

**TITLE: NON-CREDIT PROGRAMMING****POLICY STATEMENT:**

Red Deer College (RDC) provides non-credit learning opportunities that are not funded by the Alberta government ministry responsible for advanced education. These learning opportunities, on or off-campus, are offered on a cost-recovery basis that fully recover direct instruction costs and variable indirect costs associated with their delivery. RDC provides the means to assure the quality of non-credit programs through its processes of planning, implementation, monitoring, and assessment.

**PURPOSE:**

This policy defines non-credit programming, the expected recovery of costs of those programs, and the processes used by the College that assure quality and fiscal responsibility. It provides the principles and guidelines within which such learning opportunities are administered.

**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all learning activities that are not funded by the base operations grant from the Alberta government ministry responsible for advanced education or additional funding from them that is provided specifically to subsidize the cost of delivery of learning activities.

**PRINCIPLES:**

1. RDC, as part of its mandate, develops appropriate credit and non-credit learning opportunities to respond to the identified needs of its service region.
2. Deans' Council is the governing body that assures the quality of the non-credit learning activities provided by RDC.
3. Enterprise and Community Relations holds the fiscal accountability for non-credit programming activities.
4. RDC operates its non-credit learning activities in a business-like manner which means that RDC provides processes to plan, implement, monitor, assess, and make changes in the delivery of non-credit programs.
5. RDC assesses any potential risks (financial and non-financial) associated with the delivery of non-credit programs—including international operations.
6. Non-credit programming allows RDC the opportunity to more effectively utilize its existing space.
7. When booking college facilities, every effort is made to maximize learning opportunities for all RDC credit and non-credit students.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Direct expenses:** the direct instructional resources required to deliver the learning program to students including:

- Personnel costs specifically related to the activity
- Supplies and materials
- Advertising and promotion
- Program development costs

- Special fees and licenses
- Facility and equipment rental
- Travel
- Accommodations

**Gross margin:** The amount of contribution to the College after paying for direct costs; the amount required to cover overhead (program and institutional). It can be expressed in absolute terms or percentages.

**Indirect expenses:** The fixed and variable resources required for academic support, student services, library services, computing and communication, institutional support and facilities operations and support to deliver the learning program to students. These include programming overhead and institutional overhead.

**Institutional overhead:** Ongoing expenses of other RDC departments that cannot be attributed to any specific program including:

- Facilities: space, security, housekeeping, maintenance and utilities
- Student Services: registration, student records, computer services.
- Personnel and payroll services.
- Accounting and budgeting services.
- Purchasing services
- Marketing and communications
- Technical support services

**Non-credit programs:** All on-campus and off-campus courses, programs, and learning activities such as corporate training and continuing education programs for which no base operations grant is provided.

#### 1. Career Development (CD) Programs:

Non-credit programs that include measurable outcomes and normally are recognized by the Alberta government ministry responsible for advanced education as a program for which students are eligible to receive Students Finance Board funding. Some Career Development programs involve certification of learning by a body external to the College. CD programs are not funded by the base operating grant of the College.

#### 2. Continuing Education Programs:

- **Business Development:** Programs and courses that support the growth of central Alberta businesses and individuals through education, training and innovation.
- **Community Programming:** Programs, courses and partnerships that support the cultural, wellness, and personal development needs of central Albertans. These activities enhance the image of RDC and encourage learners to choose RDC for their post-secondary education.

**Programming overhead:** Ongoing administrative expenses (for example, Continuing Education administration) that cannot be attributed to any specific program/activity.

## **GUIDELINES:**

1. The Continuing Education Department is responsible for all RDC non-credit programming offered to the public.
2. When reviewing program viability, consideration must be given to financial viability as well as community impact and development, recruitment, and enhancing the College's reputation.
3. Career Development programs are subject to the program review process as established by the Program Review Policy and the procedures established by the Program and Service Review Advisory Committee.
4. Continuing Education learning activities are evaluated by the Continuing Education Department through learner feedback and financial outcomes.
5. Enrolment and financial outcomes of non-credit learning activities are reported through the accountability framework report to the Board of Governors.
6. Revenues from non-credit programs cover at a minimum the full direct expenses and the programming overhead associated with the delivery of any on-campus non-credit programs.
7. Fixed indirect costs such as some facility costs may be partially covered through the government operations grant.
8. While overall it is expected that non-credit revenues exceed the associated direct and variable indirect costs, it is recognized that on an individual program basis some programs may be run at a loss and others generate a profit.
9. Program Coordinators routinely document their assessment of financial, legal, and other risks and the steps taken to mitigate those risks.
10. The efficacy of new programs or courses may be determined through the operation of a pilot program where clear expectations and timelines are specified regarding the decision to continue or discontinue the offering. This is especially important when it is not feasible to reasonably predict the achievement of the costing expectations within this policy.
11. For non-credit programs delivered off-campus, the full direct and indirect expenses should be recovered by the revenues.
12. Base funding grants from the Alberta government ministry responsible for advanced education are not used to offset international operations.
13. To aid staff in the decision-making process and pricing of their services, Financial Services report financial results to each cost centre.
14. Direct expenses are recorded in each cost centre on an ongoing basis. Financial Services calculates and allocates indirect (overhead) expenses annually.
15. Variance reports are provided by Program Coordinators and Managers with explanations of the sources of the variance annually.
16. Program Coordinators and Managers of non-credit programming document the model used to develop their fees and charges. The model is periodically reviewed by the Chief Financial Officer.
17. A business plan is developed for each non-credit program where expenses are not expected to be fully recovered within one fiscal year period. This plan is reviewed by the Chief Financial Officer and approved by the Vice President of Enterprise and Community Relations before it is implemented. The College contribution is documented in this plan.

