

Packaged Programs Final Recommendations

The Packaged Programs Workgroup was assembled in Spring 2023 under the direction of the Academic Senate and the College Council and completed their work during the fall semester. The workgroup defines a packaged program as any A.S., A.A., or Certificate that students can complete quickly and entirely through 8-week (or shorter) courses that and that is highly-structured in nature. Packaged programs might employ cohorts and may be sequenced, but not all programs are suited to this model. Please see the following sections for more details: 1) The benefits of offering packaged programs (PPs); 2) The disadvantages of offering PPs; 3) Recommendations; 4) Other considerations; and 5) Information and concerns related to existing packaged programs.

1) The benefits of offering packaged programs (PPs):

- May benefit non-traditional students, such as those working full-time or caring for family members
- May benefit students who want to finish their coursework quickly
- May work well with and could promote cohort-based learning

2) The disadvantages of offering packaged programs (PPs):

- Students may not be well-informed or intentional when enrolling in an 8-week course and therefore may not succeed (i.e. they may only be enrolling to fill their schedule/stay full time, maintain benefits, or other reasons that aren't related to academic or career goals)
- Some courses are not well-suited to be completed in 8 weeks (which could lead to frustration and potentially leaving the program)
- A compressed schedule doesn't generally allow for the supportive, "soft-start" many faculty employ in the first week or two of a 16-week course
- If using the cohort model, students coming in with credits or specific educational needs or interests might be negatively impacted or exempt from participating

3) Recommendations:

1. Canvass Deans and Department Chairs to identify a list of specific programs, and courses that could pilot packaged programs as well as offer 8-week courses

2. Identify a list of specific programs that would benefit from a cohort model and pilot PPs with them
3. Identify two "tracks" or approaches: packaged programs (in which all courses required for the major are 8-weeks long) and 8-week courses (identifying those courses within other programs that can be compressed)
 - a. For programs with courses not suitable to an 8-week format, they could provide courses in both 8 and 16-week formats (compressing some GE, lecture, and introductory courses to 8-weeks)
 - b. For programs that require 16-week courses, the college could provide a list of 8-week GEs and other courses required to complete students' non-major coursework; such a list could also help students find courses to catch up with their cohorts or accelerate the completion of their degree
 - c. Even if not 8-week courses, the core courses for a certificate or transfer degree could be taken with a cohort
4. Counselors and Success Coaches should be well educated about PPs and 8-week courses so they can either encourage or discourage participation in these accelerated programs based on what the best fit is for them (noting that implicit biases and institutional racism/sexism etc. would need to be effectively managed)
 - a. Since Counselors and Success Coaches can carry a large caseload, we'll need to be creative and thoughtful in how this recommendation can be implemented.
 - b. We need to find ways to embed or weave ACP success teams into packaged programs
 - c. We might explore embedded tutors or an instrument to capture the challenges and refer to the instructional professor, counselor, or success coach.
 - d. We might employ a triage approach, where a front-line ACP or PP staff member identifies a student need and then directs them to more-involved support
5. Results-driven students and others interested in PPs or 8-week courses should be thoroughly onboarded before the start of the program or course so they are properly prepared and well informed about expectations:
 - a. Survey students to ensure they have the proper infrastructure, including scheduling and technology needs, in place to succeed and link them with resources if they do not. (Offer a short checklist or questionnaire of

considerations and recommendations to help students determine if this course/program is a good fit. Questions might address parental and work status, level of technology proficiency, etc.)

