

2.14 CREDIT HOUR

Original Date of Issue: 5/11/16

Revised:

Purpose

The purpose of the credit hour policy is to provide documentation regarding Delaware County Community College's procedure for determining credit hours awarded for seated, online, hybrid, and other formats pertaining to its programs and coursework as outlined in MSCHE's publication, *Verification of Compliance with Accreditation-Relevant Federal Regulations*.

Policy

The College follows credit hour guidelines to be in compliance with the policies set by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the federal government, and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

The College applies the commonly-accepted and traditional Carnegie unit definition of a semester credit hour which defines one semester unit of credit as equal to a minimum of three hours of work per week for a semester. A credit hour equals one hour (55 minutes) of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class work each week. One credit hour thus equals 42 hours of instruction including classroom sessions and outside preparation. The distribution of the credit hour usually occurs over a 14-week semester and an additional one week period for final exams; additionally, the credit hour policy is applied consistently over different length sessions such as those that occur in accelerated sessions, summer sessions, and intersessions.

The faculty and program administrators are responsible for developing, maintaining, and evaluating the curriculum within an academic program. The Board of Trustees is responsible for approving all new academic programs and curriculum. Assignment of credit hours for courses are determined within the program based on faculty expertise and course learning objectives. Existing courses will be evaluated for adherence to the federal credit hour regulation. Proposals for new courses will be submitted to the College Advisory System to be reviewed by the Curriculum Review Committee and be recommended for approval or denial.

The Curriculum Review Committee is charged with following the policy on credit hours in their review and approval of all courses and curricula and for certifying that the expected student learning for the course meets the credit hour standard. Approved courses are sent to the Registrar's Office for inclusion in the College Catalog.

The following provides general guidance on how the credit hour translates to the particular instruction method. Note, however, that the credit hour definition does not dictate particular amounts of classroom time versus out-of-class student work – the information below serves as general guidance only.

Lecture and Seminar

Courses with multiple students who meet to engage in various forms of group instruction under the direct supervision of a faculty member.

Credit Hours

	Cre aw: contact time per week	Minimum instructional time per semester	Minimum out of class student work per week	Minimum out of class student work per semester	Total of instructional contact time and out of class student work
1	55 Contact Minutes	770 Contact Minutes	110 Contact Minutes	1,540 Contact Minutes	2,310 Contact Minutes
2	110 Contact Minutes	1,540 Contact Minutes	220 Contact Minutes	3,080 Contact Minutes	4,620 Contact Minutes
3	165 Contact Minutes	2,310 Contact Minutes	330 Contact Minutes	4,620 Contact Minutes	6,930 Contact Minutes
4	220 Contact Minutes	3,080 Contact Minutes	440 Contact Minutes	6,160 Contact Minutes	9,240 Contact Minutes

Laboratory

Courses with a focus on experiential learning under the direct supervision of a faculty member wherein the student performs substantive work in a laboratory setting. The minimum contact time per credit is typically twice that of a lecture (2:1 ratio). Examples include labs, clinical sessions, and studio sessions.

Laboratory Hours

	Cre aw: contact time per week	Minimum instructional time per semester	Minimum out of class student work per week	Minimum out of class student work per semester	Total of instructional contact time and out of class student work
1	110 Contact Minutes	1,540 Contact Minutes	Contact Minutes	Contact Minutes	Contact Minutes
2	220 Contact Minutes	3,080 Contact Minutes	110 Contact Minutes	1,540 Contact Minutes	4,620 Contact Minutes
3	330 Contact Minutes	4,620 Contact Minutes	165 Contact Minutes	2,310 Contact Minutes	6,930 Contact Minutes
4	440 Contact Minutes	6,160 Contact Minutes	220 Contact Minutes	3,080 Contact Minutes	9,240 Contact Minutes

Independent Study

Courses of study in which a faculty member regularly interacts and directs student outcomes with periodic contact. Minimum credit hours are determined based on faculty instructional contact minutes and student outside work time. In all such instances, such courses must match the total amount of work using the examples listed above, and the faculty member is required to keep records of the meeting times and student work assigned so that contact hours can be calculated.

Internship/Practica/Field Experience

Courses of study in which a faculty member regularly interacts and directs student outcomes with periodic contact, but where the actual learning environment takes place off campus at an approved site. The

learning experience will typically involve a site supervisor or preceptor and directed activity/learning will occur outside of a lecture setting. Typically each credit hour requires 60 hours of contact in the work environment. Contact time and outside student work requirements must be established and documented. The faculty member or program director responsible for the experience is required to keep records of amount of supervised work and the amount of outside work assigned so that contact hours can be calculated.

Accelerated Courses

Courses offered outside of a standard 15-week semester in which the credit hours offered are the same as standard semester courses and the content and substantive learning outcomes are the same as those in the standard semester. These courses must meet the total amount of instructional and student work time as the examples above even if delivered within an accelerated time frame.

Online Courses

Courses offered entirely online without any onsite face-to-face meetings. These courses have the same learning outcomes and substantive components of a standard lecture / seminar course with an alternate delivery method. Contact time is satisfied by several means which can include, but is not limited to, the following: a) regular instruction or interaction with a faculty member once a week for each week the course runs. b) Academic engagement through interactive tutorials, group discussions moderated by faculty, virtual study/project groups, engaging with class peers, and computer tutorials graded and reviewed by faculty. In all such instances, these courses must meet the total amount of instructional and student work time as the examples above even if delivered online or asynchronously.

Hybrid Courses

Courses offered in a blended format with one or more onsite face-to-face class sessions and at least one or more online sessions, both containing direct interaction with a faculty member. Contact time is assessed using both onsite definitions (for the onsite portion) and online definitions as above (for the online portion). In all such instances, these courses must meet the total amount of instructional and student work time as the examples above even if delivered online or asynchronously.