



POLICIES *and* PROCEDURES

Board of Trustees Policy Number:
ACAF 3.05

Date of Adoption/Revision:
April 20, 2016

SUBJECT	SEMESTER FORMAT AND DEFINITION OF CREDIT HOUR POLICIES
AUTHORITY	Provost/Registrar
APPLICABILITY	Semester term management
PURPOSE	<p>To provide options for course offering to increase student enrollment and to ensure compliance with SACS COC standards.</p> <p>Most U.S. higher education institutions operate on an academic year divided into two equal semesters of 15-17 weeks' duration, a winter session and summer sessions. Bennett College recognizes the academic year as divided into semesters of relatively equal periods (Fall and Spring) with each semester containing 16 weeks. The terms within each semester are a unique and innovative method of course offering lengths at Bennett College. Students who are working professionals often find it easier to balance their study time with other outside demands by enrolling in terms.</p>
POLICY	<p>Bennett College's academic year is divided into three semesters containing several terms of varying lengths to provide flexibility in the scheduling of courses.</p> <p>Federal Definition of the Credit Hour</p> <p>For purposes of the application of this policy and in accord with federal regulations, 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</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 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. 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. <p>(SACS Credit Hours Policy Statement, Edited, January 2012)</p>

	<p>Semester Credit Hour Definition</p> <p>One semester credit hour will be awarded for a minimum of 750 minutes of formalized instruction that typically requires students to work at out-of-class assignments an average of twice the amount of time as the amount of formalized instruction (1,500 minutes). It is acknowledged that formalized instruction may take place in a variety of modes.</p> <p>While awarding semester credit hours typically occurs for instruction delivered in accordance with an institution's standard semester calendar, it may also occur for instruction that may not follow the typical pattern of an institution's standard semester calendar as long as the criteria for awarding such credit is met.</p>
<p>PROCEDURES</p>	<p>These procedures are for all students who are registered within courses at Bennett College. Courses offered for credit by Bennett College may be taught in formats shorter than semester length, with proper safeguards of quality.</p> <p>To earn a comparable unit of credit, class meeting times are adjusted during the abbreviated terms. Semesters I (Fall) and II (Spring) are approximately thirty-two weeks in total length. Each semester is sixteen weeks in length. Also, within the same semester, it can include two terms, Terms 1 and 2 of approximately eight weeks in length. Semester III (Summer) is approximately ten weeks in length. Semester III includes Session 1, which is ten weeks in length, and Sessions 2 and 3 which are five weeks in length.</p> <p>If recommended by the departmental area to offer the course, and approved through the administrative channels, the shortened course procedure is as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The semester hour system is based upon one contact hour per week (50 minutes of instruction) or its equivalent for a semester of 16 instructional weeks. Instructional hours for the shortened format courses generally maintain this standard, and any deviation must be approved through regular channels. Thus, a three-credit-hour course must have 45 contact hours. b) Any regular credit course may be taught in the summer term, utilizing the extended class periods applicable to summer. c) Courses to be offered in shortened format must have prior approval at departmental or area and College levels. d) Department chairpersons and area coordinators must formally advise their respective deans of courses to be taught in shortened format each semester. e) It is recognized that not all courses are appropriate for shortened format. Before developing such shortened courses, the department or area proposing short courses should take into consideration such factors as amount of reading and analysis required, maturity of students, need for concentrated immersion in subject, and, in general, the nature of the learning required. f) Admission to short courses follows standards for all regular credit courses.

	<p>Administrative issues such as the use of different drop and withdrawal dates, refunds, and grading must be established prior to the beginning of any course.</p>
<p>Notes</p>	<p>The policy is in compliance with each of the SACS standards/requirement below.</p> <p>SACS Comprehensive Standard 3.4.6 The institution employs sound and acceptable practices for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for courses, regardless of format or mode of delivery. (Practices for awarding credit)</p> <p>SACS Federal Requirement 4.4 Program length is appropriate for each of the institution’s educational programs. (Program length)</p> <p>SACS Federal Requirement 4.9 The institution has policies and procedures for determining the credit hours awarded for courses and programs that conform to commonly accepted practices in higher education and to Commission policy. (See Commission policy “Credit Hours.”). (Definition of credit hours)</p>

<p>Replaces policy:</p> <p><i>Date</i></p>
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