Progress Report from the Task Force on Academic Program Structure

August 24, 2012

To: Augsburg Faculty and Staff

New federal requirements regulating institutions that grant federal student aid make it mandatory for Augsburg to adopt several changes in the way courses are scheduled. These changes need to be implemented for the 2013-2014 academic year.

In considering how Augsburg should meet these new requirements while maintaining academic excellence, and with the least disruption to our established practices and rhythms of work, the Task Force on Academic Program Structure (TFAPS), a committee of faculty and administrators, worked over the last six months to draft a series of recommendations. These recommendations are outlined in pages 2-5 of this document. More extensive explanation of the recommendations, along with the rationales from which they spring, may be found at the Task Force on Academic Program Structure’s Moodle site.

Please review the attached document, and discuss the implications of the changes it recommends for the College with your department. The faculty will consider adopting these recommendations through the normal process of faculty governance at the beginning of the coming academic year.

Comments and questions may be sent via e-mail to task force chair Lori Peterson, petersol@augsburg.edu

Yours,

The Task Force on Academic Program Structure

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The Federal Credit Hour Definition:
A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally-established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than: (1) one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or (2) at least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other activities as established by an institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading toward to the award of credit hours.

The majority of Augsburg courses are currently designed to meet the equivalent of four credits per course (our 32 course credits required for graduation are the equivalent of 128 semester credit hours). We are presenting recommendations related to our need to evaluate and document our compliance with the minimum federal standard across all programs and schedules, as well as teaching and learning in out-of-class time including experiential learning in the form of practica, internships, and the like.

The Task Force’s Guiding Principles:
- To meet the Federal definition for all of our programs;
- To maintain academic excellence;
- To conform as much as possible to the prevailing rhythms and patterns of work and learning at the College;
- To choose the least radical and simplest change when several options availed themselves;
- To consider solutions proposed or in place by our sister colleges in the ACTC, the ELCA, and other institutions of higher learning, and where possible to move toward compatibility with their solutions;
- To aim toward a unified calendar across Day, Minneapolis Weekend and Evening College (WEC), Rochester and Graduate programs;
- To complete the preparatory work and implementation of changes as required by the timeline of our Higher Learning Commission accreditation process (documenting our approach to ensuring compliance in our portfolio submission due November 1, 2012 and put into practice prior to our site visit Spring, 2014).

TFAPS’ Recommendations Across all Programs:
- A fifteen-week semester (delivered in a sixteen week frame);
- A unified calendar for Weekend, Graduate, Rochester and Day school of two-semesters plus summer term/s (one full term and/or split terms);
- A “fifty-minute hour” (allowed in the Federal standard) -- meaning 200 minutes of in-class instruction on average each week;
- A four semester credit undergraduate course standard (as opposed to our current one credit=one course model), allowing for 3 or 2 semester credit courses for certain programs and departments;
- A three semester credit graduate course standard (as opposed to our current one credit=one course model), allowing for variable semester credit options for graduate programs, including four semester credits if/when warranted.
Program Specific Recommendations:

- Traditional Day schedule will reflect:
  - Addition of 20 minutes of class instructional time each week to our current schedules.
  - Changes to start times on Tuesday/Thursday classes to continue the mid-day chapel period and the ability to begin athletic practices/fine arts rehearsals at 3:30pm.
  - The possibility that, in some years, classes may begin prior to the Labor Day holiday.
- Adult undergrad (both Minneapolis and Rochester) and graduate classes will allow for:
  - Three-and-a-half hour weekly sessions throughout a semester.
  - A six-day a week schedule (no Sunday classes).
- Courses meeting in the evenings on Monday-Thursday will meet either:
  - One evening per week for the fifteen weeks of the semester for traditional, adult, or cross-listed courses.
  - 8 times per semester if hybrid instruction is used to meet the additional instructional requirements for adult learners.
- Courses for adult learners meeting on Friday nights or Saturdays would be expected to have 8 face-to-face sessions with additional hybrid work to meet the instructional minimum.
  - Non-face-to-face instruction and learning experiences that occur in the off-weeks will need to be documented.
  - Examples of non-face-to-face instruction and learning experiences will be provided.
  - The College will offer faculty development opportunities and resources to ensure faculty have the tools necessary to provide a successful learning experience for students while meeting the credit hour requirements.
- Decisions related to how majors are offered for adult undergraduates will be made by a consensus among student response, compelling market research, financial viability, and faculty recommendation.
- Each Graduate Program will consider whether to offer programs on weekday evenings or weekends, based upon student response and compelling market research.

