

**Consideration by the University to Offer Seven-Week Courses
for Students that are Not Part of WP Online**

William Paterson University

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The University launched WP Online in April 2020 in 7-week terms, running concurrently throughout the year. The intent of this approach was that a student could concentrate on fewer courses during a given period without slowing their time to degree. These focused and shorter terms are especially advantageous to WP students since so many work while enrolled in college.

NSSE data show us that WP undergraduate students work a significantly higher number of average hours per week than those at peer institutions. Our students thus need to balance competing needs of work and school. Since full time status to receive full financial aid in a traditional semester requires enrollment in at least 12 credits (4 courses), students working more than 10 hours week are at potential academic risk. Full time for a 7-week course is 6 credits (2 courses).

The University is considering the introduction of 7-week courses that are not part of WP Online. A student would still be able to complete at least 30 credits/year and graduate in 4 years.¹ The University seeks recommendations on such an initiative, and the articulation of implications or considerations that are surfaced through faculty discussion. For example:

1. Should 7-week courses be limited to online asynchronous courses?
2. Should 7-week courses be integrated at the graduate level only, or both G and UG, or if at the UG level, only deployed for upper division courses? Phased in?
3. What are the implications of a student taking a mix of 7- and 15-week courses at the same time and should that be possible?
4. Are all programs or courses best fits for a 7-week model?

Recommendations to the Provost are requested by April 1. The Provost will make a recommendation to the President shortly thereafter. The initiative is envisioned to begin deploying for the Spring 2023 semester. It will also need to be in compliance with financial aid regulations.

¹ WP Online has 6 terms/year, so in theory a student could complete 36 credits in a year if they enrolled each term. Completing just 30 credits would enable sitting out a term, or reducing to just 1 course in a given term.