

RE: Western Oklahoma State College Discontinues Quick-Credit Courses - The Ticker - The Chronicle of Higher Education

Monday, March 04, 2013

4:21 PM

| | |
|---------|--|
| Subject | RE: Western Oklahoma State College Discontinues Quick-Credit Courses - The Ticker - The Chronicle of Higher Education |
| From | David Barsky |
| To | Susan Thompson |
| Sent | Monday, February 25, 2013 9:47 PM |

Sue,

I worked on this for a bit when I came back from my run at the end of the day. If you'd like to post this to APC Community Course, I'm okay with that.

Most of what Jackie says is entirely reasonable, but there are two places where she and I disagree. I would argue that:

- Counting the entire weekend toward student out-of-class study time does not mean "that faculty and staff must be on call 7-days per week." The regular semester could be regarded as assuming that student work is spread out over every day of the week, and this does not require faculty to be on call throughout every weekend.
- We do not have to set aside an entire day for finals; especially since many classes do not have a final exam. When we schedule classes over summer, the algorithm for determining total class meeting time assumes that 120 minutes of the last class session is for a final exam – should the instructor want to give one. Since many of these classes meet for longer than 2 hours, to assume that the last class meeting is devoted entirely to a final exam would be saying that these classes have (in many cases) exams of 3+ hours.

APC should discuss this and decide which arguments they find to be more compelling.

Upon reconsideration, I do agree with Jackie that we owe it to instructors to set aside a day for them to get the grading done. As I think about this some more, I realize an important distinction between this intersession and the summer session. In the summer session, there is a full unscheduled week after the end of summer session where faculty are not yet on their academic year contracts. That is not the case in the winter; right now the day after class ends, they are already under contract for the Spring, so it makes sense to build in a day for them to get grades determined and the winter courses properly closed out.

So now, let's see what this means.

Suppose that we decide that we are requiring 45 academic hours (= 37.5 clock hours) of total time (i.e. in AND out of class) for each unit of credit, and we are going to set aside 2 clock hours for a final exam. That 37.5 hours is divided into 12.5 hours in class and 25 hours out of class.

Then we have the following needs for courses with different credit values:

One unit 12.5 of class-time + 2 hours for a final = 14.5 total hours of class
 + 25 hours of out-of-class time for a total of 39.5 hours of student effort.

Two units 25 of class-time + 2 hours for a final = 27 total hours of class

+ 50 hours of out-of-class time for a total of 77 hours of student effort.

Three units 37.5 of class-time + 2 hours for a final = 39.5 total hours of class
 + 75 hours of out-of-class time for a total of 114.5 hours of student effort.

I think that we will discover that things are workable (barely) for some of the short Januaries. In the examples worked out below, I do this without invoking a December start, in part because it's cleaner that way, and in part because I think that will have some years before too long where there is no viable chunk of December after grades are due.

Winter 2014 (AY 2013-14)

- 8 weekday class days available (Thursday, January 2 – Monday, January 13)
- 4 weekend days
- Grade reporting day is Tuesday, January 14
- Feasibility requirement for a 3-unit course:
 - We'd need to agree that it was acceptable for students to work 9 hours and 32.5 minutes of actual clock time each day for the 12 days (114.5 hours/12 calendar days)
 - Each of the 8 class sessions would have to include almost 5 hours (39.5 hours/8 class days) of actual work time. With breaks, you're probably looking at classes running for at least 5.5 hours each day.
 - I'm personally rather skeptical that this would work well, and if it doesn't work for face-to-face, I'm not certain that running the course as a hybrid or entirely on-line course magically makes everything okay.
- Feasibility requirement for a 2-unit course:
 - We'd need to agree that it was acceptable for students to work 6 hours and 25 minutes of actual clock time each day for the 12 days (77 hours/12 calendar days)
 - Each of the 8 class sessions would have to include almost 3.5 hours (27 hours/8 class days) of actual work time. With breaks, you're probably looking at classes running for about 4 hours each day.
 - This looks perfectly reasonable to me.
- Feasibility requirement for a 1-unit course:
 - Since we already know that 2-unit courses work, I didn't do all of the calculations for the 1-unit courses, but I'll observe that it might be possible to run these without having them meet on every single possible weekday.

Winter 2015 (AY 2014-15) – according to the calendar currently under consideration

- 8 weekday class days available (Friday, January 2 – Tuesday, January 13)
- 4 weekend days
- Grade reporting day is Wednesday, January 14
- Feasibility requirements for courses this year are exactly the same as for Winter 2014

Winter 2016 (AY 2015-16) – according to the calendar currently under consideration

- 10 weekday class days available (Monday, January 4 – Friday, January 15)
- 2 weekend days
- Grade reporting day is Tuesday, January 19 (the day after Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
- Feasibility requirement for a 3-unit course:
 - We'd still need to agree that it was acceptable for students to work 9 hours and 32.5 minutes of actual clock time each day for the 12 days (114.5 hours/12 calendar days)
 - Each of the 10 class sessions would have to include almost 4 hours (39.5 hours/10 class days) of actual work time. With breaks, you're probably looking at classes running for about 4.5 hours each day.
 - This is "on the bubble" for me, but probably a little "over the edge" (more because of the

9.5 hours per day than the 4.5 hour class sessions). I'd be interested in the discussion at APC as to whether this might be doable.

