# Quick Guide to Teaching Condensed-Format Courses

Courses taught in less than 15 weeks can be successful and highly rewarding. To ensure your students are achieving course-learning outcomes and not consumed with “busy-work,” consult the Wake Forest Enhanced Course Workload Estimator (<https://bit.ly/workload2>) for estimating course workload. The table below may be helpful in rethinking your course design.

| **Less time or more condensed time for students to . . .** | **Which I can address if I . . .** | **Rethink or redesign this aspect of my course** |
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| Read content | * Select most pertinent readings
* Give individual students or small groups a choice of readings and have them share the key findings (e.g., jigsaw, discussion forum)
* Turn in a reflection of guided reading questions
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| Process new information | * Reduce new information
* Simplify the presentation of new information
* Provide advanced organizers, diagrams
* Provide skeleton notes before class session
* Provide study guide after class session
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| Reflect on their experience | * Provide reflection questions
* In the middle of class, pause, and ask students to reflect on learning to date
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| Study for exams | * Place more emphasis on application and synthesis in exams; less on remembering
* Replace exams with other types of assessments (pre-assessment quizzes, weekly quizzes instead of 2 exams a semester)
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| Redo or resubmit work | * Clarify assignment expectations
* Provide a detailed rubric
* Show an excellent and unsatisfactory a poor example
* Allow students to drop a lowest score
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| Ask for help on course-related components  | * Be very clear in communicating expectations (e.g., length, format, grading criteria)
* Prepare student questions and address them
* Provide examples of what projects look like in real-world practice
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| Seek support (e.g., tutoring, academic coach, wellness, etc.) | * Include in the syllabus and mention in class available student resources
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| Review foundational knowledge (pre-requisites) | * Provide these resources at the outset
* Ask students to review the most relevant resources and explain what they discovered
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| Obtain new resources | * Provide more resources upfront (e.g., curated set of useful articles or websites)
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| Complete long, multi-stage research projects | * Replace with several smaller assessments that are not dependent on each other
* Merge two things into one to speed a process up (e.g., student introductions and their topic of most significant interest in the course, which students can later use as a basis for a research assignment)
* Reduce length expectations
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| Workgroup projects | * Provide time-saving aids (e.g., templates)
* Make the groupwork process more public:
	+ Initiate their use of useful collaboration tools (<https://bit.ly/isu-inst-tools>)
	+ Assign them to complete plans for how/when they will accomplish work (e.g., expectations, group contracts, peer assessments)
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| Receive feedback before the next assignment | * Use rubrics and comment palettes or the Tiered approach (<https://bit.ly/3205D8b>)
* Give initial feedback to the whole class while preparing individual feedback
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| Communicate with instructors | * Verify email, notification, and discussion subscription settings in Canvas
* Communicate your availability with students
* Request students to post questions to a discussion board, allowing students to help respond and seeing my answer (if needed)
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**References**

Kops, William J. (2014). Teaching compressed-format courses: Teacher-based best practices. *Canadian Journal of University Continuing Education, 40*(1):1-18.

Swenson, C. (2003). Accelerated and traditional formats: Using learning as a criterion for quality. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 97*, 83–92.



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