

## 4-1-4 Academic Calendar

McPherson College structures its academic terms on the 4-1-4 academic model; that is, the fall and spring semesters take place during four-month periods (roughly, late August through early December and late January through early May) with a one-month intervening term referred to as January Interterm. During the January Interterm, students take only one course.

Because most students average around 14 hours per semester during the fall and spring terms, and because students must complete no fewer than 124 credit hours to graduate (an average of 31 credit hours per year), most students need to enroll for Interterm classes each year in order to graduate in four years. Students should plan carefully and review their progress toward graduation with their faculty advisor or the registrar before choosing not to enroll for a January Interterm.

### May Session

McPherson College also offers an intensive, two-week May Session immediately following Commencement ceremonies. Students can enroll in only one course during the May Session. The May Session is an opportunity to make up for a missed Interterm or to pick up additional credit hours toward early graduation. May Session offerings are announced before the end of the fall semester. Like all courses at McPherson College, May Session classes must make minimum enrollment requirements. Those classes not making minimum enrollments will be canceled.

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## Definition of Credit Hour

The credit hour is the unit of measure used at McPherson College to signify the amount of work associated with successful completion of a course. An hour of academic credit is awarded contingent upon evidence of student achievement of prescribed learning outcomes of the course. McPherson College delivers courses in both face-to-face and blended formats in terms of varying length, as follows:

- Fall and Spring semesters of 14 weeks
- Summer terms of 7-8 weeks
- A January Interterm of 3 ½ weeks
- A May Session of 2 weeks

For each hour of academic credit, a student should expect to spend 50 minutes per week in class over the course of a 14-week semester, 50 minutes per day over the course of a 14-day Interterm session, 70 minutes per day over the course of a 10-day May Session, or 85 minutes per week for an 8-week summer session. In addition, for each hour of credit, students should expect to spend approximately 2 hours outside of class for class preparation and completion of assignments. Regardless the length of the term, the well-prepared, motivated student should expect to devote approximately 40 hours per term, in and out of class, for each hour of credit.

McPherson College also offers academic credit for internships and field experiences with approved student learning outcomes and appropriate assessment of those outcomes. Student-interns can earn one hour of academic credit for every 40 hours on the job at the site of the placement.

To demonstrate compliance with U.S. Department of Education regulations and standards established by the Higher Learning Commission, all McPherson College instructors include in their syllabi a course schedule with the requisite number of class meetings for the appropriate length of time as well as a detailed list of readings, assignments, and projects indicative of the expected hours outside the classroom.

### Online Coursework

McPherson College offers a small number of online courses and traditional face-to-face classes blended with an online component. Consistent with the above guidelines, for every hour of credit granted for an online course or course component, the student should expect to spend the same 40 hours per term for each hour of credit. This can include time devoted to reading lecture notes, listening to recordings of lectures, or synchronous class time. Additional time elements to consider in the online environment are readings, writing assignments (including the discussion boards), exam/quizzes and student engagement.

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## Student Course Load

Undergraduate students must be enrolled for a minimum of 12 credit hours to be classified as a full-time student for the fall or spring semesters. During the January Interterm, the normal full-time load is 3-4 credit hours. Graduate students must be enrolled in a minimum of six credit hours to be classified as a full-time student for fall or spring semesters.

Students may enroll in courses above 16 hours under the following conditions:

- 17 hrs. Requires minimum residential GPA of 3.0 and approval of faculty advisor
- 18-19 hrs. Requires minimum residential GPA of 3.5 and approval of faculty advisor
- 20 + hrs. Requires minimum residential GPA of 3.5 and overload approval form

All credits the student takes over 16 credit hours will be charged the overload fee specified in this catalog under Regular Charges and Fees.

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## Freshman and Transfer Enrollment

McPherson College hosts a number of enrollment days during the spring and summer for the upcoming academic year. First-time freshmen are encouraged to attend one of these opportunities to meet with a faculty advisor and register for classes. First-time freshmen who are unable to attend an enrollment day and all transfer students will be advised of times when they may make individual appointments with the registrar to register for classes by telephone.

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## Returning Student Enrollment

Enrollment periods are scheduled each spring when returning students can enroll by classification. Upperclassmen receive priority and enroll first, followed by sophomores and then freshmen. These enrollment period dates are published in the Academic Calendar.

All students have access to their degree audit in Bulldog Connect. For assistance, please email registrar@mcperson.edu. Students are strongly encouraged to schedule a junior check during the spring of their sophomore year and then a graduation check during the spring semester of their junior year. Students with 41 earned credit hours or more will receive an email reminder but the responsibility remains with the student to track their progress towards earning their degree.

It is important that students—especially juniors and returning seniors—enroll during the dates set aside for their class. Students who neglect to register during the enrollment period risk losing their seats in classes they may be required to take in order to graduate on schedule. Students who fail to enroll during their appointed enrollment period cannot be guaranteed a seat in courses filled by students who met enrollment deadlines.

Students with outstanding balances in excess of \$1,500 will not be allowed to enroll for the following semester. Past due balances may result in dismissal from the college and may be placed for collection.

