

Modified class schedules

Rationale

It is recognized that flexibility of course offerings and modalities is desirable, especially as we respond to the shifting landscape and challenges facing higher education. Classes operating outside of the normal semesters (e.g. over winter or spring breaks) may provide avenues for students to get ahead or catch up; as may accelerated classes operating as overlay within a semester. Such offerings may play valuable roles in enhancing the student experience by providing additional paths to graduation, and may also enhance retention and student achievement. They may also provide additional revenue at a time when we are challenged financially, so long as a financial model for these classes demonstrates a positive impact.

On the other hand, this must be balanced against various challenges including:

- This may negatively impact student success if students are not able to complete courses at an accelerated pace, and/or withdraw or achieve lower grades than they might otherwise have achieved. For overlay classes, the enhanced workload may impact their grades and progression in other classes, including required classes that may impede their progress to graduation.
- This may negatively impact federal compliance with title IV and result in sanction or delays in federal student aid eligibility, negatively impacting both students, as well as IIT in general.
- This may negatively impact accreditation (which is especially challenging at a time when we are already on notice for accreditation).
- Additional staff effort required in various administrative offices, especially as staffing levels remain challenging.

As such, we strongly support creative and flexible course offerings, within a framework that complies with regulatory structures, and is designed with student success as a central guiding consideration.

Resolutions

1. Any changes to the traditional calendar (the traditional 15-week F and S semesters; and the 6-, 8- and 12-week summer semesters) for classes relevant to degree programs be brought to relevant faculty committees and administrative offices for review before implementation. This includes UGSC for undergrad programs, GSC for graduate programs, and then to UFC in all cases. This is not required for non-degree relevant classes, such as professional education, precollegiate courses, or short courses not applicable to IIT degrees.
2. For accelerated classes operating outside the standard calendar, a minimum standard of anticipated effort shall comply with relevant regulation and guidelines which require “reasonableness” of effort levels consistent with focus, concentration and learning. To determine reasonableness in the context of student learning, it is important that students have necessary time for reflective thought, to receive and implement feedback on their work, and to assimilate

course content in a way that allows for productive learning. To achieve these aims, this resolution supports a maximum intensity of student effort that shall not rise above 9 hours / calendar day averaged over any 7-day period, i.e. 63 hours in any week.

3. For accelerated classes operating within an established semester, the contribution to student load shall be computed by multiplying the acceleration factor, a.f. (i.e., for a 6-week overlay class, compared to the regular 15-week semester, $a.f. = 15/6 = 2.5$; and for 8-week overlay class, $a.f. = 15/8 = 1.88$) by the number of ch for the class. Student loads over 18 ch require overload permits by the usual and established process (i.e. currently, by recommendation of their advisor to the relevant dean, who issues such permits)

Example

- 10 ch regular classes + 3 ch 6w overlay = $10 + 7.5 = 17.5$ = no permit required
- 12 ch regular classes + 3 ch 6w overlay = $12 + 7.5 = 19.5$ = permit required
- 12 ch regular classes + 3 ch 8w overlay = $12 + 5.6 = 17.6$ = no permit required
- 15 ch regular classes + 3 ch 6w overlay = $15 + 7.5 = 22.5$ = permit required