SHORTENED COURSES AND CREDIT HOURS

University Rule 11.03.01.C1.01 - Revised September 24, 2012

1. GENERAL CRITERIA

1.1 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 3 semester credit hour (SCH) class.

1.2 Examples of courses with non-traditional contact hour arrangements include: internet-based courses, blended courses with fewer than traditional contact hours, study abroad courses offered in compressed formats, weekend courses offered in compressed formats. These courses fall under the System Rule on Shortened Courses.

2. THE CREDIT HOUR

2.1 Following the Federal Definition and accreditation requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, a credit hour is 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

2.2 Not 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

2.3 At least an equivalent amount of work as required outlined in item 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 the university’s normal curriculum review committees, including departmental and college committees and the graduate council or undergraduate council.

3.2 Review of those courses must include the following step: To approve a course with non-traditional contact hours, curriculum committees must affirmatively determine that the course has equivalent learning outcomes to an equivalent traditionally delivered course.
4. COURSE LOADS OF STUDENTS TAKING COURSES IN A SHORTENED FORMAT

4.1 Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Rule 4.6 and System Policy 11.03 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 Advisors may not allow a student to carry a course load that will result in more than one semester credit hour 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 (a) must be approved by a dean or designee.

Contact for Interpretation: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs