

11.03 Shortened Courses

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Policy Statement

This policy provides the universities and the health science center (academic institutions) of The Texas A&M University System (system) with the necessary guidelines by which to measure the number of contact hours required for each semester credit hour offered by a system academic institution for a traditionally offered, face-to-face course. This policy also provides for exceptions to this policy by which non-traditional formatted courses can reduce the mandated contact hours based upon alternative media usage such as the internet.

Reason for Policy

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (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. System academic institutions shall be guided by the following coordinating board rule concerning the minimum length of courses:
 - 1.1 The minimum length for traditionally delivered three-semester-credit-hour courses shall be as follows:
 - 1.1.1 All shortened face-to-face courses shall consist of the same number of class contact hours as similar three hour courses offered in a regular session or summer session: that is, normally 45 to 48 contact hours. Courses shall also have the same objectives, requirements, and quality of instruction as regular length courses.
 - 1.1.2 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.

- 1.1.3 System academic institutions may offer courses in a non-traditional format, such as through the Internet or in a shortened intensive format, which do not meet contact hour requirements if the course has been reviewed by a faculty review committee and determined to have equivalent learning outcomes to a traditionally offered course.
 - 1.1.4 All requirements for three-semester-credit-hour courses shall apply proportionately to courses for one, two, four, or other semester-credit-hour values.
 - 1.2 The commissioner of higher education is authorized to permit exceptions to these rules for research purposes to determine the efficacy of teaching a specific course in a shortened format.
2. System academic institution presidents shall develop whatever rules are needed to implement and assure compliance with this policy. Any exceptions to Section 1.1.2 must be included in the rule.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Rules, 19 Tex. Admin. Code § 4.6

Minimum Length of Courses and Limitation on the Amount of Credit that a Student May Earn in a Given Time Period

http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/Rules/tac3.cfm?Chapter_ID=4&SubChapter=A#4.6

Definitions

Traditionally delivered course – a term to describe a face-to-face course in which students and instructor meet at a regular time over a fifteen-week semester for a total of between 45 and 48 contact hours.

Contact Office

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