

School of Public Health Curriculum Committee Standard Operating Procedure Review and approval of courses for nontraditional delivery

Definitions:

Traditionally delivered course: (UNIVERSITY RULE 11.03.99.M1 Definition of a Credit Hour)

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

For these purposes, also includes courses with more or fewer credit hours with the same contact hour ratio (i.e., one hour of classroom instruction each week for fifteen weeks for each credit hour, and at least two hours of out-of-class work per hour of instruction each week), and also includes face-to-face courses in regular summer sessions.

Nontraditional Course: A course that is delivered through

- a) distance education (for these purposes, internet or “WEB” classified) or
- b) shortened/part-of-term (with start and end dates that do not align with traditional fall, spring, or summer term dates)

Student Learning Outcomes: Learning outcomes in the School of Public Health’s courses are based on competencies defined by our accrediting body, the Council on Education in Public Health (CEPH), and adapted for each degree program concentration per CEPH requirements. The competencies are also the basis for demonstrating assessment of student outcomes in a course and a program. They provide a structural alignment for consistency and equivalency, regardless of the course’s format of delivery.

Semester Credit Hour: (UNIVERSITY RULE 11.03.99.M1 Definition of a Credit Hour)

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 not less than:

1.1.1 One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of 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

1.1.2 At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1.1.1) of this definition 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.

One hour is defined as a minimum of 50 minutes per week.

Formalized Instruction: (UNIVERSITY RULE 11.03.99.M1 Definition of a Credit Hour)

Formalized instruction includes any combination of the following:

- 1. Classroom instruction through lecture, discussion, or instructor-guided activity;*
- 2. Instructor-facilitated online learning.*

NOTE:

2.1.1 Logging onto online courses constitutes neither active faculty teaching nor active student learning. Faculty must demonstrate active faculty engagement in online teaching/instructing students.

Methods such as discussion boards, chats, etc. can serve as instructional time if faculty is engaged.

2.1.2 Other methods may include rounds and recitations, colloquia, instructional how-to videos, tutorials, small group activities, virtual labs, required participation in live or online discussion (e.g. review sessions, online chat, case discussions), or other instructor-driven self-guided activity delivered live or by electronic media.

Homework/Preparation: Out-of-class student work. This includes all the course’s required student activities that are not “formalized instruction / direct faculty instruction”.

OVERVIEW:

Review and approval of courses for nontraditional delivery by the SPH Curriculum Committee (SPH CC) consists of two determinations:

- **Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) are equivalent to those in a current traditionally-delivered version of the course.**
- **Formalized instruction and homework is sufficient for the Semester Credit Hours (SCH) assigned to the course, and does not exceed the SCH assigned to the course.**

The course must be approved for nontraditional delivery by the SPH CC and the A&M Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) or Graduate Council (GC) before it will be opened for student registration. Once a course has been approved for nontraditional delivery it continues to be approved.

- **The faculty member prepares documentation (with technical assistance from the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) or their SPH CC member)**
- **The department head reviews the documentation for completion and accuracy and, upon approval, the department submits the documentation via CARS**
- **OAA readies the submission for SPH CC decision; this can include consultation, clarification, or recommendations for changes.**
- **The SPH CC approves or rejects the submission. SPH CC forwards approved submissions to the A&M UCC or GC, and retains documentation. SPH CC returns rejected submissions to the originator.**

A. Procedures to determine equivalency of Student Learning Outcomes in the Department

1. The department head and faculty offering the course identify if there is a current traditionally-delivered version of the course.

2a) If there is no valid traditionally-delivered version of the course for comparison of SLOs, the faculty documents their determination of SLOs and provides their rationale on a form (Appendix A) adopted by the SPH CC.

