

Senate Council  
August 18, 2014

### Definitions of Academic Terms

**Background:** In 2008 the SC created a group called the Academic Approvals Workgroup and gave it a charge to describe the manner by which course and program proposals should be processed in a more efficient manner by the University Senate. One part of the group's report involved specific definitions for commonly-used academic terms. Below are the definitions as in the final report.

***Recommendation: that the SC send the academic definitions to the Senate's Admissions and Academic Standards Committee (SAASC) with a charge to review the definitions, edit them as appropriate (including deleting and adding terms), and present them to the Senate Council no later than December 1, 2014.***

- **Course:** A discrete subject studied during one semester or quarter.
- **Program:** Consists of a degree type plus major.
- **Degree:** An award conferred as official recognition for the successful completion of a program of studies.
- **Major:** A major is a primary area of study defined by a set of courses and/or credit-hour requirements within specified disciplines.
- **Minor:** An academic subject area in which an undergraduate student may take the second-greatest concentration of courses.
- **Option:** A particular area of emphasis within a degree program.
- **Specialty:** An area of focus within an option.
- **Sub-specialty:** An area of focus within a specialty.
- **Graduate Certificate:** A formal certification of the satisfactory completion of a series of thematically related graduate courses which require up to 15 graduate credits, usually taken over two years and are limited to a specific professional, research, or occupational focus.
- **Undergraduate Certificate:** A formal certification of the satisfactory completion of an undergraduate series of courses which usually requires up to two years of lower-level undergraduate course work and is vocationally and/or occupationally oriented.
- **Service-learning courses:** Pairs academic work with public service to enable students to understand their disciplines in a social context.

- Other Community-Based Learning Experience Courses: For-credit courses wherein a student applies theoretical knowledge gained in classes in a real-world setting, under the supervision of a faculty member. Examples include experiential education, internships, externships, co-ops, practica, clinicals, field experiences, and capstone courses.
- Extended-campus Course/Program: Academic courses/programs offered at off-campus sites either within or outside UK's area of geographic responsibility
- Off-campus Site: a location that is geographically apart, but not independent of the main campus.
- Distance Learning Course/Program: A formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous.
- Credit Hour: The equivalent of one hour (50 minutes) of instruction per week over an entire term. May also be measured as 800 minutes per credit per semester. Also, three credit hours are equivalent to meeting for 2.5 hours per week.
- Dual Degree Program: A single academic program that involves a student studying for two different degrees at the same time, either at UK or at UK and another institution (sometimes in different countries), completing them in less time than it would take to earn them separately. The two degrees could be in the same subject or in two different subjects.
- Suspended Program: An academic program that no longer accepts new students but allows students who entered the program before it was closed to complete the program. The program can be re-opened within five years without going through the CPE's new program approval process. After five years, if the program has not been re-opened, it is considered a closed program.
- Closed Program: An academic program that is no longer offered by an institution and has been removed from the institution's catalog. The institution has no intention of re-opening a closed program at a future date.
- Bachelor's Degree: An award that normally requires at least four but not more than five years of full-time equivalent college-level work. It requires at least 120 semester credit hours or the equivalent. This includes all bachelor's degrees conferred in a five-year cooperative (work-study) program and degrees in which the normal four years of work are completed in three years.
- Master's Degree: An award that requires the successful completion of an academic program of at least the full-time equivalent of one but not more than two academic years beyond the bachelor's degree. It requires at least 30 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the post-baccalaureate, graduate, or professional level.
- Doctoral Degree: The highest award a student can earn for graduate study.