

11.03.99.K0.01 Credit Hours and Shortened Courses



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Procedure Summary

The University can offer shortened courses, i.e., courses in sessions shorter than a traditional session, provided that established standards for course quality are maintained. In all instances of non-traditional delivery, the quality of the student learning experience must be equal to that of the traditional offering. This procedure outlines approval and implementation processes for distance education and other courses to be delivered in non-traditional time periods.

Procedure

1. CREDIT HOUR

- 1.1. The term credit hour is defined as an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that reasonably approximates less than one contact hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction, and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester hour of credit or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time. Unless approved as an exception, the minimum number of class contact hours for any course shall include 15 hours of instruction for each semester credit hour.
 - 1.1.1. A course contact hour is understood to mean 50 minutes.
 - 1.1.2. A one-semester-credit-hour course will meet at least 15 hours; a three-semester-credit-hour course will meet at least 45 hours, and so forth.
 - 1.1.3. A student should generally earn no more than 1 semester credit hour per week.
- 1.2. Credit hours awarded for courses using non-didactic instruction formats (such as recitations, student teaching, labs, studios, internships, etc.) will be offered as determined by college and university curriculum committees and will require at least 15 contact hours per semester credit hour.

2. SHORTENED COURSES

- 2.1. Any organized course that is shorter in duration than a traditional spring or fall semester shall be considered a shortened course. Similarly, any session other than spring or fall semesters shall be considered a shortened session.
- 2.2. Courses to be delivered during a shorter time period than one week per semester credit hour or courses providing less than 15 contact hours per semester credit hour will be offered only as approved through the processes described here:
 - 2.2.1. The faculty committee responsible for evaluating proposed shortened courses will be the standing curriculum committee of the academic college in which the course resides.
 - 2.2.2. Prior to offering the shortened course, the faculty committee will ensure that student learning outcomes will be equivalent to those of a traditionally delivered course.
 - 2.2.3. The faculty committee will convey its approval to offer the course, in writing, to the provost.
- 2.3. The total number of semester credit hours for which a student may register during a shortened session will not normally exceed the number of weeks over which the session extends without special permission from his/her college dean or advisor. The university may impose specific academic standards further limiting hours for which students may register in a shortened session.
- 2.4. All off-campus or distance education courses offered in a shortened session will follow the current rules and regulations set forth by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Texas A&M University System.
- 2.5. All students enrolling in shortened courses shall meet the admission requirements of the university.
- 2.6. The university will assure the quality of instruction for shortened courses.
 - 2.6.1. Faculty offering shortened courses must meet all normal teaching qualifications.
 - 2.6.2. Each shortened course shall require honest and significant effort on the part of the students.
 - 2.6.3. Each shortened course shall be monitored for quality of instruction the same as traditional fall and spring semester courses.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

[Texas Administrative Code Title 19, Part 1, Rule 4.6](#)

[System Policy 11.03, Shortened Courses](#)

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