

DEFINITIONS

Course

A course is a unique combination of title, course number, credit hours, and other course attributes that may include terms offered, cross listed courses, contact hours, pre- or co-requisites, credit type, level.

Academic Program

An academic program is defined as any combination of courses and/or requirements leading to a degree or certificate.

Executive Programs

An executive program refers to academic programs at the graduate-level designed for executives, business leaders and functional managers. These programs are offered as online programs.

Accelerated Program

Designated programs arranged between undergraduate and graduate or professional schools and colleges. Students apply separately to and must be accepted by both programs. The curricula of dual degree programs are not integrated. Students complete all curricular requirements of each program. The programs may allow special coordination of scheduling or allocation of electives. Upon successful completion of each component of the dual program, the students will receive the degree specific to that component, (ex. B.S. / M.S. (4+1))

Degree

A title that the University confers on a student who has satisfactorily completed a required program of study.

- Degree requirements are established by the university, colleges, and departments, and are approved through the curriculum approval process.
- New degrees must be approved by the university administration, the TSU Board of Regents, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB).

Major

A major represents the primary field of study for a degree-seeking student. It is a structured plan of study that is part of a degree plan and must have a minimum of 30 semester credit hours.

- A completed major is shown on the diploma and the transcript.
- A new major must go through the curriculum approval process. In addition, new majors must be approved by the university administration, the TSU Board of Regents, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.
- Changes to an existing major must be accomplished in accordance with TSU's curriculum update process.
- Every major will have a Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code attached to it.
- Only formally approved majors will appear in the University Catalog.

Minor

A minor represents an optional, secondary field of study for a degree-seeking student. It is a structured plan of study requiring a minimum of 18 semester hours and no more than 21 semester hours.

- Every minor will have a Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code attached to it.
- New minors as well as changes to existing minors must go through the curriculum approval process.
- Minors will be printed on the student transcript.
- Only approved minors will appear in the University Catalog.

Concentration

A concentration is an approved set of courses within a major that defines a specialty area or specific field of study. Unless specified by the unit offering the major, a concentration is not required.

- The term concentration will be used to describe what used to be called degree track, emphasis, specialty/ specialized area, and option.
- Every concentration will have a Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code attached to it.
- Both new concentrations and changes to existing concentrations must go through the curriculum approval process.
- Only formally approved concentrations will appear in the University Catalog.
- Concentrations will be printed on the diploma and the transcript.

Differences Between a Concentration and a Minor

The ultimate difference between a concentration and a minor is that a concentration is very specific academic subfield within the major, but a minor is a separate field of study.

Academic Year

For the purpose of planning, the definition of an academic year, as provided by the U.S. Department of Education, has been used. This definition follows:

- An academic year is a period that begins on the first day of classes and ends on the last day of classes or examinations, and, that is a minimum of 30 weeks of instructional time.
- For purposes of the definition of an academic year, a week is a consecutive 7-day period.
- For an educational program using a semester, trimester, or quarter system or clock hours, the Secretary considers a week of instructional time to be any week in which at least one day of regularly scheduled instruction, examinations, or preparation for examination occurs.
- For an educational program using credit hours (but not using a semester, trimester, or quarter system), the Secretary considers a week of instruction to be 5 days.
- Instruction time does not include periods of orientation, counseling, vacation, or other activity not related to class preparation or examinations.

Academic Calendar

The academic calendar is available at tsu.edu/registrar/academic-calendar/index.html (<http://www.tsu.edu/registrar/academic-calendar/>). The university reserves the right to adjust specific dates on the academic calendar without prior notice.

Credit Hour (Semester Credit Hour)

A unit of measuring educational credit based on the number of classroom hours (or equivalent course work) per week throughout a 15-week period in a semester. It is applied towards the total number of hours needed for completing the requirements of a degree, diploma, certificate or other formal award.

Contact Hour

A unit of measure that represents an hour of scheduled instruction given to students of which 50 minutes must be of direct instruction.

Face-to-Face/On Campus Course Delivery

Traditional classroom environment where the instructor and the students are not separated by geographic space or time. A course in which a majority (more than 50 percent) of the planned instruction occurs when the students and instructor(s) are in the same place and are not separated by geographic space or time. For a three-credit class, this would be at least 23 hours of face-to-face instructions, with no more than 22 hours of online and/or hybrid course instruction.

Face-to-Face/On Campus Program

Traditional classroom environment where the instructor and the students are not separated by geographic space or time. Courses offer face-to-face/on campus course work, however can include online or web-enhanced course work (not more than 50 percent) that could be delivered in a distance education format if within the guidelines of face-to-face/on campus course delivery and outside the online/hybrid guidelines. Students in these programs would be required to live on or close to the campus.

Distance Education

Note: The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board defines distance education as:

"The formal educational process that occurs when students and instructors are not in the same physical setting for the majority (more than 50 percent) of instruction". Distance education can include courses and programs offered online, off-campus face-to-face, and electronic-to-groups. Coordinating Board rules recognize two categories of distance education courses: fully distance education courses and hybrid/blended courses. A fully distance education course is defined as "A course which may have mandatory face-to-face sessions totaling no more than 15 percent of the instructional time. Examples of face-to-face sessions include orientation, laboratory, exam review, or an in-person test." A hybrid/blended course is defined as "A course in which a majority (more than 50 percent but less than 85 percent), of the planned instruction occurs when the students and instructor(s) are not in the same place".

Fully Online Course Delivery

Courses conducted via web-based instruction and collaboration. Fully online course delivery may require minimal campus attendance, face-to-face orientation, or in-person/proctored examinations with approval of program proposal through the University Academic Council process. Credit bearing course that replaces more than 85 percent of face-to-face seat time with technology enhanced instruction. The more than 85 percent refers to required attendance/participation. For a three-credit class, this would mean no more than seven (7) required hours could be face-to-face, with the remainder online.

Hybrid Course Delivery

A course in which a majority (more than 50 percent but less than 85 percent), of the planned instruction occurs when the students and instructor(s) are not in the same place. For a three-credit class, this would mean between 23 hours and less than 38 hours of instruction between students and instructor(s) not in the same place.

Fully Online Program

Programs where at least 80 percent of all courses are delivered via web-based instruction, videoconferencing, or at an off campus location. For example, 80 percent of a 36-hour graduate program would mean that 28.8 credit hours are online.

Note: The Designation of 100% Online (Course/Program):

The designation of 100% Online (Course/Program), means the entire course and/or program is online. For programs that require a practicum/rotation, if students can complete these in their own community, the program is still considered online (e.g. If a program is approved for 100% Online delivery, then each of the courses within the program must also be offered as 100% Online delivery).

Hybrid/Blended Program

Programs where at least 50 percent but not more than 80 percent of all courses are delivered via web-based instruction, videoconferencing, or at an off-campus site. For example, 50 percent of a 36-hour graduate program would be that 18 credit hours are online.

In addition, online and/or hybrid programs are required to follow the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board rules governing the offering of distance, off-campus, and self-sustaining education. For students, online and/or hybrid programs may require minimal campus attendance, a face-to-face orientation or in-person/proctored examinations with approval of program proposals through the University Academic Council process.

Note: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board rules governing the offering of distance (i.e. Online and Hybrid Programs), off-campus, and self-sustaining education

- Chapter 4, Subchapter P (rules governing online, hybrid/blended, electronic-to-groups)
- Chapter 4, Subchapter Q (rules governing off-campus face-to-face, out-of-country, out-of-state)
- Chapter 7 (rules governing degree granting colleges and universities other than Texas public institutions)