

Definitions of Course Types, Class Delivery Methods, and Relationship to Section Codes

Nov. 9, 2015 – with revisions following Curriculum Committee 10/8 and Academic Leadership Committee 10/14 and 10/28

This document discusses three interrelated topics:

1. Definitions of Course Types
2. Define Class Delivery Methods
3. Describe Relationships Between Course Types, Class Delivery Methods, and Section Codes

In this document, a “course” has a subject code and course number, for example ENGL 101, and is independent of its delivery method in any given quarter. “Class” refers to the specific implementation of a course with a section code, for example ENGL 101 section NP, in a particular quarter where the section code identifies its delivery method and location.

Definition of Course Types – note that these are elaborations of the definitions listed in the NWIC Credit Hour Policy

Course Type: A course’s type describes the primary type of instruction used to deliver the content of a course. Examples include lecture, laboratory, physical education, and internship. Course type is not determined by the delivery method or location where the course is taught and applies to all instances in which the course is taught. Each course type has a predetermined allocation of time in the following three components¹:

- a. Structured synchronous contact time which includes, but is not limited to, lecture, seminar, or discussion;
- b. Structured synchronous contact time which includes, but is not limited to, laboratory or studio;
- c. Unscheduled time student spend addressing course requirements. The time may include, but is not limited to, online activities, independent or group activities, reading, studying, problem solving, writing, and other forms of preparation.

As per the approved NWIC Credit Hour Policy, the amount of time devoted to these three components must total at least 30 hour per quarter for each credit or an average of 3 hours per week for each credit during a standard 10-11 week quarter.

NWIC has identified the following five course types which defines the contact time to credit ratio:

1. **Lecture only** – The course consists primarily of scheduled synchronous lecture or seminar activities. For each credit earned, students are expected to spend an average of 1 hour per week in scheduled structured lecture, whether in-person or at a distance using videoconferencing, such as ITV, and 2 hours per week in unstructured activities. Lecture is the default course type unless the course satisfies one of the other course type definitions. Lecture can include seminar, discussions, and other learning activities.
2. **Laboratory only** – The course consists primarily of scheduled synchronous laboratory or studio activities. For each credit earned, students are expected to spend an average of 2 hours per week in scheduled structured laboratory, whether in-person or at a distance using videoconferencing, and 1 hour per week in unstructured activities.
3. **Lecture and laboratory** – The course consists of a mixture of lecture and laboratory course types. The lecture portion of the course follows the lecture only definition and the laboratory portion of the course follows the laboratory only definition. The relative allocation of lecture and laboratory portions can be determines each time the course is implemented. For example, a 5 credit lecture and laboratory course expects that students devote an average of 15 hours to the class per week (5 credits x a total of 3 hours per credit). Four of the 5 credits may be allocated to lecture (4 hours/week) and the remaining one credit allocated to laboratory (2 hours/week). The remaining 9 hours/week of student time is allocated to unstructured unstructured activities. Alternately, 3 credits may be allocated to lecture (3 hours/week) and 2 credits may be allocated to laboratory (4 hours/week), if a greater lab component is necessary, as is typical of higher-level courses. The remaining 8 hours/week of student time is allocated to unstructured unstructured activities.
4. **Physical Education** – The course consists entirely of scheduled synchronous physical education activities. For each credit earned, students are expected to spend an average of 3 hours per week in scheduled structured physical education activities with no additional time required for unstructured activities. This course type is only used for courses with the PHED subject code, although a course with a PHED subject code may have another course type, if appropriate.

¹ Course type definitions are based upon a synchronous delivery method. Course types can be adapted to asynchronous and hybrid delivery so long as expectations for student achievement of course outcomes and other course standards are maintained.

5. **Internship/Practicum** - The course consists entirely of internship, practicum, or field study activities. For each credit earned, students are expected to spend an average of 4 hours per week or 40 hours per quarter in internship or practicum activities and no additional time is required for unscheduled activities.

