

11.03 Shortened Courses

Approved February 27, 1995 (MO 44-95)
Revised March 24, 2006 (MO 92-2006)
Revised September 26, 2008 (MO 314-2008)
Revised July 22, 2011 (MO 160-2011)
Revised August 8, 2013 (MO 192-2013)
Next Scheduled Review: August 8, 2018



Policy Statement

This policy provides the universities (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 traditional and non-traditional courses.

Reason for Policy

The purpose of this policy is to reemphasize the expectations of academic quality and rigor for courses offered by the academic institutions in a shortened format. 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 does 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 delivered 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.

2. System academic institution presidents shall develop procedures necessary to implement and assure compliance with this policy. Any exceptions to Section 1.1.2 must be included in the procedure.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

[19 Texas Administrative Code § 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.

Member Rule Requirement

No rule is required to supplement this policy.

Contact Office

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