

Credit and Contact Hours

Original Implementation: February 4, 1986

Last Revision: January 31, 2017

This policy applies to all courses at all levels (undergraduate and graduate) that award academic credit (i.e., any course that appears on an official transcript issued by the university) regardless of the mode of delivery, including but not limited to, self-paced, online, hybrid, lecture, seminar, and laboratory. Academic units are responsible for ensuring that credit hours are awarded only for work that meets the requirements outlined in this policy.

Contact hours of courses offered for degree credit will conform to the rules of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The university adheres to the Carnegie unit for contact time (750 minutes for each credit awarded).

The expectation of contact time is the same in all formats of a course whether delivered fully online, hybrid, or face-to-face. Courses that have less structured classroom schedules, such as seminars, independent studies, internships, practica, studio work, or any other academic work leading to the award of credit hours, at a minimum, should state comparable learning objectives, expected outcomes, and workload expectations.

Permission to offer a course in a shortened format is required by the academic unit head, academic dean, and the provost and vice president for academic affairs. The instruction and content of the material must be appropriate for a shortened duration, and the quality of learning must be at least equal to a course offered in a regular format. Students enrolled in a shortened course must meet the university's regular admission requirements.

Credit Hour

The federal definition of 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:

1. Not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or 10 to 12 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 outlined in item 1 above 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.

Cross Reference: 19 Tex. Admin. Code § 4.6 (2003); 34 CFR § 600.2; Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, “Credit Hours Policy Statement”

Responsible for Implementation: President; Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Contact for Revision: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Forms: None

Board Committee Assignment: Academic and Student Affairs