



Brazil – PUC-Rio Academic Information

Higher Education

All university students take a basic cycle of studies in either humanities or science. Following the basic cycle, students enter the professional cycle of undergraduate courses. Electives classes in other fields are allowed and diversified study is encouraged.

Academic Year

The academic school year normally runs from February/March through December. The year is divided into two semesters. Some institutions, especially those that have large enrollments and are located in urban areas, offer three "shifts" of classes each day—morning, afternoon and evening.

First Semester: February/March to July

Second Semester: August to December

Number of classes typical student takes per term:

PUC Rio Students: Usually 4 subjects /20 credits (minimum 2, maximum 5)

Exchange students: 4 (minimum 2subjects / 8 credits, maximum 5 subjects / 24 credits) (1 of which is mandatory. Portuguese as a Second Language Course with 6 credits).

Recommendable: not to take more than 20 credits in total (usually 3 subjects + the Portuguese Language Course).

Number of hours per week typical student spends in class: 20 or 24

Credits system:

1 credit = 1 class hour/week of lecture class OR 2 hours of laboratory class/week OR 3 hours of exercise class/week.

In Brazil, a 1 hour/class correspond to 50 minutes session.

Number of weeks per term: PUC Rio: standard term is of 15 weeks.

Grading scales may even vary within each institution. Grading is fairly severe. The top grades are awarded to relatively few and the failure rate in a given course can be high.

Minimum grade: 0 (zero); maximum grade: 10 (ten); minimum passing grade: 5,0 (five) for undergraduate students and 6,0 (six) for graduate students.

Brazilian Grade to U.S. Equivalent

A+ = 10	B+ = 8,5	C+ = 7,0	D+ = 5,5
A = 9,5	B = 8,0	C = 6,5	D = 5,0
A- = 9,0	B- = 7,5	C- = 6,0	F = Any grade below 5,0

Credit Equivalent

A transcript from PUC-Rio gives the number of hours spent in class per week and per semester to assist home universities in determining the number of credits for each class.

European University- ECTS

The conversion rate to ECTS as practiced between PUC-Rio and European Universities is 1 credit = 1,5 ECTS and European exchange students usually take 20 credits which are recognized as 30 ECTS, but this decision is up to the student's home institution.

Portuguese as a second language class- (mandatory),

there are five proficiency levels offered in the Portuguese as a Second Language program. Level I, II and III consist of 90 hours of instruction per term (6 hours per week), corresponding to 6 academic credits. Level IV and V consist of 60 hours of instruction per term (4 per week) corresponding to 4 academic credits.

Pre-Term Portuguese as a Second Language Intensive

Courses is also offered twice a year: January/February and July (Fee paid course). It is not mandatory.

90 hours of instruction per month.

The Pre-Term Portuguese as a Second Language Intensive course does not provide academic credits or transcripts. Nonetheless, a certificate of completion with the final grade achieved will be provided.