- Feasibility requirement for a 2-unit course:
 - We'd need to agreed that it was acceptable for students to work 6 hours and 25 minutes of actual clock time each day for the 12 days (77 hours/12 calendar days)
 - Each of the 10 class sessions would have to include 2 hours and 42 minutes (27 hours/10 class days) of actual work time. With breaks, you're probably looking at classes running for about 3 hours each day.
 - This looks perfectly reasonable to me.
- Feasibility requirement for a 1-unit course:
 - Since we already know that 2-unit courses work, I didn't do all of the calculations for the 1-unit courses, but I'll observe that it might be possible to run these without having them meet on every single possible weekday.

Winter 2017 (AY 2016-17) – according to the calendar currently under consideration

- 9 weekday class days available (Tuesday, January 3 – Friday, January 13)
- 2 weekend days
- Grade reporting day is Tuesday, January 17 (the day after Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
- Feasibility requirement for a 3-unit course:
 - We'd still need to agreed that it was acceptable for students to work 10 hours and 24.5 minutes of actual clock time each day for the 11 days (114.5 hours/11 calendar days)
 - Each of the 9 class sessions would have to include almost 4.5 hours (39.5 hours/9 class days) of actual work time. With breaks, you're probably looking at classes running for about 5 hours each day.
 - I have a problem with the necessary assumption that students have to spend over 10 hours a day for 11 days.
- Feasibility requirement for a 2-unit course:
 - We'd need to agreed that it was acceptable for students to work 7 hours of actual clock time each day for the 11 days (77 hours/11 calendar days)
 - Each of the 9 class sessions would have to include 3 hours (27 hours/9 class days) of actual work time. With breaks, you're probably looking at classes running for almost 3.5 hours each day.
 - This looks perfectly reasonable to me.
- Feasibility requirement for a 1-unit course:
 - Since we already know that 2-unit courses work, I didn't do all of the calculations for the 1-unit courses, but I'll observe that it might be possible to run these without having them meet on every single possible weekday.

Winter 2018 (AY 2017-18) – according to the calendar currently under consideration

- 9 weekday class days available (Tuesday, January 2 – Friday, January 12)
- 2 weekend days
- Grade reporting day is Tuesday, January 16 (the day after Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
- Feasibility requirements for courses this year are exactly the same as for Winter 2017

– David

From: Susan Thompson

Sent: Monday, February 25, 2013 5:59 PM

To: David Barsky

Subject: FW: Western Oklahoma State College Discontinues Quick-Credit Courses - The Ticker - The Chronicle of Higher Education

Hi David,

I just got this email from Jackie. I haven't evaluated yet as how it relates to our conversation today.

--Sue

Sue Thompson
Access Services Coordinator
California State University San Marcos
San Marcos, CA 92096
(760) 750-4373
sthompson@csusm.edu

From: Jacqueline Trischman
Sent: Monday, February 25, 2013 5:57 PM
To: Susan Thompson; Yvonne Meulemans
Cc: Vivienne Bennett; Janet McDaniel; Marcia Woolf; David Barsky
Subject: FW: Western Oklahoma State College Discontinues Quick-Credit Courses - The Ticker - The Chronicle of Higher Education

Sue and Yvonne,

We had referred issues surrounding this news report to both of your committees, so you may want to forward this on to them.

In particular, this comes at a time when we are wrestling with how to maintain the quality of our courses in the face of a shortening wintersession timeframe. After talking to several faculty who taught this year and last, it is clear to me that we cannot teach the typical 3-unit course in the wintersession time we had this year. But where is the line? I would urge APC to think about a reasonable amount of work time to expect from a student per day. As discussed in EC, the Barsky ratio really does not apply simply, because students have the flexibility of working on weekends during the semester, but do not have those same flex days during the wintersession. Thus, we should set a maximum we are willing to expect our students to work per day and go from there. We should be counting only 6 days per week as workdays, and not counting holidays. Otherwise, we are saying that faculty and staff must be on call 7-days per week and holidays. I do not want to be responsible for a system like this. I would be comfortable with any amount less than 10 hours per day (using the Carnegie unit of 15 hours of work in class and 30 hours outside of class for each unit), knowing that there might actually be some savings of work outside of class due to the intense nature of the course. However, I would urge you to consider an 8-hr day or a 12-hr day as well. In addition, there must be at least one final exam day. If we had 10-hour days as a max, the 135 hours of work over the semester could be delivered in 13.5 days plus one exam day and submitting grades the following day – for a total of 15 days needed between the first day of class and the day grades must be submitted (not including submission day).

I can understand why the calendar has such a short time between January 1 and the time we need to end Wintersession. Let me be straight-forward here. I DO NOT CARE about the calendar. We cannot offer substandard courses during wintersession! This is what has been done according to several faculty who have taught these courses, and it is just not good practice. We must enforce the rigor of these courses just as we do in the regular semester. If there is a way to make this work, I am supportive of it, but it cannot shortchange quality like we have been doing. We MUST EXAMINE AND PROBABLY CHANGE OUR CURRENT PRACTICE!

Jackie

From: Matthew J. Ceppi

Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2013 4:26 PM

To: Vivienne Bennett; Jacqueline Trischman

Cc: Graham Oberem

Subject: Western Oklahoma State College Discontinues Quick-Credit Courses - The Ticker - The Chronicle of Higher Education

Not sure if you'd ever taken action on this or referred it to committee, but it seems to have resolved itself and will likely be a lesson for others.

<http://chronicle.com/blogs/ticker/western-oklahoma-state-college-discontinues-quick-credit-courses/54879>

Matthew J. Ceppi

Associate Vice President for Institutional Planning & Analysis and
Chief of Staff, Office of President Karen S. Haynes

California State University San Marcos

(760) 750-4040

mceppi@csusm.edu

Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail