



Policy Number: II.01  
Policy Level: Operating Policy  
Originally Issued: December 12, 2012  
Revised: March 9, 2016  
Revised: May 7, 2019  
Revised: May 2, 2022  
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Policy Owner: Provost/ VP Academic Affairs and Student Services  
Policy Implementation: Provost/VP Academic Affairs and Student Services

## Academic Calendar and Class Scheduling

### I. Policy Statement and Purpose

In accordance with Athens State University's educational mission, this policy establishes minimum standards for academic calendars and class schedules created and implemented for any academic terms or years.

These standards are based on best practices in higher education and ensure consistency with recognized standards of instruction, including established lengths for academic terms and Carnegie unit/credit hour definitions. For related policy guidelines concerning the determination of credit hours for courses and programs, see the operating policies [Determination of Credit Hours](#) and [Distance Learning](#).

### II. Academic Year and Length of Academic Terms

Athens State University operates on the semester system, with two (2) semesters (fall and spring) comprising the regular academic year. Following the spring semester, the University also offers a summer term comprised of a variety of class sessions and formats.

The two semesters comprising the regular academic year (fall and spring) will each be not less than fifteen (15) calendar weeks in length, excluding pre-registration. The summer term will not be less than ten (10) weeks in length, excluding pre-registration.

### III. Class Formats and Scheduling within an Academic Semester or Term

Regardless of the academic semester or term, any class offered at the undergraduate or graduate level, in any format or delivery mode, during any academic semester or term must require a minimum of 750 minutes of instruction or the equivalent for each semester credit hour awarded per semester or term, according to recognized Carnegie unit/credit hour definitions.

Colleges may offer "condensed" courses that are shorter than the semester or term, subject to approval via the University's Curriculum Review process. Any such courses must maintain the minimum instructional time specified above. The length of any course shorter than the semester must consider and factor in appropriate time for reflection and out-of-class study by the students enrolled in the course.



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Regardless of the format or delivery mode of a class, the same intensity of required work, level of rigor, and learning outcomes must be maintained.

The instructional time may include required examination periods but may not include study days. In setting the academic calendar for each semester or term, the University will set holiday periods, any study days, and final examinations appropriate to accommodate the scheduled classes.

Standard meeting formats and meeting times for traditional classes have been established and are in accordance with the policy [Determination of Credit Hours](#).

These standard formats and times and the resulting academic scheduling process reflect the primary goals of maximizing the probability that all students receive their choice of courses required for graduation on a timely basis and providing a conflict-free resource environment (faculty, space, and courses) which minimizes personnel, operating, and capital costs.

Colleges and departments must build the class schedule using the university-approved standard start times. This includes traditional, traditional-hybrid, and blended classes. Meeting patterns that deviate from these standard start times should be avoided since deviations may cause student scheduling conflicts and/or room usage conflicts. Any exceptions to the standard times must be approved by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services.

The table below specifies the minimum duration for a class meeting as appropriate for the meeting format and the number of semester hour of credits awarded. Note that instructional categories other than “theory” (e.g., laboratory) may require longer durations, as specified in the policy [Determination of Credit Hours](#).

<b>Number of Semester Hour Credits</b>	<b>Meeting Format (Fall, Spring)</b>	<b>Minimum Duration of Class Meeting</b>
4	1 meeting per week	3 hours, 20 minutes
4	2 meetings per week	1 hour, 40 minutes
3	1 meeting per week	2 hours, 50 minutes
3	2 meetings per week	1 hour, 20 minutes



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Number of Semester Hour Credits	Meeting Format (Fall, Spring)	Minimum Duration of Class Meeting
2	1 meeting per week	1 hour, 40 minutes
2	2 meetings per week	50 minutes
1	1 meeting per week	50 minutes

The table below specifies the approved standard start times for classes as appropriate for the particular meeting format.

**MEETING FORMAT (Fall and Spring)**

2 Days per Week	1 Day per Week
8:00 a.m.	8:00 a.m.
9:30 a.m.	11:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m.	1:00 p.m.
1:00 p.m.	2:30 p.m.
2:30 p.m.	6:00 p.m.
4:00 p.m.	

**IV. Guidelines for the Academic Calendar**

Academic calendars should be established at least five years in advance to allow students to plan their schedules and University units to plan major events. Any major revisions to approved calendars should be made no less than six (6) months before the date the calendar goes into effect. By February 15<sup>th</sup> of each year, the 5<sup>th</sup>-year will be developed and added to the remaining calendars.

**A. Fall and Spring Semesters**

The fall semester will generally begin no sooner than the third week of August and will end no later than December 22.

The spring semester will generally begin no later than the second week of January and will generally end no later than the second week of May.



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Spring break will generally be held in conjunction with the spring break of the public schools in the surrounding counties unless this is not practicable for operational reasons.

## **B. Summer Term**

The summer term will generally begin no later than the last week of May and will generally end no later than the second week of August. Every effort will be made to have at least one week in between the end of the summer term and the start of the fall semester.

## **C. Final Exams**

All final exams (except weekend courses) will be assigned during exam week (the last week of the semester), including online and blended courses. Depending on the class meeting format, exams will generally be scheduled as specified below. Exceptions must be approved by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs.

**1 class meeting per week (day or evening)** – exam during the last class meeting

**2 class meetings per week (day)** – exams will alternate between the first class meeting of the last week and the second class meeting of the last week depending on the meeting time of the class:

- Classes meeting at 8:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and 2:30 p.m. will have the final exam during the first meeting time of the last week
- Classes meeting at 9:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m., and 4:00 p.m. will have the final exam at the second meeting time of the last week

**Weekend classes** – exam during the last Saturday meeting of the class

**Summer Term classes (any format)** – exam during the last class meeting



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#### **D. Grades Due and Commencement**

Regardless of the semester or term, final grades will generally be due within two working days of the day of the last scheduled final exam period. Commencement ceremonies for the semester or term will generally be on the Saturday following the grades due date.

### **V. Responsibility for this Operating Policy**

#### **A. Policy Owner**

As part of the initial approval of this policy by the President and subsequent to the original dissemination of the policy, the President has assigned the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services as the policy owner for the ongoing evaluation, review, and approval of this policy. Subsequent reviews and revisions to this policy must be in accordance with approved operating policy procedures and processes.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or more frequently as needed by the Policy Owner. Revisions will be reviewed/affirmed by the Faculty Senate and the Cabinet and approved by the University President. The policy will be updated/published in the University's Policy Library.

#### **B. Responsibility for Policy Implementation**

The President has assigned the responsibility of implementing this policy to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services.