

STATE BOARD FOR TECHNICAL AND COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION

STATEMENT OF POLICY

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POLICY TITLE: LENGTH OF ACADEMIC SEMESTERS

LEGAL AUTHORITY: Section 59-53-50 of the 1976 Code of Laws of South Carolina,
As Amended

**DIVISION OF
RESPONSIBILITY:** Academic Affairs

DATE APPROVED BY BOARD: February 16, 1983

DATE OF LAST REVISION: May 26, 2009

1. Definition of Semester Credit Hour:
 - a. The instructional hour will be identified as 50 minutes. One semester credit hour will be identified as 750 minutes of classroom instruction or equivalent laboratory time plus an exam period.
 - b. Colleges have the flexibility to use alternate schedules within a term as long as each semester credit granted allows for a minimum of 750 minutes of classroom instruction or an equivalent ratio of laboratory time, plus an exam period. Colleges must adhere to the requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) concerning non-traditional formats. The institution must demonstrate that students in such courses have acquired competencies and levels of knowledge comparable to those which would be required of students taking similar courses in more traditional formats.
2. The Annual Semester Calendar will typically consist of:
 - a. Two semester terms (fall, spring).

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- b. A summer session or sessions structured according to local preference.
- c. There will be no common system start and stop date for each term although the first semester must end before December 25.