18. While it is understood that non-credit courses and programs vary in the institutional overhead achieved, there is an expectation that the overall institutional overhead achieved by all non-credit programming will be targeted at 18% of revenue. While it is understood that non-credit courses and programs vary in the institutional overhead achieved, there is an expectation that the overall institutional overhead achieved by all non-credit programming will be not less than 18% of revenue.

## **PROCEDURE:**

### **1. Non-credit program approval**

- Continuing Education Programs are approved by the Dean of Continuing Education and a review of the learning outcomes and the business model for these activities. In making the decision to offer these courses and programs, the Dean ensures that the activities will provide quality learning experiences and meet the revenue guidelines outlined in this policy.
- Proposals for Career Development Programs are submitted to Deans' Council for recommendation to the Vice President Academic by the Dean of Continuing Education. In recommending such proposals for approval, Deans' Council considers that documentation and quality standards have been met for the proposed program.

### **2. Business procedures for non-credit learning activities**

- Every non-credit learning activity is planned according to the guidelines within this policy.
- A budget is proposed by the program planner in the Continuing Education Department to the Dean of Continuing Education.
- The Dean approves all activities that are not a part of a Career Development program.
- If there is an exception to the financial guidelines within this policy, the Dean is required to seek approval from the Vice President of Enterprise and Community Relations to proceed. Such decisions are documented including the factors that were considered in making the decision.

### **3. Recognition of non-credit programming**

- Non-credit programming at RDC consists of two streams of programming – Career Development and Continuing Education. Career Development programs are recognized with a Certificate and Continuing Education programs are recognized with a Certificate of Completion.
- Transcribing of non-credit programming is separate from credit transcribing.
- Career Development Programming
  - A Certificate is issued to students who complete Career Development programs.
  - The Certificate notation is “Successfully Completed xxxx Program”.
  - The grade notation on the transcript is either a grade percentage or “Successful/Unsuccessful”.
  - Students who have successfully completed a Career Development Program are recognized at the College’s Convocation.

#### 4. Grading

Grading is defined as an overall assessment – the synthesizing of the “marks” obtained on discrete criteria to arrive at an overall assessment of student performance.

The following grades will be used for Career Development programs:

- **“S” – Successful:** Used where course requirements have been met.
- **“U” - Unsuccessful:** Used where course requirements have not been met.
- **Grade percentage:** A grade percentage will be issued when required by an external body.
- **“WD” – Withdrawal:** Used at the Program Coordinator’s discretion where a student cannot continue due to unforeseen circumstance.
- **“IN” – Incomplete:** The grade of “IN” is assigned in lieu of a final grade for a course if:
  - the instructor wishes to make special provisions for
  - students to complete the course requirements after the
  - final date for submission of the final grades for that course.
  - A final completion date must be noted when assigning a grade of “IN”.
- **“AU” – Audit:** A student may attend and participate in class activities, but is not evaluated in any way. Regular tuition fees apply.
  - Instructors outline measurable outcomes for successful completion.
  - Criteria for successful completion may include participation and attendance.
  - Decisions related to successful/unsuccessful status are made by the course instructor and Continuing Education Program Coordinator.
  - Students must complete all courses within the program to receive a certificate.
  - Appeals of decisions made by a Continuing Education Program Coordinator are made by the student to the Dean of Continuing Education whose decision is final and non-appealable.

#### 5. Continuing Education Programming

- A Certificate of Completion may be issued to students who complete Continuing Education non-credit programs.
- The Certificate notation is “Successfully Completed xxxx Course/Program”.
- Enrolment in Continuing Education programming is tracked and may be transcribed.
- Attendance standards for Continuing Education programs and courses are established by the Continuing Education Program Coordinators. The attendance requirement for program completion is at least 75% unless otherwise documented.

The following grades are used for Continuing Education programs:

- ATT – Attended: Indicates that the student met the attendance requirements.
- NA- Not Attended: Indicates that the student did not meet the attendance requirements.
- Grade percentage: A grade percentage will be issued when required by an external body.

**OFFICER RESPONSIBLE:** Vice President College Services

**RECOMMENDING AUTHORITY:** Service Council following recommendation from Deans’ Council

**CONSULTATION FOR REVIEW:** Dean of Continuing Education, Deans' Council, Vice President Academic, Vice President of Enterprise and Community Relations, Program Coordinators, Registrar, Chief Financial Officer.

**POLICY REVIEW DATE:** July, 2017

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** January 1, 2013

**REVISION HISTORY:** January 1, 2002 (Recognition of Credit-Free Programming Standard Practice)  
January 1, 2013 (revised and renamed Non-Credit Programming Policy)

**RELATED POLICIES:**

- Facility Booking and Rental
- Graduation, Certification, and Completion
- Program Review

**CONNECTION TO BOARD POLICIES:**

All RDC policies support relevant Board of Governors operational policies.