

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

PROPOSAL 4-00

POLICY ON HALF-SEMESTER COURSES

Half-semester length courses scheduled for either the first or the last seven weeks and two days of a semester may be approved for one of two purposes:

1. The course's primary role is to offer elective, specialized education to senior level students on subjects that would not reasonably require 45 class meetings when taught at the senior undergraduate level, or
2. The course's primary role is to provide students with a narrowly defined set of specific tool skills that will be used immediately thereafter in another course, typically another course taught in another department.

Because half-semester courses make inefficient use of classrooms and of scheduling opportunities for students, approval will be given to only those courses whose goals are (1) central to the curriculum and (2) can be met only through a half-semester schedule.

RULES

To assure that half-semester courses do not negatively impact students' progress toward their degrees by either limiting the number of credit hours they can earn during one semester or requiring them to take excessively heavy loads of credits for half-semester, the following rules will apply:

1. Courses should be offered in pairs of first and second half-semester that would logically be taken by a student and be scheduled for the same time slot. Pairs may be offered by different departments but should be addressed in a common proposal.
2. No curriculum may require a student to take more than one free standing (unpaired) half-semester course in four consecutive semesters.
3. Unpaired half-semester courses should normally be scheduled to meet either MWF or TR to facilitate students' scheduling of other courses. Free standing half-semester courses may be offered only in the first half of a semester.

REVIEW

Half-semester courses must be reauthorized on an annual basis. The procedure for reauthorization will be established by the Vice Provost for Instruction and will include a review that includes a demonstration that the reasons for which the half-semester course was originally requested are still valid, an update on coordination of linked half-semester courses, and an assessment of student satisfaction with the half-semester offerings. A course not specifically reauthorized may not be offered in the following year.

POLICY EXPIRATION

This policy will be in effect for three academic years following its acceptance by the Senate and the administration. The Curricular Policy Committee will review the success of half-semester courses at the end of the third year and will make a recommendation to the Senate concerning the continuation of half-semester courses. Unless specifically renewed by the Senate following this review, this policy will expire and all half-semester courses will be administratively dropped by the University.

PROCEDURE

A proposal addressing the above policies and rules, along with the normal course proposal information, should be prepared by the department, forwarded to the Dean for support, and then to the Vice Provost for Instruction for approval. Proposals not supported or approved may be appealed to the Senate Curricular Policy committee. All other University policies and procedures for adding courses remain in effect for half-semester courses.

Adopted by Senate: November 10, 1999

Approved by President: January 20, 2000

Amended in Proposal 10-03

Became Senate Policy 305.1