



COLLEGE  
*of the*  
DESERT

**TAKING A SHORT-TERM COURSE?**  
**Here's what you need to know!**

## **Whether 12 weeks or 8 weeks or less, taking a short-term course is more work.**

- If face-to-face or synchronous Zoom, you will be meeting more frequently than if you were taking a full-term course.
- If asynchronous online (no scheduled meeting times), you will need to do the same amount of reading and assignments that you would do in a full-term in a much shorter amount of time.
- For example, if your short-term course is 8 weeks, which is half the length of the full-term, you will have double the amount of reading and writing so you can achieve the learning outcomes in a shorter amount of time.
- For a 3-unit course, whether full or short-term, the average student learning hours (both in and out of class learning) are 162 hours over the course of the term.
  - In a full-term course, that is roughly 10 hours a week.
  - In an 8-week, short term course, that is roughly 20 hours a week.

## **Be flexible.**

As with full-term classes, each of your short-term instructors will have different expectations, due dates, etc. Early on in a short-term class, it is critical to read the syllabus so you can ask questions as soon as possible. If you are at all unclear on any of the expectations, you will fall quicker behind than you would in a full-term course. Remember, your instructor wants you to succeed! Please reach out to them early and often.

## **Develop a routine.**

Whether taking a short-term face-to-face, synchronous Zoom class, or an asynchronous online course, create a schedule at the beginning of the class(es). This will keep you accountable and on track to complete assignments by the due date.

## **Make friends!**

- If taking a short-term face-to-face class, try to engage with your peers before and after class. Having a person or a few people you can call or text if you have a question is invaluable, especially when a deadline is coming up. You can also use this as a built-in support system and start a study group. You'll also have a group ready to go if your professor assigns a group project!
- If taking a synchronous Zoom or asynchronous online course, you can also find peer support. If your instructor doesn't already have an ungraded Cyber Café or other community discussion board, send them a friendly message to see if they would add one. This is a great way for you to get to know your online classmates.

## **Talk to your instructors.**

They want to help you not only stay in the course but get as high of a grade as possible. They want you to stay on track with your goals. Please take advantage of office hours and if you can't attend office hours, email your instructor letting them know you can't make office hours but would like to see if they can meet at a different time, either face-to-face or virtually.

- This is a good tip early on. Even if you don't have anything specific to ask, it is always good for you to introduce yourself. Your professors want to know you! A good question to bring any professor is: "What recommendations do you have for me in order to succeed in your class?"