

Wright State University

Credit hour policy

Definition of a semester credit hour

A “credit hour” is an approximate measure of effort/time required for a typical student to achieve the learning outcomes of an educational experience. Typically, a credit hour represents 750 minutes of formalized instruction accompanied by an average of twice that amount of time at out-of-class assignments (1,500 minutes). Effort/time calculations may differ by modality of instruction, but shall require a minimum of 2,250 total minutes of student effort/time per credit hour, and shall remain consistent with Federal Credit Hour Definitions [34CFR 600.2].

Equivalence of course offerings

Student learning outcomes for a course, and the approximate amount of student effort/time for a typical student required to meet those objectives, shall be reasonably equivalent regardless of the instructor or the modality of instruction used. The Faculty is responsible for the communication of course learning outcomes, clearly communicating the goals of unsupervised learning effort/time (homework), and assessing the achievement of individual student mastery of the course learning outcomes. Every course offering is expected to have approximately equivalent student learning outcome goals and to require approximately the same amount of student effort, regardless of the particular instructor of record or the modality of instruction. For example, online courses which have traditional lecture course equivalents are expected to require and to demonstrate equivalent student effort/time and achievement of student learning outcomes. The responsibility for the oversight of equivalence lies both with the instructor of record of each instance of the course specifically and the curricular oversight bodies of the Faculty in general.

Assignment of credit hours for various course modalities

Traditional lecture courses. In this modality, each credit hour consists of 750 minutes of supervised/scheduled instruction or assessment activity and a minimum of 1,500 minutes of out-of-class “homework” or other unscheduled learning activity.

For example, consider the typical three (3) credit hour traditional lecture course which includes at least 2,250 minutes of scheduled classroom time and 4,500 minutes of homework over the term of instruction.

Example schedules for typical 3 credit hour traditional lecture	# of class periods	Duration (minutes)	Total scheduled instruction (minutes)	Total homework (minutes)
Class meeting three times per week, 14-week Term	~42 + final	55	~2310 + final	4,500

Class meeting two times per week, 14-week Term	~28 + final	80	~2,240 + final	4,500
Class meeting two times per week, 12-week Term	~23 + final	100	~2,300 + final	4,500
Class meeting four times per week, 6-week Term	~23 + final	100	~2,300 + final	4,500

Lab courses. For the typical laboratory course, at least two-thirds of the course effort/time are scheduled directed laboratory time. Any remaining effort/time is spent on unscheduled learning activity supporting the laboratory. In this modality, each credit hour of a typical laboratory with homework consists of 1,500 minutes of scheduled laboratory activity supported by 750 minutes of homework. Each credit hour of a typical laboratory without homework consists of all 2,250 minutes of effort/time as scheduled laboratory activity.

Fully online. For courses in which 100% of the instruction is delivered in an online mode, each credit hour consists of 750 minutes of instructor-led, computer-assisted modules, multimedia interaction, discussions, and/or assessment activities as documented in the course syllabus, and 1,500 minutes of supporting “homework” consisting of independent preparatory work, such as readings, viewing of instructional materials or writing done online. Online courses which have traditional lecture course equivalents are expected to achieve equivalent student learning outcomes in the equivalent number of credit hours. Any set meeting times will be clearly stated in the course schedule.

Mostly and partially online courses. These modalities use the same requirements as Fully online courses with the exception that each credit hour may include on-campus scheduled direct/in-person faculty-directed instruction or assessment.

Short courses. Short courses are expected to achieve the same student outcomes and thus require the same overall effort/time as long-form course equivalents.

Studio courses. In studio courses representing art, design, and theatre, each credit hour is equivalent to 1400 minutes of direct faculty instruction and a minimum of 850 minutes for studio class preparation.

