

Credit Hour Guidelines

Overview of Credit hours:

Federal Credit Hour Definition: 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 activities as established by an institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading toward to the award of credit hours.

The college's awarding of credit is in keeping with federal definitions and with expectations of accepted practice in higher education.

Semester Credit Hour Definition

One semester credit hour will be awarded for the satisfactory completion of a minimum of one 50-minute session of classroom instruction per week for a semester of not less than fifteen weeks. The instructor bears the primary responsibility for formalized instruction, which may be delivered in a variety of modes.

For assistance in determining contact hour to credit hour equivalency that include breaks, please use the Contact/break Time Tool developed for Academic Affairs.

Semester credit hours are granted for various types of instruction as follows:

1. Theory: A minimum of 15 hours per term constitutes one credit hour (1:1)
 - Theory is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that reasonably approximates not less than one hour of classroom with direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks.
2. Laboratory: A minimum of 45 hours per term constitutes one credit hour (3:1)
 - Laboratory instruction is educational activity with students conducting experiments, perfecting skills, or practicing procedures under the direction of a faculty member.
3. Studios: A minimum of 30 hours per term constitutes one credit hour (2:1)
 - Studio describes a class in which all students are engaged in creative or artistic activities, which are new and unique and not formulated in a lecture setting. Every student in the room is performing a creative activity to obtain a specific outcome

while receiving guidance from an instructor. Studio courses require little or no out of class study.

4. Practicum: A minimum of 45 hours per term constitutes one credit hour (3:1)
 - Practicum instruction is on-or off-campus work experience, integrated with academic instruction. Students apply theoretical concepts to practical situations within an occupational field.
5. Cooperative/Internship/Externship: A minimum of 45 hours per term constitutes one credit hour (3:1).
 - A cooperative or internship is on or off-campus work experience. It augments formal classroom instruction but is not integrated with a particular course.
6. Field Experience: A minimum of 60 hours per term constitutes one credit hour (4:1)
 - A capstone course conducted in the field in which students apply knowledge gained during the complete program of study.
7. Clinical: A minimum of 45 hours per term constitutes one credit hour (3:1)
 - A student is assigned to practice experiences under supervision at an external agency. The student should receive individual instruction and critique in the performance of a particular function.

Additional Guidelines

- Theory/lab combination courses will adhere to guidelines established above.
- Independent study and topics courses will be consistent with the guidelines identified for the particular type of instruction.
- Exceptions to the above guidelines, including courses which exceed the minimum contact time/credit hour ratios, will be referred to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.