

Continuing Learning Units

Identifying High Quality Professional Development

After the 2007-2008 school year, HOUSSE will no longer be available as a general option. Exceptions for the use of HOUSSE may be granted on a case-by-case basis, by the Louisiana Department of Education's Office of Educator Support if there are extenuating circumstances.

What is a CLU?

A Continuing Learning Unit (CLU) is a professional development activity that builds capacity for effective, research-based, content-focused teaching and learning that positively impacts student achievement. A CLU quantifies an educator's participation in high quality professional development aligned with an educator's individual professional growth plan. Educators may earn one CLU for each hour of active engagement in high quality professional development.

CLU requirements for becoming highly qualified under HOUSSE (High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation).

The federal NCLB act requires that all teachers meet the definition of highly qualified by the end of the 2007-2008 school year. One component of highly qualified is demonstration of content mastery, as evidenced by a content-specific test, coursework, or the HOUSSE option.

In Louisiana, a teacher choosing the HOUSSE option must complete a total of 90 CLUs that are specific to his/her teaching assignment(s) and area(s) of certification. The HOUSSE option also allows for a teacher's previous work experience as a fully certified teacher to be credited as CLUs at the rate of three (3) CLUs for each year of successful experience in the content area, with a maximum of 45 CLUs earned through work experience.

CLUs for HOUSSE are content-focused.

The NCLB Act requires that teachers demonstrate content knowledge and content mastery to be considered highly qualified. Therefore, teachers must focus on professional development that broadens the depth and scope of their content knowledge in their assigned content area(s).

CLUs for meeting the HOUSSE option:

- Must be of high quality as defined in the Louisiana Professional Development Guidance;
- Must focus on the subject/content area or areas in which the teacher is demonstrating mastery;
- Must be aligned with the educator's individual growth plan;
- May be of a "pure" content nature and/or content-focused instructional practices; and
- May be delivered face-to-face, online, or through videoconferencing.

Examples of the types of professional development experiences that could qualify for CLUs that meet the definition of highly qualified under HOUSSE include:

- Professional development related to state or diagnostic assessments in the content area or academic content standards
- University courses (subject-specific or content methodology-specific)
- Workshops, institutes, seminars, conferences in the targeted content areas
- Participation in the LINCS program in the targeted content area
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in the targeted content area
- Curriculum Mapping, Curriculum Alignment, and Curriculum Auditing

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Continuing Learning Units Meeting NCLB HOUSSE Definition Requirements

How does a teacher determine if he/she must earn CLUs to meet the highly qualified requirements of NCLB?

One component of the highly qualified definition requires that a teacher demonstrate content mastery. Demonstration of content mastery can be done in a number of ways (e.g., coursework equivalent to a major, National Board Certification in the content area, a Master's degree in the content area, or passing the PRAXIS content area exam). If a teacher is unable to demonstrate content mastery using one of the listed ways, then the teacher may use the Louisiana HOUSSE option, which requires the earning of 90 content-focused CLUs by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. A teacher should work with the Human Resources department of his/her school district to make such determinations.

If a teacher teaches more than one subject area, is the teacher required to earn 90 CLUs for each subject area? – UPDATED 10/8/2008

Under the HOUSSE option, teachers must earn a total of 90 CLUs by the end of SY 07-08. If the elementary or middle school teacher is assigned to teach more than one subject content area, then it is the shared responsibility of the educator and the district to ensure that the 90 CLUs will be divided appropriately and proportionately among the subject areas. Teachers at the high school level are required to earn 90 CLUs for each subject area taught. These CLUs should be in alignment with the educator's individual professional growth plan.

How does a teacher know which professional development experiences will count toward CLUs?

Teachers are to participate in high quality professional learning experiences that support and enhance their work and lead to increased student achievement. Teachers must work collaboratively with their districts to determine which professional development activities will apply to the required 90 CLUs. Under the HOUSSE option, the CLUs must be earned in content-specific and/or content methodology professional development. Approval of CLUs is a district level responsibility.

What information does a teacher have to keep to prove he/she has earned the CLUs?

Teachers are required to maintain documentation to verify their participation in a professional development activity. This documentation may vary according to the type of activity. Examples of documentation include agendas, handouts, work products, final grades, teaching meeting logs, action plans, and student work samples. Because approval of CLUs is a district responsibility, individual districts may develop additional criteria.

What is the starting date for earning CLUs for teachers under the HOUSSE option?

Teachers earning CLUs under the HOUSSE option may use approved professional development activities beginning on or after January 8, 2002.



“ Teaching is the highest
form of understanding. ”

-- Aristotle