

ACADEMIC TERMINOLOGY

Course Definitions

- **Course Numbers:** Academic departments use specific abbreviations for each general subject area (for example, MATH for Mathematics). These three- or four- letter abbreviations (subject codes) are followed by a three-digit code, which signifies course level:

100-299	Lower-Level Undergraduate Courses
300-499	Upper-Level Undergraduate Courses
500-599	Graduate level courses that are available to post-baccalaureate students and provide broad-based disciplinary knowledge in preparation for more advanced graduate work. (500-599 courses sometimes are cross-listed with upper-level undergraduate courses)
600-699	Graduate level courses that are available to post baccalaureate students and provide in-depth exploration of specialized disciplinary knowledge. (600-699 level courses sometimes are cross-listed with 400 level undergraduate courses)
700-799	Graduate courses available only to fully admitted graduate students.
800-899	Graduate research and thesis courses
900-999	Doctoral research and dissertation courses

- **Hybrid Course:** instruction occurs both on-campus and online to the same group of learners. *At TU, 10-90% of the instruction in a hybrid course must occur online.*
- **On-campus (in-person) course:** classes consist of synchronous instruction occurring with the learner(s) and the instructor(s) in the same location at a university site. *At TU, up to 10% of the instruction in an on-campus (in-person) course may be conducted online.*
- **Online (distance education) course:** all instruction must occur synchronously or asynchronously online. *At TU, 100% of the instruction in an online course must occur online. However, on-campus meetings/activities are permitted for orientation, testing or academic support services.*
- **Unit:** The value given to one 50-minute class meeting weekly for a term. This means that a class meeting Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9-9:50 a.m. or Tuesday and Thursday from 8-9:15 a.m. will be a 3-unit course. Most classes fit this format. Classes that require laboratory or studio time in addition to lecture time will usually merit an extra unit, becoming 4-unit courses, just as those requiring less class time will merit fewer units. The course description section of the catalog lists the number of units each course carries. **Faculty expect students to spend at least two hours reading, writing, and doing research outside of class for each hour spent in class.**
- **Unit Load:** In a regular fall or spring term, students typically take 15 units (five 3-unit courses). In the *Minimester*, students may take a maximum of 4 units. In *summer*, students may take a maximum of

13 units. To be considered full-time, undergraduate students must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 units each term. All students in good academic standing may register for a maximum of 19 units in any fall or spring term. Students must ask permission from the Registrar's Office to take units beyond 19.

Program Definitions

- **Concentration (MHEC approved):** A concentration is a group of courses representing a specialized area of study within a major. Concentrations require a minimum of 24 units and should have enough unique units to distinguish it from another concentration or a track. A concentration will appear on the student's transcript.
- **Focus Area:** A focus area is a group of courses representing a specialized area of study within a major that does not meet the level of overall units for a track or does not have enough unique units to distinguish it from another concentration or track. A focus area does not appear on the student's transcript.
- **Major (MHEC approved):** A major consists of courses required for a particular discipline. A major must have at least 30 units and be comprised of both lower-level courses (100-200) and upper-level courses (300-400), with at least 50% of the units being upper-level. All students must complete a major in order to graduate. A grade equivalent of 2.00 or higher is required in all courses taken for the major. Majors are also called academic plans or programs.
- **Minor (TU approved):** A minor is a set of courses within a major area of study, or a separate, distinct thematic area of study. A minor must have at least 18 and no more than 30 units. At least 30% of the units in the minor must be upper-level (300-400) and no more than 12 units can be outside of the minor or thematic discipline. A grade equivalent of 2.00 or higher is required in all courses completed toward the minor. A minor cannot be earned independently of a bachelor's degree. A student cannot declare a major and minor in the same discipline.
- **Prerequisites/Corequisites:** Prerequisites are requirements imposed by an academic department for certain courses within its curriculum. Such requirements may include, but are not limited to: other courses, a specific test score, a specific major, or class standing, (e.g., junior, senior).
 - A student must have earned a C or higher in any course for it to be considered as a course prerequisite, including courses transferred from another institution.
 - Corequisites are courses that must be taken together, for example a lecture course that has a related lab course. Occasionally a requirement may be stated as either a corequisite or prerequisite and the student may decide whether to take the courses concurrently or complete the requirement prior to enrolling in the other course.
 - Most enrollment requirements (prerequisites and corequisites) are enforced automatically when the student registers; however, it is ultimately up to the academic department to enforce enrollment requirements. Some departments make the determination after registration and students not meeting the requirements will be notified to drop the class. Therefore, students should carefully read course descriptions before registering to make sure they have met any enrollment requirements. Failure to meet published requirements or to withdraw from the course by the published deadline is not a basis for petitioning the Academic Standards Committee for an exception to academic policy.
- **Program Modality (COMAR definitions):**

- **Distance education:** a program that is comprised of 100% online (distance education) courses. Requirements for in-person orientation, testing or academic support are permitted in distance education programs.
- **On-campus:** a program that is not a distance education program.
- **Both:** a program that is offered in both distance education modality and on-campus modality
- **Track (TU approved):** A track is a group of courses representing a specialized area of study within a major. A track requires between 18 and 23 units and should have enough unique units to distinguish it from another concentration or track. A track will appear on the student's transcript.
- **Upper Division Certificate:** An upper division certificate is an undergraduate certificate that requires successful completion of at least 12 units of upper-level courses (#300 – 499) in a defined area of study. Students must be in a degree program, or have completed one, to pursue an Upper Division Certificate. All courses must be taken at TU with a grade equivalent of 2.00 or higher.

Term Definitions

- **Minimester:** A condensed term in January that allows students to take courses that lend themselves to a highly focused format (15 hours of instruction each week) to discuss ideas that interest students or that may fill a gap in their requirements. Students may take a *maximum* of 4 units in this term.
- **Semester:** A term composed of 15 weeks of instruction, including final examinations during the spring and fall. Most courses in a semester run for 15 weeks, however, there are two 7 week sequential sessions within each semester for a smaller number of courses.
- **Summer:** A term composed of four sessions of varying lengths that allow students to complete regular course work in a shorter period of time and fulfill degree requirements sooner.