2b). If there is a there is a valid traditionally-delivered comparison, the department determines match. SLOs of traditional and nontraditionally delivered courses are deemed equivalent for several possible reasons:

- **Syllabi of the non-traditional and traditionally delivered versions of the course have identical SLOs**
- **SLOs of the courses are alternative but comparable versions that achieve the same competencies**
- **SLOs are equivalent for other reasons, explained by the faculty**

SLOs are deemed non-equivalent if the nontraditionally-delivered version of the course has deviated from that course's established competencies, and/or has adopted different course objectives that could not be justified as achieving comparable learning outcomes.

3. The faculty documents their determination and provides their rationale on a form adopted by the SPH CC (Appendix A).

4. The department head reviews the faculty determination and, if accepted, signals their verification and approval with signature.

5. The faculty or department may request review and guidance from OAA on their documentation at any point prior to official submission.

B. Procedures to determine sufficiency of course work for the Semester Credit Hours in the Department

1. Faculty conducts an audit of their course's sessions, using examples of formalized instruction in Rule 11.03.99.M1 Section 2.1 and with technical assistance by OAA to make sure that course content met requirements for faculty-student engagement.

2. Using a form adopted by the SPH CC (Appendix A):

- For face-to-face activities and for on-line sessions that meet the definition of formalized instruction with active faculty engagement, faculty quantify actual time spent in instructor-facilitated learning per course session, and arrive at a total sum of time spent. (See Appendix B: Guide for Formalized Instruction)
- For homework workload, faculty tabulate out-of-class assignment time using standard workload estimators (such as Rice University's Course Workload Estimator <http://cte.rice.edu/workload/>, or the Accrediting Commission of the Distance Education and Training Council's H.13 Determining Credit Hours guidance) for a standardized measure of hours spent on homework, preparation, and other work that does not count as formalized instruction.

3. The department head reviews the faculty documentation and, if accepted, signals their verification and approval with signature.

4. The faculty or department may request review and guidance on their documentation OAA at any point prior to official submission.

C. Procedures for submission and approval of a course for nontraditional delivery

Considering that a submission must be approved by the A&M GC or UCC before the course will be opened for student registration:

1. The faculty or department generates a course proposal (a new course or an edit to an existing course) in CARS. The form with department head approval (Appendix A) is attached to the proposal as documentation for the SPH CC decision.

NOTE: If the faculty or department has not consulted with OAA in their preparation of their documentation, it is strongly advised that they consult prior to official submission in CARS.

2. The proposal follows the usual course approval workflow in CARS until it reaches OAA.
3. OAA readies the submission for SPH CC review and decision; this can include consultation, clarification, or recommendations for changes. If faculty or the department has not consulted OAA before submission, they risk delay of the approval process if inconsistencies or mistakes are identified by OAA.
4. OAA verifies and releases the proposal in CARS for consideration at the next SPH CC meeting.
5. The SPH CC reviews the proposal and votes to approve for nontraditional delivery per University Rule 11.03.99.M1, or to reject.
 - 5a. For approved proposals, the SPH CC removes the documentation attachment from CARS and stores it, then forwards the proposal via CARS to the GC or UCC for consideration at their next meeting. Once a course is approved, it does not need to go through the process again.
 - 5b. For rejected proposals, the SPH CC returns the proposal to the originator in CARS. Rejected proposals may be resubmitted via CARS once cited deficiencies and problems are addressed.

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APPENDIX A: NONTRADITIONAL COURSE CREDIT CALCULATOR WORKSHEET

Note: Use the full electronic spreadsheet form for formula-driven calculations for the whole semester.