(An issue arose with BA-CARE courses around field study which uses mixed lecture and internship. Should we define a mixed internship with lecture, similar to lecture with lab? It would require revision to the course creation and course revision forms.)

The course type for a particular course (for example, ENGL 101) is specified using the NWIC Curriculum Committee course creation or course revision form and cannot be changed without Curriculum Committee approval. The description of course type and each of the five course types above is consistent with and elaborated on the approved NWIC Credit Hour Policy.

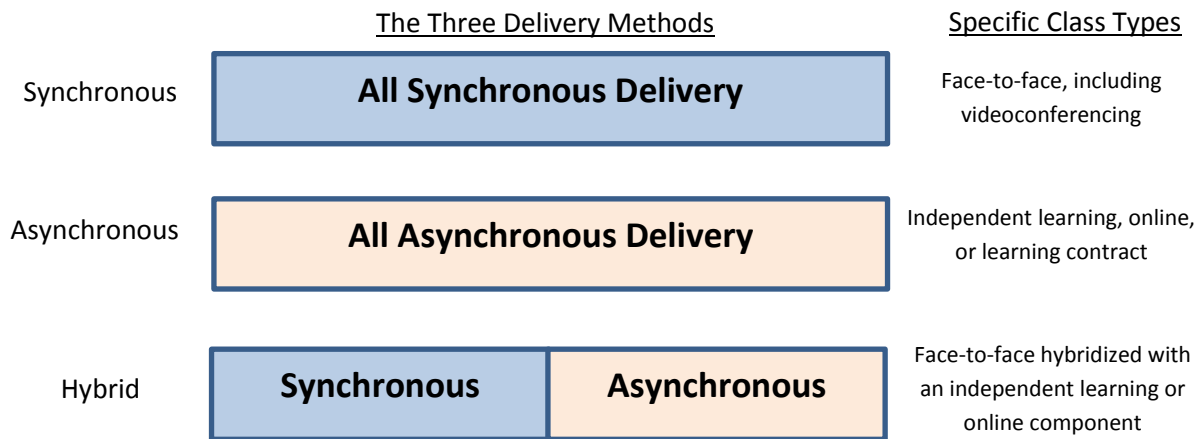
Definition of Class Delivery Methods

The term “delivery method” describes the way in which course content is delivered in a particular class. NWIC has identified three delivery methods: synchronous delivery (requiring real-time interaction), asynchronous delivery (not requiring real-time interaction), and a hybrid of synchronous and asynchronous delivery. All implementations of a course, regardless of delivery method or location, must meet the same approved course outcomes and the same course standards.

NWIC uses three methods to deliver classes:

1. **Synchronous** (also called face-to-face) – a class that focuses on concurrent, collective, and collaborative learning amongst students, requires regularly scheduled contact times between instructor and students, may be in-person or at a distance, and is listed in the quarterly class schedule. In-person means that the student is in the same physical location as the instructor. The regularly scheduled meeting times in the quarterly schedule constitutes the required contact time for the particular course type. Synchronous contact time occurs in real time, meaning that the students and instructor are engaged in learning activities simultaneously. Synchronous learning activities can include a broad range of methodologies, such as, lecture, discussion, group projects during class time, labs, studio, videos watched as a class, videoconference discussions, real-time document sharing and editing, etc. The class may meet in-person at a particular location or it may meet at a distance via a scheduled synchronous method, such as ITV, Skype, Zoom, Canvas, or other tools. Synchronous classes may include asynchronous electronic, online resources, or a learning management system, such as Canvas, in which case these resources are treated as ancillary to print or other resources (textbook, handouts, etc.) and not as central required asynchronous components of the class, as in asynchronous and hybrid delivery methods. Any of the course types can meet synchronously.
2. **Asynchronous** – a class that may be self-paced, individual or intermittently collaborative, requires that the content of the class be delivered using methods that do not rely on structured meeting times, and that no regularly scheduled contact times are listed in the quarterly class schedule.. Asynchronous delivery does not occur in real time, meaning that class learning activities need not be carried out simultaneously. Independent learning, learning contracts, and online classes are asynchronous class types. This delivery method does not preclude face-to-face meetings between faculty and students or between students and other students, only that there are no required scheduled synchronous meeting times listed in the quarterly class schedule. Online tools, for example, Canvas, may have both synchronous components using real-time videoconferencing, and asynchronous components, such as discussion boards, streamed video and audio files, blogs, wikis, document sharing, assignments completed outside scheduled class times, etc.
3. **Hybrid** – a class in which part of the contact time of a synchronous/face-to-face class is replaced by a required asynchronous component, thus reducing the amount of required scheduled contact time. Hybrid classes are typically 50% synchronous and the remainder asynchronous although they may be implemented between 25% and 75% synchronous and the remainder asynchronous. A hybrid class with an average time commitment of half as many hours of face-to-face time per week as a standard synchronous class, which may be in-person or at a distance, and a commensurate increase in the time students are expected to spend out of class on asynchronous class work. The asynchronous component may include an online or an independent learning component. Hybrid classes may have less than or more than half as much synchronous time as a standard synchronous class, in which case the expected student commitment to the asynchronous component is increased or decreased as needed to represent an average of 3 hours per week or 30 hours per quarter for each credit earned. For

