

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 6, 2018

TO: All University of Arizona Faculty

FROM: Neel Ghosh, Chair, Undergraduate Council
Celeste Pardee, Assistant Director for Academic Policies/Organizations

RE: **Definition of Course Types/Components**

In February 2018 the Course Component Definition Group, consisting of college/departments representatives, presented a proposal to the Undergraduate Council (UGC) to define common course types/components with respect to the typical format, structure, and activities, along with the ABOR-required contact and homework hours. The UGC approved the proposal (3/13/18), as did the Graduate Council (3/23/18) and Faculty Senate (9/10/18), to be **effective for all undergraduate and graduate courses in Fall 2019**.

Course Type and Component Definitions (<https://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/course-type-and-component-definitions>):

The following definitions apply to in-person, hybrid, and fully-online classes. The associated Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) policy is provided for further clarification of each definition. For suggestions on calculating contact hours for hybrid and fully-online classes, see [examples compiled by the Office of Digital Learning](#).

COURSE TYPE OR COMPONENT	DEFINITION	REQUIRED CONTACT AND HOMEWORK HOURS (per ABOR Policy 2-224)
<i>Lecture</i>	<i>Standard course type. Lecture courses are led by the instructor and may include a variety of pedagogy types.</i>	<i>At least 15 contact hours of recitation, lecture, discussion, testing or evaluation, seminar, or colloquium, as well as a minimum of 30 hours of student homework is required for each unit of credit.</i>
<i>Lab</i>	<i>A course set aside for supervised laboratory or field experimentation, observation, or practice in a field of study or a course incorporating practical experience.</i>	<i>Laboratory courses require a minimum of 45 contact hours per unit of credit. Field trips will be counted hour-for-hour as laboratory meetings.</i>
<i>Discussion</i>	<i>Interactional meeting typically serving as a secondary component that can include activities such as demonstrations, hands-on engagements, case studies, field experiences.</i>	<i>At least 15 contact hours of recitation, lecture, discussion, testing or evaluation, seminar, or colloquium, as well as a minimum of 30 hours of student homework is required for each unit of credit.</i>
<i>Studio</i>	<i>A course set aside for supervised creative and/or artistic endeavors incorporating practical experiences and possibly individualized instruction.</i>	<i>Studios must involve at least 30 contact hours and at least 15 hours of homework for each unit of credit.</i> <i>*Note: Music instruction and specialized types of music performance offerings</i>

		<i>must conform to the requirement for accreditation of the National Association of Schools of Music.</i>
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Rationale for Establishing Definitions:

- The UA defines [unit of credit](#) based on [ABOR's definition/policy](#) referring to minimum contact hours per course type. However, definitions of course types based on the typical format, course structure, and instructional activities were lacking.
- Departments and colleges have had differing interpretations of what constitutes a course type or component. Due to diverse interpretations, some courses have not met the minimum contact hours per unit of credit for that type of course.
- Research on ABOR and AAU peer institutions in December 2017 revealed a variety of definitions. Some institutions have vague definitions, while others have detailed descriptions of course components, such as class setting, instructor role, and classroom size.
- The Higher Learning Commission, the UA's accrediting body, expects the faculty to follow UA and ABOR policies on contact hours.

Management of the Definitions:

- Department curriculum committees should review all existing offerings in the Course Catalog to make sure they comply with the approved definitions and required contact and homework hours.
- Requests to modify the course type/component of existing courses or to inactivate one course and add another, should be submitted through UAccess Course Forms. Contact Room and Course Scheduling to discuss additional options for large-scale changes that may be required.
- Curricular Affairs staff will continue to check new course and modification proposals submitted in UAccess Course Forms for compliance with the stated course type and contact hours.

Questions about correcting the course type/component of existing courses may be addressed to Room and Course Scheduling at 621-3313 or rcshelp@email.arizona.edu.

Questions about these definitions may be addressed to Martin Marquez II, Assistant Director for Academic Programs, Academic Affairs, at 621-0378, or martinmarquez@email.arizona.edu.