<p>Please answer the following question:</p> <p>Are the SLOs of the nontraditional course equivalent to those of a current traditionally delivered version of the course? Highlight one: There is no current <i>traditionally delivered</i> version of the course for valid comparison. <i>Syllabi of the non-traditional and traditionally delivered versions of the course have identical SLOs</i> SLOs of the courses are <i>alternative but comparable versions</i> that achieve the same competencies SLOs are equivalent for other reasons, explained by the faculty: _____.</p>																																																	
<p>Faculty Worksheet for (course number and name)</p>																																																	
						Formalized Instruction							Homework																																				

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APPENDIX B: GUIDE FOR FORMALIZED INSTRUCTION

Please read carefully

Formalized instruction includes any combination of the following:

- (1) Classroom instruction through lecture, discussion, or instructor-guided activity
- (2) Instructor-facilitated online learning

1. Course developers are to ensure that the quantity of student learning required per credit is the equivalent of 15 to 16 hours of formalized instruction for the semester through activities that address and demonstrate student competency in the defined learning outcomes and draw upon recommended instructional practices identified below:
 1. 2.1.1 Logging onto online courses constitutes neither active faculty teaching nor active student learning. Faculty must demonstrate active faculty engagement in online teaching/instructing students. Methods such as discussion boards, chats, etc. can serve as instructional time if faculty is engaged.
 2. 2.1.2 Other methods may include rounds and recitations, colloquia instructional how-to videos, tutorials, small group activities, virtual labs, required participation in live or online discussion (e.g. review sessions, online chat, case discussions), or other instructor-driven self-guided activity delivered live or by electronic media.
 3. 2.1.3 Other academic activities may include, but are not limited to, laboratory work, research, internships, instructor-supervised independent study, practica, clinical work, studio work, and field work. Faculty may also consider cultural events, group projects, increased course content, research and information literacy, service learning and civic engagement, individual or group conferences, oral presentations, or other methodology.
 4. 2.1.4 Activities that are counted for credit must be REQUIRED and STRUCTURED. Examples of activities that **do not count** toward instructional time: *readings, homework and other intrinsic preparation or activities.*
 5. 2.1.5 The number of meeting hours for a clinic activity may vary from college to college depending upon the nature of the activity, extent of student engagement, and expected learning/training outcomes.

Semester credit hour is defined as not less than:

- (1) One hour of formalized instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
- (2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in item (1) of this definition for other academic activities leading to the award of semester credit hours.

One hour is defined as a minimum of 50 minutes per week.

(From UNIVERSITY RULE 11.03.99.M1 Definition of a Credit Hour)

October 13, 2017

Examples of Formalized Instruction and Suggested Time

Formalized Instruction	Meaning...	Time
Online Lecture	Recordings of: lectures, voice-over PPT, instructor talking over PPT, introduction video, etc. These items count as formalized instruction if interactive activities are embedded/included. The activities can be embedded/included at the beginning, during, and/or the end of the video.	The length of a recording/video. You can include the time students spend on activities embedded/included in a video.
Self-guided Electronic Presentation	Self-pace electronic presentation (PPT, Prezi, Google Slide, etc.) must provide learning objectives and/or learning guide.	For self-pace PPT, time it out as if you were giving the presentation.
How-to/Tutorial Video	Must be used in conjunction with or relate to an online lecture. Must be assessed in an appropriate time from the time students receive the instruction.	The length of the video, if there is an activity or an assessment students will be doing while watching the video, include the time students spend on the activity as well.
Online Discussion Board	Offline interaction. Posting and replying to discussion topics and threads over a time period (e.g. weekly)	Time students would spend on answering/reply to a topic or thread.
Live Q&A sessions/Office Hours	Online live interaction, two-way immediate communication	Time that is scheduled
Instructor's Note	Introduction memo, feedback on assignments, announcements, etc.	Time students would spend reading the note (i.e. half page = 10 mins)
Exam/Quizzes	Direct assessments	Time students would spend taking each individual exam/quiz
Lecture reflection	A written paper/memo reflecting on a lecture	Time students would spend on writing
Students' Presentation via Video-Conference	Live videoconference session for students to present their work. Instructor must be present.	Time that is scheduled
Feedback on assignments	Formats include written, voice-recording, video feedback on assignments.	Time students would spend reading/listening/watching the feedback

Please refer to: <http://cte.rice.edu/workload/> for workload calculation for homework, readings, and writing assignments.