



Process Name: Credit Hours

OVERVIEW OF CREDIT HOURS

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.

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)
 - Under the guidance of an instructor, laboratory instruction is educational activity with students conducting experiments, perfecting skills, and practicing procedures in a manner analogous to workplace or research laboratories.
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 new and unique creative or artistic activities not formulated in a lecture setting which are analogous to the practices of professionals. Every student in the room is engaged

in a creative activity focused on a specific outcome while receiving guidance from an instructor.

4. **Practicum**: A minimum of 45 hours per term constitutes one credit hour (3:1)

- Practicum instruction is an on- or off-campus work experience course that incorporates previous or concurrent academic instruction. The practicum allows students to apply theoretical concepts to practical situations within an occupational field.

5. **Cooperative Education/Internship** A minimum of 45 hours per term constitutes one credit hour (3:1)

- A Cooperative Education or internship course provides paid or unpaid work experience on or off-campus directly related to a student's program of study. It augments formal classroom instruction using pre-determined learning objectives that include the development of professional skills. The experience is not integrated within a particular course.

6. **Field Experience** A minimum of 60 hours per term constitutes one credit hour (4:1)

- A field experience gives students the opportunity to apply cumulative knowledge gained during the complete program of study, in a real-world setting.

7. **Clinical**: A minimum of 45 hours per term constitutes one credit hour (3:1)

- Students are assigned to clinical practices in affiliated clinical settings at external agencies and/or a clinical lab to practice skills learned in healthcare related areas of study. Students are under the supervision of faculty or CNM staff and a qualified clinical professional with a focus on gaining a broad clinical experience.

8. **Clinical Intensive**: A minimum of 60 hours per term constitutes one credit hour (4:1)

- Students are assigned to clinical practice in affiliated clinical settings at external agencies and/or a clinical lab to practice skills learned in healthcare related areas of study. Students are under the supervision of faculty or CNM staff and a qualified clinical professional with a focus on the development of clinical skills. This clinical type provides additional time for repetition and hands-on skills practice appropriate to the goals and objectives of the program.

9. **Integrated Service Learning**: A minimum of 20 contact hours per term, in conjunction with a theory course, constitutes one credit hour (20 contact hours per term: 1) (effective Fall 2016)

- Integrated Service Learning is a teaching methodology that allows faculty to integrate a Service Learning experience, in conjunction with an existing CNM theory course. Students are engaged in direct service or research for an approved site in the community. The experience enhances learning by enabling students to apply course concepts in an off-campus setting and emphasizes community service, as well as personal and social responsibility.

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 that do not meet the minimum contact time/credit hour ratios will be referred to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

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