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## Student Classification

To be eligible to enroll in courses open to members of that class, a returning student must have earned hours toward a degree as listed:

Freshman	1-25 credit hours earned
Sophomore	26-56 credit hours earned
Junior	57-89 credit hours earned
Senior	90+ credit hours earned

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## Waiting Lists

Due to space limitations or pedagogical principle, all courses have a maximum number of students that can be enrolled. Once the maximum enrollment has been reached during the pre-registration period, students can be placed on a waiting list. As students with seats reserved in a course drop or withdraw, students on the waiting list will be moved into those empty seats on a first-come-first-served basis. Students who are still on a waiting list for a

class when the term begins should meet immediately with their advisor to reconsider their course schedule. On occasion, an upper level student may be given priority as long as it does not hinder the progress of another student.

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## Academic Advising

Academic advising at McPherson College is an intentional relationship between advisor and student as they plan and reach the student's educational, career, and personal goals.

Focal points of the advisement program at McPherson College include:

- advising the student about his or her academic concerns, co-curricular activities and postgraduate plans
- assisting each student to assess educational/academic objectives
- serving as an interpreter of regulations and academic requirements
- acting as a referral service for any personal or academic problems which may arise

With few exceptions, first-time freshmen are initially assigned a freshman advisor from the Center for Academic Development. By the end of their first semester, however, freshmen are encouraged to select a faculty advisor from their academic major or from a discipline of interest to assist them with enrolling for the next academic year and with developing a graduation plan.

Students may ask to change advisors at any time. Change of Advisor request forms are available on Bulldog Connect ([my.mcpherson.edu](http://my.mcpherson.edu)) and from the registrar's office.

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## Beginning, Adding, Dropping and Withdrawing from Classes

The dates of all deadlines are published in the annual Academic Calendar. The last day to add a course is also the last day for students to begin courses. Students are not able to drop/add courses after the first day of classes without the assistance of their academic advisor. During the second week of classes, students may drop courses without a fee. Beginning the third week of class, students will be charged a \$50 fee to withdraw from a course, and a grade of W will be posted on their transcript. Students may withdraw from courses until one week after midterm grades are due. Students who withdraw from a class before that deadline will receive a notation of "W" on the permanent record in place of a letter grade. Students may not withdraw after that deadline without the grade earned at the end of the term being reported on their transcript.

Students who drop a course within the first two weeks will not receive a W on their transcript since they are within the add/drop period. However, if a student withdraws from all courses, they will receive W's on their transcript to document their attempt at McPherson College.

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## Auditing Courses

With permission of the instructor and the registrar, students may register to audit courses with available seats. The auditor is expected to attend class and participate along with students taking the course for credit. An auditing student is not required to take examinations and does not receive a grade or academic credit. Restoration technology, studio art classes, and private music lessons may not be audited. The vice president for academic affairs determines which courses may be audited.

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## Cancellation of Courses

Due to scheduling conflicts, faculty leaves of absence, sabbatical leaves, and other factors, a course listed in the catalog or course schedule may not be offered in a particular year. The college reserves the right to cancel or reschedule any course for which there is insufficient enrollment.

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## Special Courses

A special course may be developed by the student, or by the student with the faculty advisor, as an independent and personal search for information and understanding in a defined area. These courses may

- extend the range of subject matter that the student can explore;
- enable the student to collaborate with a faculty member on work relating to the latter's research or teaching;
- enable the student to use special learning opportunities on and off campus;
- offer the student a chance to test self-teaching capacity and to develop skills.

### Course by Appointment

A course by appointment is a course regularly offered and listed in the catalog. It may only be taken by appointment if circumstances do not permit a student to take the course when it is regularly offered. The Application for Special Courses (signed by the student, the course instructor and the vice president for academic affairs) is due before enrolling the student in the course.

### Course on Demand

A course on demand is a course that is listed in the catalog but is only taken on an individual basis. Examples of courses on demand include Field Experience, Readings and Research, Independent Study, or an advanced topics course.

- **Independent Study** – Ordinarily initiated by the student with the advice of the academic advisor, independent study presumes a special interest that will form the basis for a project in original research. Applicants must have a 3.0 grade-point average when they apply. Application is due 30 days prior to the final day of enrollment and must be presented to the vice president for academic affairs accompanied by a prospective course syllabus. The independent study option is course number 299 or 499 in all departments (1-4 credits).
- **Field Experience** – Field experiences involve observation or participation in vocational and operational activities outside the classroom. Students, often participating without pay and for a single term or less, may or may not bring specific skills to the experience. The field experience option is course number 295 or 495 in all departments (1-4 credits).
- **Readings and Research** – Reading and research courses provide an opportunity to do in-depth study in any field. Such courses, which may be initiated by the student or the instructor, may be undertaken only in the major department and only after the student has earned 12 credit hours in that department. A maximum of eight hours of research/readings credit can be counted toward graduation requirements. The Application for Special Courses (signed by the student, the course instructor and the vice president for academic affairs) is due before enrolling the student in the course. The readings and research option is course number 445 in all departments (1-4 credits).

