

Ashland University's Credit Hour Policy

According to the Higher Learning Commission, an institution that awards credit hours must adhere to commonly accepted practices in higher education. The federal definition of a credit hour is the "... amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is 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 for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester ... or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or*
- *at least an equivalent amount of work as required [above] of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practice, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of academic hours."*

In compliance with federal regulations and mandates from the Higher Learning Commission in July 2013, Ashland University awards semester credit hours based on the following:

- one semester credit hour in a lecture or seminar course corresponds to 750 minutes of classroom instruction, or 50 minutes of instruction per week for fifteen weeks, and 1,500 minutes of out-of-classroom work by the student, or 150 to 180 minutes of independent or directed work per week for 15 weeks;
- one semester credit hour in a laboratory, studio, workshop, large ensemble, clinical, or practicum course corresponds to 1,800 to 3,600 minutes of supervised or independent work, or 100 to 240 minutes per week for fifteen weeks;
- one semester credit hour in a private instrument or voice lesson corresponds to a minimum of 30 minutes per week with the instructor plus independent practice as prescribed by the instructor;
- one semester credit hour in an internship course corresponds to 1800 to 4800 minutes, or 120 to 320 minutes of independent work per week for fifteen weeks;
- one semester credit hour in EDUC student teaching/internship corresponds to a minimum of 3000 minutes of field hours, or 200 minutes per week for fifteen weeks;
- semester credit hours for field research, thesis, and dissertation shall conform to the minimum standard of 2250 minutes of student work per credit hour, or 150 minutes per week for fifteen weeks; and
- courses offered in on-line, hybrid, or accelerated formats shall be consistent in quality, assessment, learning outcomes, and requirements as courses of the same departmental prefix, number, credit hours, and title taught in a traditional semester structure.

Faculty members teaching in these formats should include the following statement on their syllabus:

This course format consistently meets the same quality, assessment, learning outcomes and requirements of the traditional semester offering of this course.

It is recommended that faculty members add a weekly expected range of instructional minutes to their syllabus to demonstrate adherence to AU's credit hour policy. (See attached.)

Monitoring for compliance will occur through the Dean's office for each College.

Definitions:

- A traditional semester consists of 15 weeks of instruction followed by 1 week of final exams.
- One contact hour is made up of 50 minutes of instructional meeting time.
- Instructional minutes include contact hours and expected student preparation time.
- The minimum instructional minutes recommended by ODHE in order to grant 1 semester hour of academic credit is 2250 minutes.