



**Policy Number:** 02-50-015

**Policy Title:** ASSIGNMENT OF COURSE CREDIT HOUR

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2021

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A. **Policy Statement**

The policy ensures that the amount and level of credit awarded for each undergraduate, graduate and professional course is compatible with sound academic practice in each discipline, meets OHSU expectations for rigor, meets or exceeds the minimum definition of a Credit Hour required under 34 CFR 600.2, and meets or exceeds the curriculum scope and sequence of similar programs offered by OHSU's peer institutions.

The assignment of credit will be based on the number of formal contact hours for each course occurring over the length of the academic term as well as the number of hours of Course Preparation outside of the classroom setting performed over the length of the academic term. Where appropriate, each school or college may adopt the policies and processes for assigning Credit Hours recommended by their discipline-specific professional organizations, as long as those policies and processes meet or exceed the minimum requirements contained in this policy.

Courses may be composed of any combination of elements described in order to reflect student effort represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement. Examples include, a lecture course which also has required laboratory periods or a lecture course having an additional requirement for supervised independent study or tutorial activity. The Credit Hour measure may be calculated proportionately to take into account a variety of delivery methods, measurements of student effort, modified academic calendars, disciplines, and degree levels, as long as an equivalent amount of effort exists over that modified period of time.

At the discretion of the program, as well as specialized accreditation standards, limited credit may be awarded for demonstration of competency by examination. Award of credit by examination is a program-level decision and faculty are responsible for assessing student competency on examinations.

2. **Definitions**

A) **Course Preparation** or effort includes reading assignments, research papers, study for quizzes and examinations, developing projects, writing up case studies, journaling, discussion forums, and other course activities outside scheduled class time.

- B) **Credit Hour.** The amount of student effort 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 effort each week of an academic term, or approximately eleven to twelve weeks, for one hour of credit; or the equivalent amount of effort over a different amount of time.

Credit Hours are granted for courses and applied to learning activities as follows:

- i. **Lecture, Seminar or Traditional Instruction:** One credit is assigned for one hour of instruction per week per term. Each hour of instruction is generally expected to require two additional hours of Course Preparation (e.g., reading, writing, case study or problem assignments) per week per term.
- ii. **Laboratory Instruction:** One credit is assigned for three hours of laboratory instruction or its equivalent per week per term.
- iii. **Clinical Instruction:** One credit is assigned for three hours of clinical instruction per week per term for undergraduate and School of Dentistry courses, with little or no outside preparation. One credit is assigned for four hours of clinical instruction per week per term for graduate/professional courses, with little or no outside preparation.
- iv. **Simulation Instruction:** One credit is assigned for three hours of simulation instruction per week per term for undergraduate and School of Dentistry courses, with little or no outside preparation. One credit is assigned for four hours of simulation instruction per week per term for graduate/professional courses with little or no outside preparation.
- v. **Web-based or Technologically-Mediated Instruction:** The credits assigned to courses offered partially or totally through technology are subject to the same minimum requirements and should be consistent with the standards and learning outcomes of courses offered through face-to-face instruction. One credit is assigned for one hour of instruction per week per term in addition to the expectation of two additional hours of Course Preparation per week per term.
- vi. **Compressed, Modular, or Self-paced Instruction:** The credits assigned to courses offered during an abbreviated time frame or alternative structured format must remain in compliance with these established policies and procedures for the awarding of credit regardless of format.
- vii. **Workshops and Contract Instruction:** The credits assigned to courses offered for special populations by special arrangement will meet all regular Credit Hour standards established herein.

- viii. **Thesis/Dissertation and Independent Study Instruction:** One credit is assigned for a minimum of three hours of student effort per week per term.

3. **Responsibilities**

Each school or college will establish a formal faculty review process for determining the appropriate number of Credit Hours for each course offering. If a school or college establishes a policy for the assignment of Credit Hours that exceeds the minimum requirements set forth herein, the school or college will publish that policy within the school's regular policy documents. This OHSU policy addresses the federal definition of Credit Hours as required by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities [compliance requirements](#) as well as the requirements listed under 34 CFR 600.2.

The Office of the Provost is responsible for establishing a process to periodically review sample course offerings to ensure the consistent application of this policy in the assignment of Credit Hours to course offerings.

4. **Procedures**

Each school or college must establish a formal faculty review process for determining the appropriate number of Credit Hours for each of its course offerings.

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**Implementation Date:** March 10, 2014

**Revision History:** January 6, 2016; July 1, 2021

**Related Policies and Procedures:** Policy 02-50-010, Proposing Curricular Modifications.

**Responsible Office:** Office of the Provost, [academicpolicy@ohsu.edu](mailto:academicpolicy@ohsu.edu)

**Supersedes:** CAP Policy 0-02-0214

**Key Words:** Graduation requirements, credit hour, course credit