

# Utah Tech University Policy

## 616: Academic Curriculum Requirements



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### I. Purpose

- 1.1 To stipulate that Utah Tech University (“the University”) curriculum requirements for courses and programs be aligned with the Utah Code Annotated §53B-16-102, appropriate Utah Board of Higher Education policies, the requirements of the Office of the Commissioner of the Utah Board of Higher Education, and accreditation guidelines.

### II. Scope

- 2.1 These policies apply to all University courses and programs.

### III. Definitions

- 3.1 **Curriculum:** Curriculum is a program of study leading to academic credit, degrees, minors, emphases, and certificates, and includes courses and all other requirements or credentials leading to a degree, minor, emphasis, or certificate.
- 3.2 **Academic Program:** An academic program is a coherent set of courses for academic credit and other requirements leading to the completion of a degree, minor, emphasis, certificate, or other credential.
- 3.3 **Course:** A course is a set of teaching activities and learning outcomes delivered and supervised by faculty and offered by academic units, either for academic credit or not for academic credit.
- 3.4 **Credit Hour:** A credit hour is an amount of student work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement. At the University, 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 is equivalent to one semester hour of credit. The equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time, or at least an equivalent amount of work for other academic activities, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work may also equate to one semester credit hour.

## IV. Policy

### 4.1 Academic Programs

4.1.1 Academic programs include, but are not limited to, the following:

4.1.1.1 Master of Arts or Master of Science degree (30-36 credits)

4.1.1.2 Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree with major (120-127 credits)

4.1.1.3 Emphasis in a bachelor's degree

4.1.1.4 Minor to be awarded with a bachelor's degree

4.1.1.5 Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree (60 – 63 credits)

4.1.1.6 Specialized associate's degree (68 - 85 credits)

4.1.1.7 Associate of Applied Science degree (63 - 69 credits)

4.1.1.8 Certificate of Completion (30 or more credits)

4.1.1.9 Certificate of Proficiency (16 - 29 credits)

4.1.1.9.1 University Certificates of Proficiency of less than 30 credits (including less than 16 credits) may be approved under the auspices of the University (R401.3.1.1).

4.1.1.10 General Education program

4.1.1.11 University requirements

### 4.2 Courses

4.2.1 Course prefixes and numbering will follow Utah Board of Higher Education Policy R470 whenever possible and shall conform to the Utah Board of Higher Education standardized prefixes and numbering guidelines.

- 4.2.2 All course descriptions must include a rotation schedule listing the minimum semester when the course will be scheduled. Changes to course rotations do not require approval beyond the department chair.
  - 4.2.2.1 Department chairs are responsible for submitting course changes according to a published annual schedule. Curriculum additions and revisions should receive the approval of the course-offering unit's faculty members before being submitted for further approval.
- 4.2.3 Articulation agreements with other institutions require the consent of the department offering the University courses to which external courses or clock hour programs are articulated and the appropriate dean before being submitted for approval by Academic Council.

#### 4.3 Credit Hour

- 4.3.1 The academic year is comprised of three terms: fall, spring, and summer semesters. Fall and spring semesters contain approximately 15 weeks of instruction. Summer semester and other terms are typically shorter, and all contact hours and registration/refund deadlines must be adjusted accordingly to maintain the same standards outlined herein.
- 4.3.2 The calendar for each academic year is approved by Academic Council.
- 4.3.3 The University complies with the U.S. Department of Education definition of a credit hour as an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement. One credit hour is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates at least one of the following:
  - 4.3.3.1 A credit hour approximates not less than one hour of direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately 15 weeks, or the equivalent amount of coursework via an alternative time frame or modality, to culminate in not less than 45 total hours of student contact and work.
  - 4.3.3.2 A credit hour approximates at least an equivalent amount of work as required for other academic activities as established by the University. A student is expected to be academically

engaged through activities including, but not limited to, classroom attendance, examinations, practica, laboratory work, internships, co-operative education, supervised studio work, textbook work, submitting an academic assignment, taking an exam, an interactive tutorial, computer-assisted instruction, online chats, video conferencing, attending an assigned study group; participation in teamwork, contributing to an academic online discussion; and initiating contact with a faculty member to ask questions about the academic subject being studied in the course.

4.3.4 In traditional courses in a 15-week semester, one 50-minute period of direct instruction per week throughout a 15-week semester equals 12.5 contact hours per credit. The same standard should be used in determining credits for courses which do not meet for 50-minute periods.

4.3.4.1 Minimum contact hour standards for a 15-week semester:

4.3.4.1.1 Lecture: 1 hour / week = 1 credit, with 2 hours out-of-class student work per credit required weekly.

4.3.4.1.2 Lab with Credit: Lower-division laboratory courses require minimum 2 hours / week = 1 credit; upper-division laboratory courses require minimum 3 hours / week = 1 credit.

4.3.4.1.3 Lab with No Credit: These courses usually substitute for in- or out-of-class activities associated with another course, so the hours vary.

4.3.4.1.4 Activity: 2 hours / week = 1 credit

4.3.4.1.5 Clinical: Minimum 3 hours / week = 1 credit, although some programs require more hours per credit.

4.3.4.1.6 Practicum: If offered for credit, similar to Lab with Credit, depending on the level of instructor supervision, specific activities required, and standard of evaluation. Practicum hours can also be similar to Lab with No Credit and substitute for in-class activities associated with another course.

4.3.4.1.7 Independent Study: Minimum 45 hours of student work = 1 credit.

4.3.4.1.8 Ensemble: 2 – 6 hours per week = 1 credit, depending on the amount and standard of performance, outside rehearsal, etc.

4.3.4.1.9 Internship / Cooperative Education: Hourly standards for work experience courses are much higher than other types of coursework, ranging from 45 to 200 total hours of work = 1 credit.

4.3.4.1.10 Studio: 2-hours per week in class per credit, with at least 1 hour per week out-of-class.

4.3.4.1.11 Other instruction types may be added but will follow the same minimum standards.

4.3.4.2 Except as allowed or required by U.S. Department of Education, State of Utah, Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, Utah Board of Higher Education, or other applicable professional accrediting agency, the credit hour equivalency will apply to all programs at all degree levels, regardless of delivery mode.

#### 4.3.5 Review and Evaluation of Credit Hour Integrity

4.3.5.1 The content of a course, the amount of work required of students, and contact hours should remain constant through all term and semester schedules and in any delivery modality.

4.3.5.2 Schedule adjustments made for terms shorter than 15 weeks must meet the total minimum hours of direct instruction and out-of-class student work. The minimum contact hour standards for a 15-week semester must be adjusted accordingly for shorter semesters and terms in order to ensure appropriate contact time.

4.3.5.3 Contact hour requirements remain consistent across all instruction modes and formats.

4.3.5.4 As part of the University's cyclical academic Program Review and assessment processes, each academic program will undertake a review of its programs and individual courses at every degree level and every delivery mode to:

4.3.5.4.1 Assure that credit hour assignments are accurate and reliable.

4.3.5.4.2 Assure that any variations in the assignment of credit hours conform to commonly accepted practices in higher education.

**V. References**

5.1 Utah Board of Higher Education Policies R401 and R470

**VI. Procedures**

N/A

**VII. Addenda**

N/A

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Policy Owner: Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost  
Policy Steward: Associate Provost for Academic and Budget Planning

History:

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