

Title: Credit Hour Definition and Application to Courses	Policy No:2.11
Category: Instruction and Coursework	Effective: Fall 2012

Policy Statement: 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 one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately sixteen weeks.

This definition is consistent with the U.S. Department of Education's definition. The definition also extends to other academic work that leads to awarding credit hours.

Background: The academic semester is the standard academic calendar unit used at UCO. The standard semester is 16 weeks in length, excluding enrollment, orientation, and designated holidays. It is understood that internships, practica, student teaching, studio work, laboratory work, online courses, and other academic activities leading to the award of credit will organize student work in configurations which do not precisely match this definition. Nevertheless, the amount of student work required per credit hour in these courses or credit-bearing activities at UCO will always be equivalent to the amount of work required per credit hour in a standard lecture or seminar course, as defined above.

Implementation Date: Fall 2012

Related Procedures: As the standard unit of credit to be used in evaluating a student's educational attainment and progress, the semester credit hour will be calculated as follows:

Credit Hour Calculation (rounded to the nearest whole)

The *minimum* amount of time required for credit hour is calculated using 50 minutes as the recognized length of a classroom "hour."

One Hour of Classroom or Direct Faculty Instruction per Semester

$(50 \text{ minutes} \times 16 \text{ weeks} = 800 \text{ minutes}) \div 60 \text{ minutes in an hour} = 13 \text{ hours of classroom or direct faculty instruction.}$

Two Hours of Student Work Out-of-Classroom or Direct Faculty Instruction per Semester

$(2 \times 50 \text{ minutes} \times 16 \text{ weeks} = 1,600 \text{ minutes}) \div 60 = 27 \text{ hours of out-of-class student work}$

13.0 hours of classroom or direct faculty instruction plus 27 hours of out-of-class or direct faculty instruction per semester equals 40 hours.

One Credit Hour equals approximately 40.0 clock hours of instruction/student work per 16 week semester.

The U.S. Department of Education is flexible on how much of this time is used in the classroom or for direct faculty instruction. Each course must account for 40 hours of instruction and student work per credit hour credit.

Clock hour Requirements for Courses

Note: In the following clock hour requirements, the term “instructional time” is synonymous with “in-class” and “direct faculty instruction.” Examinations may be included as instructional time. Instructional time applies to courses taught in all modalities, i.e., face-to-face, online, hybrid, etc. The term “student work” means all assignments or other academic activities required to be completed outside of instructional time. Student work may include reading, studying, writing, completing worksheets, research, etc.

16-Week Courses

Each 3-credit theory course requires 40 hours of instructional time, and 80 hours of student work for a total of 120 hours. These courses typically have 150 minutes per week of instructional time that accounts for 40 hours per semester [(50 minutes x 3 x 16 weeks) ÷ 60 minutes]. The remaining 80 hours (120 – 40) or the equivalent of 5 hours per week (80 ÷ 16) must be accounted for by student work outside of instructional time.

Online and Hybrid Courses

Online and hybrid courses must meet the same credit hour requirement as face-to-face courses. Faculty teaching online and hybrid courses must account for 13 hours of instructional time and 27 hours of student work for each credit hour. A three credit hour course requires 120 hours of instructional time and student work. Logging on constitutes neither active faculty teaching nor active student learning. Faculty must demonstrate active faculty engagement in online teaching/instructing students. Methods such as discussion boards, chats, etc. can serve as instructional time.

Laboratory: 1 lab credit = 3 clock hours

One laboratory credit is defined as: a minimum of 2 class hours per week (2 x 50 minutes x 16 weeks = 1600 minutes) and an expectation of 1 class hour of additional out-of-class student work per week.

Requires 40 hours of laboratory instruction time and 27 hours of student work

Class/Laboratory Combination: Instruction offered through a combination of class and laboratory meeting would observe the standards on a pro rata basis.

Studio Credit: one credit hour is defined as a minimum of 2 class hours of studio work each week under the direct supervision of an instructor and a minimum of 2 class hours of individual studio work each week.

Music Instruction and Specialized music performance offerings: must conform to the requirement for accreditation of the National Association of Schools of Music. For every one hour of credit students, receive one half hour of instruction and are expected to practice one hour each day.

Internship or practicum credit: one credit hour is defined as a minimum of 40 hours of supervised work in a field placement each semester.

Individualized Study credit (e.g. thesis, graduate project, independent, directed reading): one credit hour is defined as a minimum of 3 class hours of direct instruction and/or individual work each week for sixteen weeks.

Seminars, Institutes, Workshops, and Topics courses: These courses will observe the same academic standards involving instructional hours per semester-credit-hour as those courses offered during a standard academic calendar.

Self-Paced Online Courses (Correspondence): These courses will observe the same academic standards involving instructional hours per semester-credit-hour as those courses offered during a standard academic calendar.

Drill Session: A class period taught in conjunction with entry level engineering science courses to provide directed problem-solving instruction. The drill session carries no credit hour value.

Recitation: A class period specially taught in association with, and for review of, a lecture or lab session. An oral presentation which includes interactions involving questions, answers, and directed responses. The delivery of material by a student in an academic setting. Recitation observes the same academic standards involving instructional hours per semester-credit-hour as those courses offered during a standard academic calendar.

Performance: A performance class is an educational situation in which the student learns the art of public presentation of music, dance, and/or drama through personal participation. The presentation can vary from one person, to small ensemble or cast, to a large ensemble, group, or cast.

Large ensembles (bands/orchestra/chorus) - one credit hour is defined as: 4 hours per week for sixteen weeks.

Chamber groups - one credit hour is defined as 2 hours each week for sixteen weeks.

Small music ensembles – one credit hour is defined as 3 hours each week for sixteen weeks.

Production: A production class is an educational situation in which the student learns through personal participation in the art of public music, dance, or drama production. Includes some combination of planning, music, staging, acting, costume and make-up, sets, and lighting. One credit hour is defined as 12 hours of instruction plus an additional 12 hours as a member of a cast or crew.

Clinical: A class consisting of hands-on application of concepts in a specific course that takes place outside the classroom setting and is supervised by an appropriately credentialed professional. Instruction offered through a combination of class and laboratory meeting would observe the standards on a pro rata basis. For health professions, clinical credit is awarded in compliance with the individual program accreditation standards.

Field Study: A field study is a credit bearing activity which includes a long-term immersion into the topic being studied at a location pertinent to the topic and may include at least one overnight stay. It is an intensive on-site experiential learning or research based activity. One credit hour is defined as a minimum of 40 hours of supervised work in a field placement each semester.

Study Tour: A study tour is a credit-bearing course in which the majority of the academic work is accomplished through group study and travel outside the UCO campus. A minimum of two days on site or 16 academic work hours equate to one academic credit hour. An academic work hour is defined as an hour in a class setting (in the US or abroad), or an hour spent actively in on-site activities. No more than six credit hours will be awarded for any single study tour, except under special circumstances.

Coordinating Offices: Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management

Academic Affairs Point-of-Contact: Executive Director for Academic Affairs-Policy and Curriculum

Policy approved by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs on September 13, 2012.

Key Words: Credit hour definition