



UWS Credit Hour Worksheet

This worksheet provides information on federal and institutional credit hour policies and their application for determining course credit hours.

On the accompanying Excel spreadsheet, credit hours have been estimated for your course. This document provides you with the opportunity to participate in the conversation regarding credits assigned to your course.

The first part of the document (pages 1-7) provides a discussion of

- how credit hours are defined,
- the components of a credit hour to include a discussion of:
 - direct faculty instruction or instructional hours
 - instructional activity equivalencies, and
 - credit hour calculations by course type.

On pages 8-12, worksheets are provided with examples for estimating credit hours.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to one of the members of the Curriculum Review Workgroup.

Definition of Credit Hours

Federal Guidelines for Credit Hours

Credit hour expectations at UWS are derived from the Carnegie unit. Specifically, federal regulations mandate that all candidate and accredited institutions comply with the definition of the credit hour as set forth in Section 600.2, which defines the credit hour as:

Except as provided in 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (l), 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 or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter 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, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours. (NWCCU, November 2012).

UWS Credit Hour Definition, Policy Number 1210 (5/29/2018) add new

Academic programs at University of Western States (UWS) are typically offered on a quarter system. A quarter hour credit is not the same as a semester hour credit, because semester systems include more weeks per academic term than quarter systems.

A quarter credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement 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 eleven weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time;*
- 2) Two hours of laboratory instruction, and a minimum of one hour of out-of-class student work each week, for approximately eleven weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or*
- 3) Three hours of academic commitment per week of internship, practicum experiences, or independent/direct study for approximately eleven weeks for one quarter hour of credit.*

Student learning outcomes for courses and academic programs are to be uniformly satisfied regardless of the mode of instruction (University of Western States, 2018).

Components of a Credit Hour

Based on the federal guidelines, each credit hour may have two parts:

- Direct faculty instruction - The federal definition for credit hours requires students to complete one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction per credit hour for an 11-week quarter. In the sections below, a discussion of direct faculty instruction is provided.
- Work outside of class - The federal definition for credit hours requires students to complete two hours of work outside of class per week per credit hour for an 11-week quarter. This includes assigned reading, study for exams, etc.

Please note: laboratory classes, internships, practica, etc. may not require out-of-class student work.

Direct Faculty Instruction or Instructional Hours

According to the Department of Education, a week of instructional time is any seven-day period in which at least one day of regularly scheduled instruction or examination occurs. Instructional time does not include:

- vacation time,
- homework, or
- periods of counseling or orientation (US Department of Education, 2016).

Thus, in any seven-day period, a student is expected to be academically engaged through, for example, classroom attendance, examinations, practica, laboratory work, internships, and/or supervised studio work. As long as the work is coordinated or supervised by the faculty member and intentionally engages all students, it counts as direct faculty instruction.

Please note: CCE refers to direct faculty instruction as instructional hours. So, in this document, you may see both terms.

Direct faculty instruction includes activities such as synchronous lecture, guided discussion, experiential learning activities, synchronous demonstrations, assessments, etc. These activities should:

- be related directly to the learning outcomes of the course/program
- be quantifiable- i.e. a standard minimal amount of time can be assigned to each activity for each participant.
- have the direct oversight or supervision of the faculty teaching the course
- in some form be equivalent to an activity conducted in the classroom

So, a meeting with an individual student after class does not count unless all students are receiving the equivalent one-on-one meeting. Observing and guiding students while they complete group work in class would count as the instructor is directly available to assist as necessary.

In the case of online education, academic engagement includes, but is not limited to, submitting an academic assignment; taking an exam, an interactive tutorial, or computer-assisted instruction; attending a study group that was assigned by the institution; contributing to an academic online discussion; and initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course. Merely logging into the electronic classroom does not constitute academic engagement.

Activities that May Replace In-Class Hours for Hybrid or Online Courses

If you are pursuing a hybrid model or a fully online model (approved through the UWS curriculum committee process), the traditional, direct “in class” instructional hours may be satisfied by other activities. The type of activity or combination of activities is determined by the instructor and the course learning outcomes, and must adhere to the credit hours (as closely as possible recognizing some students will use more time or less time based on their individual circumstances).

Activities to satisfy synchronous time must:

1. be related directly to the learning outcomes of the course/program
2. be quantifiable
3. broaden upon or replace the traditional in class instruction

A credit hour in an online, hybrid, lab, practicum, studio, or other course format must involve an equivalent amount of instruction and student work necessary to achieve the intended course learning outcomes and verify evidence of student achievement.

Here are some examples of activities that may fulfill the direct faculty instruction requirement.

