CREDIT HOUR DEFINITION

Policy

All academic units must follow the federal credit hour definition (please refer to Assignment of Credits, Program Length, and Tuition (https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/assignment-of-credits.html)). 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 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 academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Hour Definition

One credit hour is equivalent to one hour (50 minutes minimum) of lecture and two hours of out-of-class work each week. For all standard 15-week semesters of instruction, and for non-standard (condensed) and online courses the following contact times (minimums) are assigned for every one credit hour based upon the specific type of learning activity:

- **Lecture:** A course that disseminates cognitive knowledge (may be an oral presentation or other type of presentation). Is synchronous learning, even if students are at multiple locations
  - 1 hour of contact time and 2 hours of out-of-class work for each week of instruction
- **Laboratory:** A course with controlled conditions to perform research, experiments, or practice/simulated procedures; not a patient-billable setting
  - 2-4 hours of contact time for each week of instruction
- **Research/Field Work:** Used for dissertation, capstone, thesis, or research other than thesis
  - 2-4 hours of contact time for each week of instruction
- **Clinical:** A course that is clinical training of any sort in the patient care setting; a supervised practice situation in a real-world setting; a patient-billable setting
  - 2-4 hours of contact time for each week of instruction
- **Other Education Methods:** (Simulation, Directed Studies, Independent Study, Practicum, Seminar, Exam):
  - 3 hours of contact time (Exam time can be considered part of contact time if an instructor chooses to count time spent on assessment as part of contact time)
- **Online or Distance Learning:** All course activity is done online; there is no required face-to-face sessions within the course and no requirements for on-campus activity. Activities can be synchronous or asynchronous. Three (3) hours of student work for each week. Student work includes reading, research, online discussion, and instruction, and assigned group activities, preparation of papers or presentations. (Exception: Courses requiring only one in-person practicum, with all other work completed online)

The Curriculum Committee of each College approves the number of credit hours for all courses, regardless of mode of delivery. The determination/assignment of credit hours should reflect the educational content of the course and the time required for a typical student to achieve the College's desired outcomes.

Course Formats

- **Classroom:** Course activity is organized around scheduled class meetings (even if students are at multiple locations).
- **Hybrid:** Online activity is mixed with classroom meetings, replacing a significant percentage, but not all face-to-face instructional activities. A minimum of one classroom meeting is required to define a course as hybrid.
- **Online:** All course activity is done online. There are no required face-to-face sessions within the course and no requirements for on-campus activity. Online courses may include both synchronous and asynchronous activities. (Exception: Courses requiring only one in-person practicum, with all other work completed online)

Additional Information

- Contact Student Success, 402.559.4437, studentsuccess@unmc.edu
- UNMC Division of Student Success (https://www.unmc.edu/student-success/)
- Applicable Federal Regulation: Department of Education - Assignment of Credits, Program Length, and Tuition (http://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/assignment-of-credits.html). Higher Learning Commission Number: FDCR.A.10.020

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