Music ensembles and applied lessons. In accordance with the National Association of Schools of Music standards, each credit hour of ensemble work (including class piano, pedagogy and methods courses) in the field of music represents 2250 minutes of faculty instruction. Applied lessons for music majors can be either 2 or 4 credits with 750 minutes of direct instruction, and one hour per day per credit hour in practice. NASM standards require that performance majors practice considerably more than non-majors, and that all music students be available for frequent concerts, recitals, juries, repertoire classes and other performances.

Raider Active (physical education). For Raider Active courses, each credit hour generally includes 1250 minutes of activity-based instruction and 1000 minutes of cognitive homework and out of class student work. Some Raider Active programs may vary based upon the standards set by their respective learned societies or certification organizations.

Study abroad. A faculty-led study abroad course may award one (1) credit per week (7 days) with a maximum of six (6) credits. Each credit hour must include at least 625 minutes of formal instruction

prior, during, or after the trip. Formal instruction may include instruction by guest speakers as well as faculty-interaction. Scheduled cultural, linguistic, or other types of engagement may also count as formal contact hours, at a 2:1 ratio (2 minutes of field trip = 1 minute of formal instruction). Transportation time does not count towards contact hours.

Other courses. Student teaching, clinical experience, cooperative education, internship, field placement, experimental learning activity, independent study, thesis, dissertation, non-contact courses, or other academic work which fit no other classification may receive credit if the work is performed under the supervision of and with approval from a member of the Faculty, with a formal written agreement noting the nature of the academic work, approved also by the appropriate program director, chair, or similar overseeing authority at a program-wide level. In this modality, each credit hour consists of no less than 2,250 minutes spent on approved work during the term of instruction. Specific curriculum/programs may require more hours in order to award one credit hour. Credit for these experiences may be determined in accordance with recommendations of a program's specific accreditor or applicable regulations.

REQUIRED HLC ACTION

From July 1, 2016 HCL status notification, IAC requires the interim monitoring including:

Interim Report. An interim report due 6/30/17 on documenting a credit hour policy that addresses all instructional modalities.

REFERENCE

Federal Credit Hour Definitions [34CFR 600.2]

Clock hour: A period of time consisting of -

- (1) A 50- to 60-minute class, lecture, or recitation in a 60-minute period;
 - (2) A 50- to 60-minute faculty-supervised laboratory, shop training, or internship in a 60-minute period;
- or
- (3) Sixty minutes of preparation in a correspondence course.

Credit hour: Except as provided in 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (l), a credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than -

- (1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
- (2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

REPLACES EXISTING POLICY

Standard Credit/Instructional Hour Base

Faculty Senate Approval - November, 2009

Standard Credit Hour Base

Under the semester academic calendar, the standard course credit hour will be based on three semester credit hours. While the majority of course offerings will be three credit hours, all course offerings will not be constrained to three credit hours. Justifications can be made for fewer or more credit hours per course so as to accommodate different academic program needs, curricular innovations, and instructional methods.

Standard Instructional Hour Base

Under the semester academic calendar, the standard class time instructional base will be 750 minutes per credit hour per semester: 1 Credit Hour Class=750 Scheduled Class Meeting Minutes per Semester. Laboratories are twice that amount: 1 Credit Hour Laboratory=1500 Scheduled Laboratory Meeting Minutes per Semester. Over the span of a semester, the total class meeting minutes vary according to a courses' total credit hours and how it is scheduled.

REPLACES/INCORPORATES EXISTING POLICY

Non-Contact Credit Policy

Faculty Senate Approval – March 2015

Provost Approval – August 2015

Non-Contact Course Credit is defined as credit hours earned for activities such as laboratory work, studio work, internships, practica, experiential learning, independent study, independent reading, and other academic work.

Any WSU undergraduate student engaged in non-contact academic work will receive credit for same only if the work is performed under the supervision of and with approval from a WSU faculty member, with a formal written agreement noting the nature of the academic work, approved also by the appropriate program director, chair, or similar overseeing authority at a program-wide level.

Students engaged in such work should typically spend no less than 45 hours on approved work for each credit hour during the academic term for which credit is offered.