



Standard Administrative Procedure (SAP)

11.03.99.L0.01 Shortened Courses

First Approved: June 17, 2013
Revised: February 25, 2019
June 7, 2024
Next Scheduled Review: June 7, 2029

Procedure Statement and Reason for Procedure

The purpose of this SAP is to establish procedures for developing and offering shortened courses and corresponding academic credit that can be earned.

For purposes of this SAP, the definition of **shortened format** course and **credit hour** provided in [Texas A&M University System \(System\) Policy 11.03, Shortened Courses](#) will be referenced and used.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1. GENERAL CRITERIA

- 1.1 [System Policy 11.03, Shortened Courses](#) requires that a faculty committee review courses offered in a format that results in non-standard contact hour arrangements. Standard contact hours are 45 to 48 contact hours for a 3 semester credit hour (SCH) course.
- 1.2 Examples of courses with non-traditional contact hour arrangements include internet-based courses with fewer than traditional contact hours, blended courses with fewer traditional contact hours, study abroad courses offered in compressed formats, competency-based education, and weekend courses offered in compressed formats. These courses fall under [System Policy 11.03, Shortened Courses](#).

2. THE CREDIT HOUR

The term *credit hour* is defined by Federal regulations and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) as an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates:

- 2.1 No less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time, or
- 2.2 At least an equivalent of work as outlined in Section 2.1 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.

3. APPROVAL OF COURSES WITH NON-TRADITIONAL CONTACT HOURS

- 3.1 Courses with non-traditional contact hours are approved by TAMIU's normal curriculum review, including departmental and college committees, and the University Curriculum Committee. Final approval rests with the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- 3.2 To approve a course with non-traditional contact hours, curriculum committees must review and affirmatively determine that the course has equivalent learning outcomes to an equivalent traditionally delivered course.

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

- 4.1 [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Rule 4.6](#) and [System Policy 11.03, Shortened Courses](#) specify that students "not carry more courses at a time in a shortened format than will give them total credit of one SCH per week of instruction."
- 4.2 Advisors may not allow a student to carry a course load that will result in more than one SCH per week of instruction, unless:
 - a. The student is in good academic standing.
 - b. All requests for loads more than 3 SCH above the limit and any exceptions to Section 4.2.a above must be approved by a dean or designee.

Related Statutes, Policies, Regulations, or Rules

[Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Rule 4.6](#)
[System Policy 11.03, Shortened Courses](#)

Contact Office

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