



Nontraditional Programs

NASFAA -- 1998

Chicago, Illinois

Carney McCullough

Term or Nonterm

- Do classes start and stop on the same dates?**
- Is the coursework taken concurrently or sequentially?**
- Does the coursework overlap?**

Term or Nonterm

- Generally, if all of the coursework can be completed within a specific time frame, the program may be considered to be term-based.
- You may combine a series of mini-sessions into a term.
- You may incorporate mini-sessions into an existing term.

What Is a Standard Term?

Semester or Trimester

- Approximately 15 weeks long
- Full-time is at least 12 hours
- Academic calendar is 3 terms -- fall, spring and summer

Quarter

- Approximately 10-12 weeks long
- Full-time is at least 12 hours
- Academic calendar is 3 quarters in fall, winter and spring and often a summer quarter as well

Any other type of term is a nonstandard term.

Term or Nonterm?

Considerations

- It's OK to have a nonterm program.
- May have separate versions of the same program.

Weeks of Instructional Time

Week= 7 consecutive days

Week of instructional time

For semester, trimester, quarter and clock hour programs, any week with 1 day of instruction

For credit hour programs not using standard terms, any week with 12 hours of instruction

Program Eligibility

Instructional Time

- Degree programs. No minimum program length requirements
- 2 year transfer programs
- 1 year program
- At least 600 clock hours, 16 semester or trimester hours or 24 quarter hours during at least 15 weeks of instructional time
- At least 300 clock hours, 8 semester or trimester hours or 12 quarter hours during at least 10 weeks of instructional time

Applying the 12 Hour Rule to Program Eligibility

Example = Certificate program of 20 semester hours
Must have 15 weeks of instructional time
Minimum of 15 calendar weeks
Must have 180 hours of instruction
(12 hours x 15 weeks)

If only offer 6 hours of instruction per week, program would have to be 30 calendar weeks long in order to be eligible.

(180 hours of instruction \div 6 hours = 30 weeks)



Academic Year

Instructional Time

Every eligible program, including graduate programs, must have a defined academic year that contains a minimum of 30 weeks of instructional time.

Applying the 12 Hour Rule to the Academic Year Definition

- Must have 30 weeks of instructional time
- Minimum of 30 calendar weeks
- Must have 360 hours of instruction
(12 hours x 30 weeks)

If only offer 10 hours of instruction per week, the program would need to meet for 36 calendar weeks to have the equivalent instructional time for a full academic year
(360 hours of instruction \div 10 hours = 36 weeks)



Student Eligibility Issues

Regular student -- Enrolled for the purpose of obtaining a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential.



Student Eligibility Issues

- Preregistration
- Registration
- Enrollment contracts
- Other documentation

Student Eligibility Issues

If a school establishes separate versions of a program, but allows students to take courses in both versions, the school must determine which program the student is actually enrolled in.

Payment Period Definition

Term-based credit hour programs

Program offered in...

- semester
- trimester
- quarter
- other academic term

Payment Period is...

- semester
- trimester
- quarter
- other academic term

Payment Period Definition

Nonterm credit hour programs and all clock hour programs of one academic year or less

First payment period

- period of time in which student completes first half of the program

Second payment period

- period of time in which student completes remainder of the program

Enrollment Status

Standard Term, Credit-Hour Programs

To be Considered	A student must take at least
Full time	12 credit hours per term ¹
Three Quarter time	9 credit hours per term ¹
Half time	6 credit hours per term ¹
Less than half time	Less than half the workload of the minimum full-time requirement

¹ The school must use appropriate credit hours for the term, for example, semester hours for semesters, quarter hours for quarters.

Enrollment Status

Clock-Hour Programs or Nonterm Credit-Hour Programs

To be Considered	A student must take at least
Full time	24 semester hours, 24 trimester hours, or 36 quarter hours per academic year, or prorated equivalent for program of less than an academic year or 24 clock hours per week
Less than half time	Less than half the workload of the minimum full-time requirement

Enrollment Status

Nonstandard Terms

Full time* =

$$\text{Credit hours in the academic year} \times \frac{\text{Weeks of instructional time in the nonstandard term}}{\text{Weeks of instructional time in program's definition of academic year}}$$

* round up to the next whole number

Less than full time status

$$\frac{\text{Credit hours taken by student}}{\text{credit hours required for full-time status}}$$

Enrollment Status Issues

- Awards can be based on projected plans. May need to be recalculated when enrollment is finalized.
- Enrollment status must be established consistently for all students in the program and used for all Title IV programs.

Enrollment Status Changes

- For Federal Pell Grant awards, if a student does not begin attendance in all of his or her classes and this results in a change of enrollment status, the Federal Pell Grant award must be recalculated.
- For FFEL and Direct Loans, each time a disbursement is received, school must confirm that the student is eligible (including at least half-time enrollment).

Loan Proration

Loans must be prorated when a student is enrolled--

- In a program containing fewer weeks, clock hours, or credit hours than the statutory minimum academic year

or

- In a program that is longer than an academic year but the final period of study is shorter than an academic year

Loan Issues

Type of Academic Year

Scheduled Academic Year -- Term based credit hour programs
may use

Borrower-based Academic Year -- Clock hour and nonterm
credit hour programs
must use



Frequency of Annual Loan Limits

In general, once a student has reached the annual loan limit, he or she cannot receive another loan until he or she begins a new academic year.

Pell Grant Formulas

Formula

- 1 Standard term, credit hour, fall through spring terms contain at least 30 weeks of instructional time
- 2 Standard term, credit hour, fall through spring terms contain less than 30 weeks of instructional time
- 3 Term-based credit hour
- 4 Nonterm, credit hour and clock hour
- 5 Correspondence programs

Withdrawal Issues

- Refund of unearned tuition, fees, room and board and other charges is required if student withdraws, drops out, is expelled or otherwise fails to complete period of enrollment for which he or she was charged.
- If combined mini-sessions in a term, the refund formula must be applied when the student does not complete any classes.
- If mini-sessions are not combined into a term, the refund formula must be applied when the student withdraws from or drops out of all classes in the individual session.
- If a student is taking courses sequentially, completes a course and does not enroll in the subsequent course, he or she is considered to have withdrawn.