Please find calendar and daily schedule recommendations on pages 4-5 of this document.

Additional Matters:
Sub-committees of the TFAPS have developed the following supporting recommendations and materials (available for viewing on the Task Force’s Moodle site):

- syllabus templates explaining out-of-class expectations for students for both regular and hybrid courses;
- explanations on how intensives, laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, academic work, and study abroad courses can fit the new requirements;
- rationale for the use of a hybrid model as an instructional methodology;
- summer session schedule options;
- Academic Affairs Committee (AAC)/Graduate Academic Affairs Committee (GAAC) evaluation process recommendation and rationale, including forms; and
- market research on adult undergraduate scheduling preferences.
Calendar and Daily Schedule Recommendations

1. The academic year will be split into **two 15-week semesters** (in a 16 week period) and **two 7-week summer sessions over a 15-week period**. For the 2013-2014 school year, we suggest these dates:
   - Fall: September 3 – December 15. (December 21 for 8-week half-term – see below)
   - Spring: January 13 – May 4. (15 weeks + spring break = 16 weeks)
   - Summer Session #1: May 12 – June 29
   - One week break: June 30 – July 6
   - Summer Session #2: July 7 – August 24

2. Within the 15-week semesters, programs will have **multiple scheduling options**. These options include:
   - One 15-week session.
   - Two 8-week half-term sessions (16 week total).
   - Three 5-week sessions that run one third of the term. (1, 2, or 3 credit courses only)
Most weekday courses would run within one 15-week session.

3. Minimal contact hours will be met either by **face-to-face or hybrid instruction**. Minimal contact time will be:
   - 4 credit course: 50 hours of instruction (100 hours out of class student effort)
   - 3 credit course: 37.5 hours of instruction (75 hours out of class student effort)
   - 2 credit course: 25 hours of instruction (50 hours out of class student effort)
   - 1 credit course: 12.5 hours of instruction (25 hours out of class student effort)

4. Some examples of contact time within the various scheduling options include:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Number of weeks/course</th>
<th>Frequency of sessions</th>
<th>Credit value</th>
<th>Hours per week faculty directed instruction: face-to-face or on-line or both</th>
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<td>15 weeks</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>4 sc</td>
<td>3 hours 30 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 weeks</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>3 sc</td>
<td>2 hours 30 min.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Number of weeks/course</th>
<th>Frequency of sessions</th>
<th>Credit value</th>
<th>Hours per week faculty directed instruction: face-to-face or on-line or both</th>
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<td>8 wks – ½ term;</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>6.25 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 wks – ½ term;</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>3 sc</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
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<td>8 wks - ⅓ term;</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>2 sc</td>
<td>3 hours 30 min.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Number of weeks/course</th>
<th>Frequency of sessions</th>
<th>Credit value</th>
<th>Hours per week faculty directed instruction: face-to-face or on-line or both</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>Weekly</td>
<td>2 sc</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 wks - ⅔ term</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>1 sc</td>
<td>2 hours 30 min.</td>
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5. The following daily schedule is recommended for Traditional Day, face-to-face courses.

**MWF 70 minute sessions (4 credit course standard/base)**

**TR 100 minute sessions (4 credit course standard/base)**

Evening courses to begin at 6pm; four credit courses meet 6-9:30pm

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Noon - 1:40</td>
<td>11:00-12:20</td>
<td>Noon - 1:40</td>
<td>Noon - 1:40</td>
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<td>1:50-3</td>
<td>1:50-3</td>
<td>1:50-3</td>
<td>1:50-3</td>
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