- Discussion Board structured to provide guided or instructor-mediated threaded discussion with specified timeframes and expectations for participation
- Chat rooms for class or group projects that provide opportunities for collaborative learning and that have specific expectations for participation and feedback
- Case studies and problem-solving scenarios relative to course goals and outcomes and utilizing higher order analytical skills with instructor and class designed feedback
- Blogs, journals, or logs in which students share the most relevant aspects with instructor and classmates
- Web Quest activities in which students find Internet sites that address specific course outcomes and are shared with class and instructor mediated
- Library research in which instructor directs students to locate certain information or resources and relate them to course outcomes and present them to class in a designated manner
- Lecture materials—Video, audio recordings --from which students are expected to develop questions, comments, or observations shared with class and instructor through discussion board postings or participation in chat rooms
- Instructional CDs or podcasts to be utilized in one way or another;
- Field trips or tours in which students may participate as an individual or group in analyzing an activity (hospital, clinic, public health event, etc.) and prepare a paper or presentation to share with instructor and class
- Final group projects which represent a culmination of learning outcomes and by which students collaborate via e-mail, chat rooms, discussion boards, and ‘face-to-face’ contact to research, analyze, synthesize, and prepare project with instructor receiving periodic updates and providing guidance to group.

(Adapted from Albright University, 2015)

Estimated Activity Equivalencies

In the table below, estimated equivalencies are provided for a variety of instructional activities.

Example Activity	Description	Estimated Instructional Hours
<i>Communication & Class Participation</i>		
Blogs, Journals, Discussion Boards, Wikis	Opportunity for students to apply learned concepts or reflect on learning experiences; shared with instructor and/or in a public forum for analysis, feedback and assessment. Can be used for class or group projects or feedback after instruction.	1 posting = ½ hour instruction 1 response = ½ hour instruction
Chat Rooms	Instructor or student led opportunities. Can be used for class or group projects or feedback after instruction. Provides for collaborative, synchronous learning with specific expectations for participation & feedback as well as possible asynchronous learning where post-review and discussion posts can assist in reflection. Where possible, chats should be posted for archive review.	1 hour chat = 1 hour instruction
<i>Learning Activities</i>		
Case Studies, Online Scenarios, Simulations	Examination and exploration requiring utilization of critical thinking skills which relate to course objectives. Analysis is shared with instructor and/or class with posts.	Guide through case study 1-3 hours as determined by instructor 1 posting = ½ hour instruction 1 response = ½ hour instruction

Example Activity	Description	Estimated Instructional Hours
<i>Collaboration and Peer Review</i>		
Group Project	Activity with specific learning outcomes that is instructor mediated; students collaborate using electronic methods and/or face-to-face contact to research, analyze, synthesize, and prepare project with instructor receiving periodic updates and providing guidance to group.	1 hour per week for duration of project is suggested
Guided Project	Individual activity with specific learning outcomes that is instructor mediated; student and facilitator collaborate using electronic methods and/or face-to-face to research, analyze, synthesize and prepare project with instructor receiving periodic updates and providing guidance and deliberate feedback	1 hour per week for duration of project
Asynchronous Student Presentations	Apps/tools that engage students in online collaboration and peer critiques via programs like Voicethread, website creation tools, student-created posted videos, etc. This is an electronic substitute for in-class presentation time.	1 posting = ½ hour instruction 1 response = ½ hour instruction
Synchronous Student Presentations	Presentations done via web conferencing face to face. Gives the class opportunity for participation and direct feedback. If recorded, should be archived when possible as an electronic substitute for in-class presentation time.	Time allotted for presentation = instructional time 1 posting = ½ hour instruction 1 response = ½ hour instruction
<i>Direct Instruction</i>		
Synchronous Lecture/Web Conferencing	Instructor led instruction using web conferencing for synchronous learning using web conferencing like Adobe Connect. Gives students opportunity for participation and feedback. Should be archived when possible for review.	Time allotted for instruction = instructional time
Asynchronous Lecture	Asynchronous instruction using instructor created resources such as narrated PowerPoints, written notes and screencasting. Students should have the opportunity for comment and discussion through posts or chat room discussions. See Post or Chat equivalency above if this option is given.	Instructor estimate time taken to view instruction = instructional time
Instructional videos	Instructor mediated to expand upon and clarify course concepts and objectives. The videos should engage students through discussion boards or other form of active engagement.	Length of Video = instruction time 1 Hour of CD Activities = 1 hour of instruction 1 posting = ½ hour instruction 1 response = ½ hour instruction
<i>Assessment</i>		
Online Quizzes	Informal assessment tool to assess knowledge and provide individualized feedback on progress.	1 hour test = 1 hour instruction
Reflection Paper/ Article Review	Writing assignment that requires submission of a draft for instructor comment and suggestions for improvement. Should be a guided activity for students to apply learned concepts or apply higher order analytic skills to assess scholarly articles.	1 private posting = ½ hour instruction 1 shared posting (required to read all classmates' postings) = 1 hour instruction
Service Learning Project	Instructor led service project with specific learning outcomes that integrates community service with academic study; faculty provides guidance, support, and feedback to students and student shares experience and reflection with fellow classmates via emails, chats, discussion boards, and/or face-to-face.	1 hour per week for duration of project

(Albright University, 2015)

Credit Hour by Course Type Examples

In the table below, the total number of hours of student work by credit hour is presented by week and for the entire quarter.

Credit Hours	Hours/Week	Hours/Quarter
0.5	1.5	16.5
1	3	33
2	6	66
3	9	99
4	12	132
5	15	165
6	18	198

Examples of credit hours with instructional hours and outside student work expectations for a lecture, lab, and lecture, and lab courses are presented below.

