Student Course Load Policies

Course Load

To complete program requirements in a timely manner, most students choose to attend classes full-time and enroll in 4 quarters per year. Course load designations for students are as follows:

Undergraduate
Half-time: 6-8 credit hours.
Three-quarter time: 9-11 credit hours.
Full-time: 12 or more credit hours.

Graduate
Half-time: 4 credit hours.
Three-quarter time: 6 credit hours.
Full-time: 8 or more credit hours.

Course Overloads

Students may wish to enroll in greater than the full-time number of courses in a particular quarter or academic year. Overloads will only be approved for students who exhibit outstanding academic performance. Please note, students financial aid packages are generally based on full time enrollment. Exceeding full time can impact your financial aid. Please work with your Academic Counselor and Financial Aid Advisor to understand any financial impact.

Campus-based students wishing to enroll in more than 16 credit hours (undergraduate) or more than 8 credit hours
(graduate) must have the permission of their Program Director or the Campus Director & Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations to receive a course overload.

Students in online programs may wish to enroll in more than 16 credit hours (undergraduate) or more than 8 credit hours (graduate) must have the permission of their Academic Counselor and Program Director to receive a course overload.

Individual programs may designate the specific courses to be taken each quarter or session (thus specifying the total number of hours to be taken) or the specific course sequence to be scheduled. In such cases a student need not obtain permission for his/her enrollment unless s/he wishes to enroll in more than the designated number of credit hours or enroll in a non-specified sequence of courses, or must deviate due to other circumstances.

Coursework Taken Outside a Student's Degree Program

Students enroll in a degree program and the courses taken must all apply to that program. The requirements for the program are defined in this Academic Catalog. A degree program may include elective courses which apply to that program. Any course that is defined as a possible elective is acceptable for student enrollment, as long as the elective requirement has not already been satisfied by another course.

If a student takes a course not required by his/her degree program, that course does not qualify for financial aid and does not qualify for computing the student's load for financial aid purposes. The student is responsible for payment of the course's tuition and any associated fees. The student must complete, sign, and submit the Coursework Intent Form (which must also be signed by the appropriate Financial Aid and Registrar staff members or their designees) to confirm the student's financial responsibility for course's tuition and any associated fees and that the tuition and associated fees will not be covered by financial aid.

A student who needs to complete one course to complete an associate's degree and then intends to proceed directly into a bachelor's degree program cannot take the bachelor's program courses during the final quarter of the associate's program and receive financial aid for those bachelor's program courses.

Students receiving VA benefits may take courses not required for their program of study to bring his/her course load up to a full-time in his/her last term only. This allows students to continue to receive benefits at the full-time rate in their last term of enrollment, even though fewer credits are required to complete the program. Students may only do this once in their program of study. Students should select courses in consultation with their Academic Advisor or Academic Counselor. Students must meet all pre-requisite requirements for the courses selected.

Auditing Courses

A student wishing to audit a course without receiving credit must obtain permission from the Campus Director & Dean of Academic Affairs and Operations and complete and sign a class audit form before registering for the course. A student may not change from audit to credit status or from credit to audit status after the registration process has been completed. A grade designation of AU (Audit) will be recorded on student transcripts for audited courses. The regular schedule of fees applies to auditors. Unauthorized auditing is prohibited. Online courses cannot be audited.

Transient Students

Students wishing to take classes at another institution while enrolled with South University should contact their Academic Counselor before enrolling in another institution. Students must be in good academic standing with South University. The Academic Counselor can provide guidance on what courses may transfer into South University from the other institution. Without prior approval no guarantees are made that courses taken at other universities will be accepted for credit at South University.

Retaking Coursework

Effective July 1, 2011, the Department of Education amended the full-time enrollment status definition for programs at term-based institutions. In a standard term-based program, students who retake previously completed coursework are considered eligible for additional Title IV assistance, even if the students will not receive credit for that coursework in addition to credits already received. To comply with this provision and to assist students with managing appropriate FSA loan balances, South University has implemented the following policy on retaking coursework for standard term programs.

Note: Requirements below refer to enrollment for Title IV eligibility purposes. NSLDS Enrollment Reporting/Clearinghouse enrollment status is based on all enrolled courses regardless if it is funded by Title IV aid and/or VA benefits. VA recipients will need to follow the VA requirements. VA will only cover repeated courses if the student failed or does not meet the minimum grade requirement as established by the institution. All students will be charged tuition for retaking any course.

Standard Term-based Programs

Students enrolled in standard term-based programs may retake failed or withdrawn courses and eligible students will receive Title IV funds for failed and withdrawn courses with no credits earned as long as the student is meeting the satisfactory academic progress (SAP) standards. Although there is no limit on how many times students can repeat failed or withdrawn courses for FSA purposes, South University has limitations on how many times students can retake failed courses before they are dismissed from the institution. In addition, retaking courses will impact a student's Satisfactory Academic Progress, including Maximum Time Frame. Please refer to the school's SAP Policy.

For standard term-based programs, South University's policy will allow financial aid to cover a single repetition of a previously successfully passed course, assuming the student has not earned all the credits within the current program and the course is required in the current program of study, subject to certain conditions. Students who earned credit(s) may receive Title IV funds for one retake of any previously passed course only if they meet one of the following conditions:

The student must have completed the course for it to be considered a repetition under this policy. Because only one repetition of a previously passed course may be included in the a student's enrollment status for purposes of Title IV aid, if the student failed the repeated course, the student is not eligible for an additional retake because the student is considered to have completed the course. A student enrolled in developmental courses (ENG0099 and MAT0099) must successfully complete the course after three attempts or the student will be academically dismissed from the University.