example, a 4 credit hybrid class may be scheduled to have between 1 and 3 hours of scheduled synchronous time each week with the remaining required time delivered asynchronously. The amount of time a particular class will actually meet synchronously is specified in the quarterly class schedule, which will be fewer hours than the non-hybrid class, and is not to be changed on-the-fly during the quarter. Hybrid classes are also sometimes referred to as blended classes.



Relationship between course type and class delivery method

Once a course is created or revised by the Curriculum Committee its course type is set and cannot be changed without Curriculum Committee approval. Courses are implemented each quarter as classes and a single course may be implemented using more than one delivery method and at more than one location any given quarter. A class' section code identifies its delivery method and locations. NWIC has identified a large number of section codes to accommodate the many ways in which a course may be offered in a given quarter. A list of available section codes and their meaning is available from Enrollment Services.

Section codes consist of two parts: the first part identifies the location of the class, which may be a physical location if it is synchronous in-person (for example, A, B, C, etc. for Lummi Campus, NP for Nez Perce site, SW for Swinomish) or a specific delivery method if it is synchronous but not in person (example, TC for synchronous ITV) or asynchronous (for example, IL for independent learning, OL for online, or LC for learning contract). Adding an "H" to the end of a section code of a synchronous class means that it is a hybrid. For example, NP identifies the class as synchronous and in-person at the Nez Perce site. NPH means that this same class at the Nez Perce site is hybridized and its scheduled class time in the quarterly schedule is reduced from the standard synchronous time and a required asynchronous component is added.

A hybridized class that is place-based such that students must attend synchronously in-person during a scheduled time (perhaps once per week), plus have a required online asynchronous component, would use the section code for that site's location plus an H at the end to indicate that it has less synchronous contact time than the non-hybrid class and adds a required asynchronous component. For example, AH would indicate a Lummi campus hybrid class.

TC means that the class is taught synchronously at a scheduled time using ITV and that the students in that section are not normally in physical attendance at the site delivering the telecourse but instead meet at the scheduled time via ITV. Students in the telecourse who plan to be in physical attendance at the site delivering the class would enroll in the on-campus section for that class, for example, section A for Lummi or NP for Nez Perce. Likewise, a class taught using synchronous videoconferencing other than ITV would follow the same model but use section code VC rather than TC. For example, if the class is taught at Lummi, students planning to be in physical attendance at the Lummi classroom would sign up for section A and students who typically plan to attend using videoconferencing and not in-person would sign up for section VC. If the class is hybrid then the section codes would be AH and VCH. If the videoconferencing class is delivered from Nez Perce then students in-person at Nez Perce would enroll in section NP and students at all other locations, including at Lummi campus, would enroll in section VC. Use section codes NPH and VCH if the class is hybrid.