

SUMMER SCHOOL

History

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill established what was possibly the first United States summer school in 1877. It enrolled 235 students in courses from 10 disciplines. Women were first admitted into University courses during this summer session. Students came from 42 North Carolina counties and several neighboring states. By 1925, 19,983 students had enrolled in Summer School. The University has continued annually to provide a wide offering of summer academic opportunities to the people of North Carolina and other residents from this country and abroad. From 1934 to 1987 the programs were administered by the Office of Summer Sessions. The traditional name of Summer School was reinstated in 1988. The Summer School is now a part of UNC–Chapel Hill Digital and Lifelong Learning.

Opportunities

The College of Arts and Sciences as well as many professional schools offer summer courses for undergraduate and graduate students. The same faculty members who make the University one of the nation's best teach the courses, assisted by visiting professors who are specially recruited by departments for this purpose.

Summer School is central to the teaching mission of the University. The summer is one of the three periods during which the campus is open for formal instruction. Summer courses are of comparable quality and provide the same credit as corresponding courses in the fall or spring terms.

For students who have problems in the fall or spring terms getting courses they need or have to choose between courses, summer provides a time when the courses can be taken. This option relieves pressure on fall and spring enrollments, creates opportunities to enhance students' programs, increases student access to courses in nonmajor fields and other schools, and ensures that students can complete their degree requirements in a timely manner. Summer also allows incoming students the opportunity to take courses and become acclimated to campus before the fall term begins.

Because some subjects are best learned in an intensive and concentrated way, summer provides a time when students can focus on a single field. This learning style is particularly useful for some laboratory experiences, concentrated arts courses, and foreign languages. Some curricula require field study or research projects, and summer uniquely allows time for these studies.

During the summer, faculty members and students can concentrate on one or two courses without interruptions of other administrative, academic, and social events that exist during the year. The total number of students is fewer in the summer, and the mix includes greater diversity and a higher proportion of nontraditional and visiting students than during the fall or spring terms. Because class sizes are smaller and classes meet daily, students interact more with faculty members and with one another.

The summer program is also one of the key ways the campus reaches out to visiting and postdegree students who can benefit from what the University has to offer. Finally, summer is a time for faculty members to develop and experiment with new content and teaching models that can be incorporated into fall or spring courses.

Programs

Summer School offers two sessions of five weeks each, a three-week Maymester, and other short courses with various beginning and ending dates. In recent years about 600 sections of courses have been offered each summer to about 7,500 students. The available courses include many that satisfy undergraduate degree requirements. Twelve semester hours of credit typically would be earned by a full-time summer student over both summer sessions. Many students take fewer hours or attend only one session. About 95 percent of summer students are regular UNC–Chapel Hill students, and the other 5 percent are visiting students.

In recent summers, enrolled students have come from all 100 counties in North Carolina and all 50 states, as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and 60 foreign countries.

Highlights

Summer School highlights include concentrated three-week courses offered in Maymester, five-week online courses, some field courses and law courses that extend beyond the usual Summer Session I, some courses taught especially for public school teachers that begin after mid-June when the public schools end their term, and other credit programs that operate on a concentrated schedule. Some courses are offered in the late afternoon or evening. Some offerings combine off-campus activities and on-campus classes or combine online and face-to-face learning formats.

Student Services and Advising

Summer School coordinates and distributes information on summer course offerings for credit in all Academic Affairs units. Course offerings are available on the Summer School Web site in mid-December. Regular UNC–Chapel Hill students who need information on summer courses and early registration should contact their advisor, dean, or the relevant academic department. These students and all others can obtain updated information daily on the website (<http://summer.unc.edu>).

Summer School admits and advises visiting students. A potential visiting student can obtain information and an online application from the website (<http://summer.unc.edu>).

All UNC–Chapel Hill majors and minors have a primary academic advisor assigned in ConnectCarolina. They are strongly encouraged to meet regularly with their advisor and review their Tar Heel Tracker.

Summer School students are able to use most of the campus facilities enjoyed by students in the fall and spring semesters, such as the libraries, makerspaces, and athletic facilities. Links to Information on summer University housing and on dining plans are available in March on the Summer School website. The Carolina Union, Carolina intramural recreational sports, and *The Daily Tar Heel* also provide activities, events, and information during the summer.

Contact Information

Summer School

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