## Career Connections

The Career Connections program of McPherson College is designed to provide the students with an opportunity to gain hands-on work experience in their major fields of study and to receive academic credit for that experience. Students involved in Career Connections should realize valuable educational gains not obtained in the classroom. This knowledge should, in turn, assist the students' transition from the classroom to the job. Appropriate paperwork must be completed before the student is registered in the experience.

*Important Note:* Academic departments at McPherson College are encouraged to help students develop Career Connection options consistent with institutional guidelines; however, all students considering Career Connection experiences should consult with their faculty advisor to determine whether or not their academic department has additional requirements or requirements different from those that follow.

### Career Connections Internship

Internships are designed to provide students with the opportunity to gain work experience in their major fields of study and to receive college credit for that experience. Internships are normally reserved for students who have completed at least four semesters of study since they are expected to bring an appropriate level of skills into a productive employment setting. The internship option is course number 388 in all departments (1-10 credits).

### Eligible Experiences

In consultation with the Career Connections coordinator, the faculty advisor must approve the student's overall experiential learning plan. Any internship or field placement can make an acceptable Career Connections experience, as long as the student can demonstrate to the advisor and the Career Connections coordinator that it can advance previously determined and agreed upon educational goals. A student's previous work experience, although personally valuable, does not meet the Career Connection criteria of directed, independent, and career-related learning.

### Student Eligibility

To be eligible to enroll for a Career Connection option, a student must have completed 12 credit hours at McPherson College or, if a transfer student, and is a junior classification or above, must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0.

A student may be determined to be unplaceable at any time by either the faculty advisor or Career Connections coordinator. This may result in a student not being placed or termination of a placement.

### **Academic Credit Guidelines**

One (1) credit hour may be awarded for approximately 40 hours of relevant internship or field placement experience. A student may not receive more than four (4) hours of credit per semester or term for any kind of career connection's experience unless otherwise approved by the faculty advisor, Career Services director and the Chief Academic Officer. A maximum of ten (10) hours of credit earned through Career Connections experiences can count toward graduation—six (6) for transfer students.

Complete, fully approved applications for internships are due in the registrar's office before the first day of the experience. The Chief Academic Officer reserves the right to deny approval for any internship or field experience that is not submitted before the experience begins.

Whenever possible, academic credit should be applied to the term in which the internship or field experience is taking place. Students enrolling in Career Connections during a summer term will be charged the part-time tuition rate published in the most recent academic catalog. Internships and field experiences undertaken in the summer can only be applied to a later fall or spring term when the student is already enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours. If Career Connections credits push the student's semester load beyond 16 credits, they are charged the overload fee published in the most recent catalog. Career Connections credit hours cannot be applied to an interterm if the total interterm hours exceed four credit hours.

### **Assessment**

In addition to the 40 hours onsite for each credit hour, Career Connections also requires the student to develop goal/strategy plans and reflective log summary reports that include appendices - items the student created or came in contact with. The work log reports, along with feedback from the employer and the performance appraisal will be the primary device used by the Faculty Advisor for grading the experience. However, the Faculty Advisor may also request other journals, papers, and projects for assessment of the total experience. (See assessment objectives worksheet.)

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## **Alternate Ways to Receive Academic Credit**

### **Credit for Advanced Placement Equivalent**

Students who have taken College Board Advanced Placement (AP) courses in high school and have passed one or more Advanced Placement examinations with a score of 3 or higher can receive credit for McPherson College's equivalent course(s), as determined by the college registrar.

### **Credit for International Baccalaureate Equivalent**

Students who have participated in the International Baccalaureate program in high school and who have passed one or more IB examinations with a score of 4 or higher can receive credit for McPherson College's equivalent courses(s), as determined by the college registrar.

### **College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) Tests**

Students may elect to earn credits for McPherson College courses by passing registrar-approved College Board CLEP tests with a score that meets the credit-granting scores recommended by the American Council on Education. Before registering to take a CLEP exam to test out of a particular McPherson College course, students should be sure the registrar approves the exam as an equivalent to the course for which they desire credit. No more than six hours of CLEP credit will be accepted in the area of college composition. Current CLEP credits are accepted through midterm of the semester the official scores are received by McPherson College. If the current CLEP scores are received after midterm, they will be transcribed the following semester.

The student is required to pay the fee per exam. Additionally, there is a \$100 fee to post the credit on the student's transcript.

### **Credit by Departmental Examination**

To receive credit by institutional examination, the student must have permission from the instructor of the course and/or the department chair. Credit is granted to students who earn a grade of C or higher on the exam. The grade earned on the exam will be recorded on the student's permanent transcript, along with the notice that the credit was awarded by examination.

Credit by departmental exam counts toward the achievement of a degree and is included in the calculation of the student's cumulative grade-point average. However, it is not included in the calculation of the GPA for the semester in which the examination is taken.

There is a \$100 fee to post the credit on the student's transcript.