

SECTION 3 – CREDIT HOURS

Revised: 02-16-2021

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3.1 CREDIT HOUR POLICY

Departments are strongly urged to prefer three-credit-hour courses, especially when these are taken by significant numbers of students from other fields. It is understood that some courses, such as laboratory courses and lower division mathematics courses, will be offered for more than three credits.

Monitoring the allocation of credit hours for a regular course and laboratory work will be the responsibility of the University Curriculum Committee. Each academic department will monitor the allocation of hours for internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit.

The University Curriculum Committee will report on the allocation of credit hours for regular courses and laboratory work as part of its annual report.

The annual reports on the awarding of credit hours will be reviewed and maintained in the Provost's Office to ensure institutional compliance with federal and NWCCU requirements.

3.2 CREDIT HOURS

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 one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction (including 10 minutes for movement between classes) and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fourteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

3.3 CREDIT RATIOS

Academic credit is a measure of the total time commitment required of a typical student in a particular course of study. Total time consists of three components: (1) instructional time - which may be face-to-face, online, or a combination of the two; (2)

time spent in laboratory, studio, fieldwork, or other scheduled activity; (3) time devoted to reading, studying, problem solving, writing, or preparation. One full-semester credit hour is assigned in the following ratio of component hours per week devoted to the course of study: (1) lecture courses (which include face-to-face, online and hybrid) – at least one contact hour or equivalent instructional time for each credit hour, (at least two hours of outside work implied, meaning that for a three-credit hour class, a student should plan to spend a minimum of nine hours per week in some combination of instructional time and outside study); (2) laboratory or studio course – at least two contact hours for each credit hour; (3) independent study - at least three hours of work per week for each credit hour.