- b. Provide extensive support before students enroll in a program or 8-week course
 - c. Educate students regarding the time they will need to devote in an accelerated course, highlighting that an 8-week course is equal to a 16-week in half the time—they should expect 6 hrs/week in class and 12 hours/week of homework
 - d. To ensure accommodations are in place at the start of the course, students should be encouraged to contact the DSPS office several weeks prior to the start of the class
 - e. Consider limiting how many 8-week courses a student can take at any one time or advise them on how many 8-week courses they should take, allowing students to petition should they wish to take more units
 - f. Consider labeling these courses and programs as “accelerated” or “compressed”
 - g. Consider a mandatory orientation to make sure that students are ready before their first 8-week class starts so they understand what the whole program or sequence looks like from start to finish
 - h. Highlight all of the support services Miramar has in place so students don’t fall behind
 - i. Identify any financial aid implications and notify students that they may not be able to register for a course in the latter half of the semester in time for financial aid
6. Ensure students are prepared on Day 1 of their 8-week courses (i.e. have books/materials, have access to and are trained in Canvas, etc.); there should be zero textbook cost options (ZTC) to help with this
 7. Emphasize and distinguish between 8-week courses and PPs that are comprised entirely of 8-week courses
 8. Consider embedding tutors in each PP or PP cohort, maybe even for each 8-week course
 9. Programs will need to provide regular updates to keep students, whether in cohorts or not, up to date and educated about the program and GE requirements, etc.
 10. For students that work full-time or are otherwise have full schedules, the college should explore offering more night, Friday, and Saturday courses (note that the Auto program,

which employs many of these PP recommendations, had difficulty when they offered courses on Saturdays. Saturday and weekend courses will also have an impact on Facilities' operations.)

4) Other Considerations:

Certain lab courses, such as BIOL 107, couldn't be offered in both an 8-week and a 16-week course due to lab requirements (scheduling, labor, materials, and cost)

For-profit colleges offer these courses and we need to compete with them if we want to attract this student population and give them a better chance of success with us

We need to adapt and meet the needs of the populations we serve

The students seem to like 8-week courses and night classes and tend to be very successful

Corporate and 4-Year University Partnerships: Geico pays their employees to take more classes

We could also try to feed into things like the SDSU global campus or similar online programs—

SDSU is paid for by Amazon for example); Southwestern has a relationship with the Global Campus for three degrees (Business and two others). SDSU's programs don't include GE, it's only for Juniors or Seniors. If we look at our ADTs that feed into completion programs, we can capture them in the first two years. (SDSU's Global Campus reached out to Miramar a few years ago but there wasn't support for it at the time.)

"Heavy science" courses probably need more time than 8-weeks—science and other lab-intensive courses should not be shortened

12-week, 1 day/week didn't seem to work too well for students; a 10-week, 2 day/week course might fare better—whether this works or not is dependent on the discipline

These efforts should in no way serve to devalue GE courses as they are foundational and important and shouldn't just be "rushed" or "checked off"

How do we address concerns that there may be faculty who are not fully committed to providing 16-weeks worth of content and rigor in their 8-week course?

Folx might consider different tracks for the same program—some four-year universities have a speed Physical Therapy track but another, longer one for their graduate feeder programs; CSUSM had three tracks for their PT programs

Consider looking beyond 8-week courses and PPs to identify other variations. For example, one CA community college is doing 4-week classes where students would meet 4 hours one

night a week and then complete additional work online. That institution is also looking into offering childcare that night. If a student took one class each month, they could complete an 8 course program in two semesters.

5) Information and Concerns Related to Existing Packaged Programs:

ADJU has offered a number of 8-week courses, and while it's gone well, there have been some concerns

AUTO:

- Cohort model—there is one pathway
- The program takes two years: 5 certificates and all of the degree requirements; students could take GE courses on top of this load but they don't recommend it (the program has a heavy load, three days a week)
- Cohort starts once a year—if they have to drop out, they can't come back in until the class comes around again (they lose roughly 20%/year)
- 6 week courses
- Were in an 18-week schedule, with 3x6 week courses
- Students did not often choose the correct path
- There are a lot more student completions with this model
- Saturdays didn't work very well—neither students nor faculty liked them and it wasn't well supported through the campus
- We have been doing the AUTO cohort program since 2009. Also as mentioned we do a lot of onboarding with the students prior to starting to make sure they are committed to the 2 year process.
- The manufacturer partners require that the participants are working (ideally by the end of the first year)—640 hours of paid work experience in the field