



Innovative Course Application Tutorial

Overview:

- Review the rules that govern the innovative course application process
- Review the application, section-by-section
- Provide tips to ensure the innovative course application is complete



Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §74.27. Innovative Courses and Programs.

A school district may offer innovative courses to enable students to master knowledge, skills, and competencies not included in the essential knowledge and skills of the required curriculum.

(1) The State Board of Education (SBOE) may approve any course that does not fall within any of the subject areas listed in the foundation and enrichment curricula when the applying school district or organization demonstrates that the proposed course is academically rigorous and addresses documented student needs.

(2) The commissioner of education may approve a discipline-based course in the foundation or enrichment curriculum when the applying school district or organization demonstrates that the proposed course is academically challenging and addresses documented student needs.

(3) To request approval from the SBOE or the commissioner of education, the applying school district or organization must submit a request for approval at least six months before planned implementation that includes:

- (A) a description of the course and its essential knowledge and skills;
- (B) the rationale and justification for the request in terms of student need;
- (C) a description of activities, major resources, and materials to be used;
- (D) the methods of evaluating student outcomes;
- (E) the qualifications of the teacher; and
- (F) the amount of credit requested.

(4) With the approval of the local board of trustees, a school district may offer, without modifications, any state-approved innovative course.

Innovative Course Application Requirements



Innovative course applications must meet the following Texas Education Agency (TEA) requirements:

1. The essential knowledge and skills should be unique to the course and not duplicative of any other course from the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) or a previously approved innovative course.
2. The essential knowledge and skills should be academically rigorous.
3. The description of the course should justify a documented student need.

Innovation Course Application

LET'S GET STARTED!



General Information

SECTION 1 (PAGE 1)





2017–2018 Innovative Course Application

Application request

- Approval of a new innovative course Renewal of a previously approved innovative course

Title of innovative course(s):

Applicant Information

Name of applying school district, charter school, or organization: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Complete mailing address: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Contact person: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Contact person's title: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Contact person's email address: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Contact person's phone number, area code first: [Click here to enter text.](#)

County District Number (if applicant is a Texas public school): [Click here to enter text.](#)

Superintendent (if applicant is a Texas public school): [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date of local board of trustees' approval of this innovative course application (if applicant is a Texas public school): [Click here to enter text.](#)

Course Information

Subject area (choose only one): [Choose an item.](#)

Career cluster (CTE only): [Choose an item.](#)

Number of credits per course that may be earned: [Choose an item.](#)

Grade level(s) to be served (high school only): [Click here to enter text.](#)

General Information:

Application request

- Identify the application as a new innovative course or a renewal for a previously approved innovative course

Applicant information

- Provide basic demographic information for the course applicant

Course information

- Identify the subject area
- Recommend the number of credits for the course
- Identify the grade level(s)

General Innovation Course Application Information

REMINDERS:

- Identify the course as “new” or as a “renewal” as appropriate.
- Ensure the contact person listed is authorized to negotiate with TEA staff regarding edits or changes to the course.
- Ensure an actual or anticipated date of local approval is listed.
- Ensure all questions have been answered!

Course Description, Course Justification & Student Need

SECTION 2 (BEGINS PAGE 2)



Section 2-Course Description

(limited to 150 words or less)

The brief description should answer the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the course?
- What are the goals or student outcomes of the course?
- Who are the recommended course participants?
- What is the central focus of the course?

Course Description

Course Description, example:

§130.83. Animation I

Careers in animation span all aspects of motion graphics.

In addition to developing technical knowledge and skills needed for success in the Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communications Career Cluster, students will be expected to develop an understanding of the history and techniques of the animation industry.

Course Description

REMINDERS:

- Summarize the central focus of the course, including goals and student outcomes.
- The brief description should describe **what** should be taught.
- The brief description should not describe **how** the course should be taught.

Section 2- Course Justification

(limited to 150 words or less)

The course justification should address the following:

- What makes this course unique?
- What can students learn in this course that is not addressed in any other TEKS-based or innovative course?
- What are students prepared for upon completion of this course?

Course Justification

Course Justification, example:

General Employability Skills

It is crucial for students to acquire general employability skills as a foundation of their work experience so that they can be successful in career development and career and technical education (CTE) courses that have been designed to prepare high school students for the postsecondary world.

There are fundamental experiences and basic concepts that are incidentally learned by some students that must be systematically and sequentially taught to other students, including beginning job behaviors and social skills, job-seeking skills, and job maintenance skills. Other fundamentals of employability to be learned include punctuality, dependability, problem solving, and independent living skills such as grooming, dressing, and arranging for public transportation.

Course Justification

REMINDERS:

- The justification must clearly explain why the course is necessary and it should address a broad regional/statewide need.
- Avoid language that ties the course specifically to your district or organization.

Section 2- Student Need

(limit to 150 words or less)

The description of student need should address the following:

- How will Texas students benefit from this course?
- Does the course prepare students for a particular field or an industry-related certification or license?
- What unique or specialty skills do students have the opportunity to learn and demonstrate?

Student Need

Student Need, example:

College Transition

Students entering both high school and college need specific instruction in time management, organization, study skills, and motivation.

Students also need a structured introduction to the importance of a college education as well as the options available in high school and beyond.

It is essential that students have the format and guidance early in their high school careers that enable them to identify their own skill sets and interests to establish their individual goals.

Student Need

REMINDERS:

- Explain how students benefit from this course
- Address a broad regional/statewide need
- Avoid language specific to your district or organization

Essential Knowledge and Skills

SECTION 4 (PAGE 2)



Section 4-Essential Knowledge and Skills

The essential knowledge and skills (EKS) describe in detail what students should know and be able to do at the end of the course.

