the courses they are approved to teach are provided to school districts each school year. A data base of all teachers is maintained by the ATC state office located in the College of Education at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches. For more information, contact atcstaff@sfasu.edu.

15. Is there a deadline for when a teacher must receive training before they can teach ATC statewide-articulated courses in a school year?

Yes: The rule is that a teacher must have completed training by August 31 of the school year they want to teach a statewide-articulated course. For example:

- If an eligible teacher completes training by August 31, 2005, they may teach the approved courses for the 2005-2006, 2006-2007, and 2007-2008 school years.
- If training is completed on or after September 1, 2005, they may teach the approved courses for the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 school years, but not for the 2005-2006 school year.

THE DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

16. Are all ATC statewide-articulated courses eligible for advanced measures for the Distinguished Achievement Program?

Yes. According to the Texas Administrative Code, all college academic courses and Tech Prep articulated courses count as long as the courses are completed in the junior or senior year with a grade of 3.0 or higher. The advanced measure is recognized as soon as the student successfully completes the course. Transcribing of college credit is not required.

17. What ATC courses count for advanced measures for the Distinguished Achievement Program?

Only courses taken in grades 11 or 12 are eligible for DAP advanced measures.

For example, if a student completes with a grade of 3.0 the ATC content-enhanced course, Business Computer Information Systems I (BCIS1-TP), in grade 9 or 10, and the ATC content-enhanced course, Business Computer Information Systems II (ABCIS-TP), in grade 11 or 12, will both courses count as an advanced measure for the Distinguished Achievement graduation plan (DAP)? **No**. Only Business Computer Information Systems II will count.

ATC AND TECH PREP

18. Is ATC the same as Tech Prep? Must a student be a Tech Prep program participant to participate in the Advanced Technical Credit Program (statewide articulation)?

No. The Advanced Technical Credit Program is only one of several methods students can use to earn college credit in high school.

A student can take ATC statewide-articulated courses to satisfy requirements in any high school graduation plan. These courses may apply to many technical college programs, including college Tech Prep programs, without the student first participating in Tech Prep in high school.

19. What is a “Tech Prep” class?

Sometimes an articulated class is called a “Tech Prep class” because it is frequently part of a Tech Prep program.

A Tech Prep program provides a way for students to start a college technical major in high school by beginning a course of study in high school that continues in a community or technical college. Tech Prep programs combine the academic courses needed for success in college and technical courses that begin to prepare students for a career. Some articulated technical courses may also apply toward a four-year degree.

20. Is articulation the only way a Tech Prep student can earn college credit while in high school?

No. By definition, a participant in a Tech Prep program may earn college credit by one or more of the following methods:

- Content-enhanced articulated courses (ATC statewide and local)
- Dual credit (by concurrent enrollment)
- College Board Advanced Placement (AP)

The definition of Tech Prep programs and program participants are outlined by the Texas Education Agency in PEIMS code table C142 (see Section IV, p. 17).