

**PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE**



11.03.99.P0.01 Shortened Courses

Approved February 26, 2014

Revised March 15, 2019

Next Scheduled Review: March 2024

UAP Purpose

The purpose of this University Administrative Procedure (UAP) is to provide guidelines by which to measure the number of contact hours required for each semester-credit-hour offered by the university for traditional and non-traditional courses, and to outline the approval process for distance education and other courses to be delivered in non-traditional time periods. This UAP reemphasizes the expectations for ensuring the academic quality, integrity, and rigor for courses offered by the University in a shortened format.

Official Procedures and Responsibilities

1. GENERAL CRITERIA

- 1.1 The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) has established 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.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 System Policy [11.03 Shortened Courses](#) requires faculty review of courses that are offered in a format that results in non-standard contact hour arrangements. Standard contact hours are 45 to 48 contact hours for a three-semester credit hour (SCH) class. A course contact hour is understood to be 50 minutes; 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.
- 1.4 Examples of courses with non-traditional contact hour arrangements include: internet-based courses, blended courses with fewer than traditional contact hours, and study abroad courses offered in compressed formats. These courses fall under System Policy [11.03 Shortened Courses](#).

2. THE CREDIT HOUR

- 2.1 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:

- 2.1.1 Not less than one contact hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or,
- 2.1.2 At least an equivalent amount of work as required in Section 2.1.1 above for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.
- 2.2 University requirements for the work necessary to attain the expected learning outcomes for each credit hour are the same for all formats of a course, even if it is a fully online section, a hybrid of face-to-face and internet contact, or a traditional lecture.

3. APPROVAL OF COURSES WITH NON-TRADITIONAL CONTACT HOURS

- 3.1 Courses with non-traditional contact hours are approved by the university's normal curriculum review committees, including departmental and college committees and the graduate council or undergraduate council.
- 3.2 The Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs will make the final decision on all recommendations related to courses with non-traditional contact hours.

4. COURSE LOADS FOR STUDENTS TAKING COURSES IN A SHORTENED FORMAT

- 4.1 [Texas Administrative Code §4.6](#) and System Policy [11.03 Shortened Courses](#) specify that "students should not carry more courses at a time in a shortened format than will give them total credit of one semester credit hour per week of instruction."
- 4.2 Students may not carry a course load that will result in more than one semester credit hour per week of instruction, unless:
 - 4.2.1 The student is in good academic standing; and,
 - 4.2.2 All requests for loads above the semester credit hour limit must be approved by a dean or their designee; and,
 - 4.2.3 Any exceptions to Section 4.2.1 must be approved by the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs or their designee.

Related Statutes, Policies, Regulations and Rules

[19 Texas Administrative Code §4.6](#)

Contact Office

Office of Academic Affairs 936-261-2175