The EKS written for an innovative course should be formatted like the TEKS and should include these sections:

- General Requirements
- Introduction
- Knowledge and skills

A formatting template is provided in the application on page 2.

Essential Knowledge and Skills

General Requirements section should:

- List the award of credit
- List any required or recommended prerequisites

Use existing TEKS-based courses as a general guide.

Essential Knowledge and Skills

General Requirements, example:

§117.311. Music, Level II (One Credit), Adopted 2013.

(a) General requirements. Students may fulfill fine arts and elective requirements for graduation by successfully completing one or more of the following music courses: Band II, Choir II, Orchestra II, Jazz Ensemble II, Jazz Improvisation II, Instrumental Ensemble II, Vocal Ensemble II, World Music Ensemble II, Applied Music II, Mariachi II, Piano II, Guitar II, and Harp II (one credit per course). The prerequisite for each Music, Level II course is one credit of Music, Level I in the corresponding discipline.

Essential Knowledge and Skills

Introduction section should:

- Discuss how the proposed course aligns with or complements the required curriculum
- Include your course description in the introduction

Use existing TEKS-based courses as a general guide.

Essential Knowledge and Skills

Introduction, example:

§130.82. Principles of Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communications (One Credit), Adopted 2015.

(b) Introduction.

(1) Career and technical education instruction provides content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant technical knowledge and skills for students to further their education and succeed in current or emerging professions.

(2) The Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communications Career Cluster focuses on careers in designing, producing, exhibiting, performing, writing, and publishing multimedia content including visual and performing arts and design, journalism, and entertainment services.

(3) *[Your course description here]*

Essential Knowledge and Skills

Knowledge and skills statements are broad statements of what students must know and be able to do.

These statements must:

- be written in complete sentences
- address the individual (“the student” rather than “the students”)
- use present tense rather than future or conditional tense, and
- end with the phrase: “The student is expected to:”

Essential Knowledge and Skills

Knowledge and skills statements, example:

Languages Other than English, Level I:

(1) Interpersonal communication: speaking and writing. The student negotiates meaning through the spoken and written exchange of information in rehearsed and unrehearsed situations in a variety of contexts. The student uses a mixture of sentences and connected discourse with appropriate and applicable grammar structures and processes at the specified proficiency levels. The student is expected to:

Essential Knowledge and Skills

The student expectations (SEs) state specifically how a student should demonstrate knowledge.

The student expectations (SEs) must:

- begin with an active verb,
- be observed and measureable,
- relate directly to the Knowledge and Skills statement, and
- describe what skill or knowledge must be taught rather than how to teach it.

Essential Knowledge and Skills

Student expectations (SEs), example:

§112.35. Chemistry

(9) Science concepts. The student understands the principles of ideal gas behavior, kinetic molecular theory, and the conditions that influence the behavior of gases. The student is expected to:

- (A) describe and calculate the relations between volume, pressure, number of moles, and temperature for an ideal gas as described by Boyle's law, Charles' law, Avogadro's law, Dalton's law of partial pressure, and the ideal gas law;
- (B) perform stoichiometric calculations, including determination of mass and volume relationships between reactants and products for reactions involving gases; and
- (C) describe the postulates of kinetic molecular theory.

Essential Knowledge and Skills

REMINDERS:

- Ensure SEs are clearly connected to the knowledge statement
- Use Bloom's charts as a guide to increase the academic rigor
- Avoid vague verbs such as “explore” or “recognize”
- Avoid repeating skills without increasing rigor
- Avoid introducing too many skills within one SE

Recommended Resources

SECTION 5



Section 5- Recommended Resources

List five to ten possible resources for the course.

The recommended resources list should address:

- Resources that would be helpful to students in learning the course content
- Resources beyond textbooks, such as . . .
- Resources that integrate the use and/or application of technology

Recommended Resources

REMINDERS:

- TEA is prohibited from dictating instructional materials or advocating for specific products or curriculum
- Refer to products generally, avoid trademarks or brands
- Use the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), Sixth Edition to create your list of resources

Recommended Activities

SECTION 6



Section 6- Recommended Activities

Course activities should be authentic tasks related to the learning standards.

The course activities should address:

- What are some opportunities for students to demonstrate learning?
- How do the recommended activities relate to course content?

Recommended Assessment

SECTION 7



Section 7- Recommended Assessment

Assessments should be authentic measurements of student learning

The following should be addressed:

- What are some authentic ways to evaluate learning on a daily or weekly basis?
- What is a reliable summative demonstration of the standards?

Recommended Educator Certification

SECTION 8



Section 8-Educator Certification

At least one valid Texas educator certificate must be listed.

- Teacher assignment rules for high school are located in [TAC 231, Subchapter E.](#)
- TEA will make the final recommendation with regard to educator certifications.

Educator Certification

Educator certification, example:

Forensic Art

An assignment for Forensic Art requires a certification in

- Secondary Art (Grades 6-12);
- All-Level Art; or
- Art: Early Childhood-Grade 12

Educator Certification

REMINDERS:

- The requested certification should match the content area requested on page 1 of the application.
- Applicants may also recommend additional training or industry certifications above and beyond teacher certification.

Resources for Applicants



Helpful Links

Innovative Courses webpage

- <http://tea.texas.gov/index4.aspx?id=6079>

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

- <http://tea.texas.gov/curriculum/teks/>

American Psychology Association (APA) citation guide

- <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/949/01/>

TAC Chapter 231, [Teacher Assignment Rules](#)

Summary

TEA wishes for the success of all our applicants. Should you need further assistance with the application or process, please do not hesitate to contact us at:

Curriculum Standards and Student Support

512-463-9851

innovative.courses@tea.texas.gov

