

11.03.99.R0.01 Course Credit and Length Requirements



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Revised September 24, 1998
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Revised September 24, 2019
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Procedure Summary

This procedure provides Texas A&M University-Commerce with the necessary guidelines by which to measure the number of contact hours required for each semester-credit-hour offered for traditional and non-traditional courses.

The purpose of this procedure is to reemphasize the expectations of academic quality and rigor for courses offered by the University for all courses, including those offered in a shortened format. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has established set minimum requirements for consistency in generation of semester-credit-hours. The advent of internet-based distance education has created alternatives to previously required face-to-face contact hours.

Procedures and Responsibilities

- 1 The minimum number of class contact hours shall be fifteen hours for each semester hour of credit; thus, a one-semester hour course will meet at least fifteen hours; two-semester hour course--thirty hours; and a three-semester hour course--forty-five hours.
- 2 The minimum duration of a four semester credit hour course shall be fourteen class days spread over a minimum of three and a half weeks; the minimum duration of a three semester credit hour course shall be ten class days spread over a minimum of two and half weeks; the minimum duration of a two semester credit hour course shall be seven days spread over a minimum of one and a half weeks; and the minimum duration for a one semester credit hour course shall be four class days.
- 3 Any organized class that is less than the regular semester in length shall be considered a "shortened format course."
- 4 Assurance of quality in shortened courses, as in all courses, rests with the instructor, with proper monitoring by the department head and college dean. Such courses shall be offered only by qualified faculty and shall include sound evaluation mechanisms, which require honest and significant effort on the part of the student.
- 5 Courses offered in a shortened format should be limited to those whose content lends itself to acceleration. Such courses are generally ones in which the primary objectives are transfer of information, acquired skills or limited objectives.

- 6 Approval to offer such courses shall follow regular approval procedures, i.e., Department Head recommendation, with approval by the Academic Dean, and the Dean of the Graduate School (in the case of graduate courses). Exceptions to this policy must receive approval of the Dean of the Graduate School in the case of graduate courses and the Academic Dean in the case of undergraduate courses.
- 7 The total number of hours, for which a student is registered, including accelerated courses, may not exceed the normal load limitation for the registration period. Furthermore, a student taking a course of two and a half weeks or less will not be permitted to enroll in a second class of two and half weeks or less during the same period.
- 8 Students enrolling in shortened format courses shall meet the admission requirements of the University.
- 9 All off-campus courses will follow the current rules and regulations for the approval of distance learning instruction for public colleges and universities as set forth by the Coordinating Board.
- 10 Courses offered in an online delivery mode will demonstrate equivalency to traditionally delivered courses in terms of rigor and learning objectives. Course syllabi, course rigor, and course content will follow the same policies for approval as for face-to-face courses.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

Texas Administrative Code Rule § [4.6 Minimum Length of Courses and Limitation on the Amount of Credit that a Student May Earn in a Given Time Period](#)

System Policy [11.03 Shortened Courses](#)

Contact Office

Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
903.886.5410