



Is 30=4 Really Better?

Q: Should I advise this student to take more hours?

Quick Check Questions	Rationale
Does your student work less than 30 hours per week?	Though research indicates positive impacts from 15-credits per semester enrollment, a recent study also found that a subset of students working 30 or more hours per week did not graduate at higher rates when taking 15 credits, compared with students taking 12 credits (Monaghan & Attewell, 2014).
Does your student receive financial aid when enrolled full-time?	Spare money = good. Free money = VERY good.
Does your student have scholarship incentives that encourage full-time or 4x30 enrollment?	Among institutions recently surveyed, only 50 percent or fewer of full-time students at most four-year colleges ... were enrolled in 15 credits (Complete College America & Postsecondary Analytics, 2013).
Does your student's current four-year plan minimize or omit summer coursework?	According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the median time that it took students to complete a 2008 bachelor's degree was 52 months (4.5years, or nine semesters) from initial post secondary enrollment (Cataldi et al., 2011).
Is your student's current GPA at least 3.0?	Scott-Clayton (2011) conducted an analysis, of Georgia HOPE students who scored just above and below the state's cut off scores (ACT 21, SAT 1000), and a cohort of students who entered college two years before and two years after the introduction of the scholarship, which annually requires a 3.0 cumulative GPA and 30 SCH of completion per year for its renewal. Results showed those meeting both the requirements had higher GPAs and higher rates of credit accumulation, completion, and on-time completion (Scott-Clayton, 2011)

A: "Yes" in two or more of the quick check questions above means the answer is probably, "YES!"

Of course, when advising students into any combination of a total of 30 SCH per academic year (fall, summer, spring), advisors can consider and guide their students to evaluate these important details:

- 1. Applicable:** Will the additional course(s) you recommend apply to the student's degree? Has the student met his/her drop limit?
- 2. Available:** Can this student actually enroll in the additional course(s) you are recommending? Offered? Available seats? Works with student's schedule?
- 3. Prepared:** Will the additional course(s) be appropriate for this student, considering his/her past performance, current confidence, and available academic supports?
- 4. Payment:** Can this student afford, financially speaking, to pay for this course?
- 5. Support:** Are you prepared to discuss the available academic supports offered to increase this student's likelihood of success in the recommended additional course(s).
- 6. Follow Up:** Can you provide an immediate action timeline and future follow-up checkpoints that will further encourage their use of the recommended supports?