Lecture Class

Credit Hours	Hours/Week		Per Quarter	
	Instructional Hours (Synchronous and Asynchronous)	Outside student work	Instructional Hours (Synchronous and Asynchronous)	Outside student work
2	2	4	22	44
3	3	6	33	66
4	4	8	44	88
5	5	10	55	110

Lab/Clinical Class

Credit Hours	Hours/Week		Per Quarter	
	Instructional Hours (Synchronous and Asynchronous)	Outside student work	Instructional Hours (Synchronous and Asynchronous)	Outside student work
0.5	1.5	0	16.5	0
1.0	3.0	0	33.0	0
1.5	4.5	0	49.5	0
2.0	6.0	0	66.0	0
2.5	7.5	0	82.5	0
3.0	9.0	0	99.0	0

Lecture-Lab Class

Credit Hours	Hours/Week			Per Quarter		
	Instructional Hours (Synchronous and Asynchronous)		Outside student work	Instructional Hours (Synchronous and Asynchronous)		Outside student work
	Lecture	Lab		Lecture	Lab	
2	1	3	2	11	33	22
4	3	3	6	33	33	66
6	4	6	8	44	66	88

Credit Hour Review

On the Excel spreadsheet, credit hours have been estimated for your course. To determine how to best use the instructional hours that have been assigned to your course, complete either worksheet #1 or #2.

Worksheet #1 – hours are estimated by week

Worksheet #2 – hours are estimated for the entire quarter

Remember this is just an estimate and you are not expected to provide exact hours. Use your best guess and your experience as a faculty member to gauge expectations. Again, if you have any questions or concerns, please reach to the CRWG.

The CRWG will follow-up with each faculty member to review worksheets and have additional conversations about the credit hours assigned and any other questions related to the curriculum revision.

Blank Worksheet #1: Week by Week												
Instructional Hours	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Total
On-campus meetings (direct instruction, in-class lectures, demonstrations, recitations)												
Practical experiences (lab experiences, studio activities, clinical assignments, field experience)												
Group or team-based activities (group projects or presentations, debates, group assessments)												
Projects/Presentations (oral presentations, portfolios, multimedia presentations)												
Practice problems or exercises (drills, practice problems, exam reviews)												
Online discussions (discussion forums, wikis)												
Synchronous activities (videoconferences, audio chat, text chats)												
Research activities (literature review, individualized study, research study)												
Writing activities (papers, essays, journal entries, blogs)												
Quizzes or exams (written, computer-based, online)												
Inquiry-based activities (webquest, problem-based or self-directed learning)												
Total												
Outside Class Activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Total
Reviewing course content (audio/video lectures, podcasts, written lectures)												
Readings (assigned readings, additional readings, websites, articles)												
Practice problems or exercises (drills, practice problems, exam reviews)												
Outside Class Activities Total												
Overall Total												

Example: This is for a 3-credit lecture class. Using the Federal definition of a credit, a 3-credit course should have 3 instructional hours and 6 hours of outside student work per week for a total of 9 hours per week.

Worksheet #1: Week by Week Completed Example												
Instructional Hours	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Total
On-campus meetings (direct instruction, in-class lectures, demonstrations, recitations)	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	2	29
Practical experiences (lab experiences, studio activities, clinical assignments, field experience)												
Group or team-based activities (group projects or presentations, debates, group assessments)												
Projects/Presentations (oral presentations, portfolios, multimedia presentations)												
Practice problems or exercises (drills, practice problems, exam reviews)												
Online discussions (discussion forums, wikis)												
Synchronous activities (videoconferences, audio chat, text chats)												
Research activities (literature review, individualized study, research study)												
Writing activities (papers, essays, journal entries, blogs)												
Quizzes or exams (written, computer-based, online)			1			1		1			1	4
Inquiry-based activities (webquest, problem-based or self-directed learning)												
Total	3	3	33									
Outside Class Activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Total
Reviewing course content (audio/video lectures, podcasts, written lectures)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	33
Readings (assigned readings, additional readings, websites, articles)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	33
Practice problems or exercises (drills, practice problems, exam reviews)												
Outside Class Activities Total	6	6	6									
Overall Total	9	9	99									

Worksheet #2: Overall Quarter	
Instructional Hours	Estimated Hours/Quarter
On-campus meetings (direct instruction, in-class lectures, demonstrations, recitations)	
Practical experiences (lab experiences, studio activities, clinical assignments, field experience)	
Group or team-based activities (group projects or presentations, debates, group assessments)	
Projects/Presentations (oral presentations, portfolios, multimedia presentations)	
Practice problems or exercises (drills, practice problems, exam reviews)	
Online discussions (discussion forums, wikis)	
Synchronous activities (videoconferences, audio chat, text chats)	
Research activities (literature review, individualized study, research study)	
Writing activities (papers, essays, journal entries, blogs)	
Quizzes or exams (written, computer-based, online)	
Inquiry-based activities (webquest, problem-based or self-directed learning)	
Total	
Outside Class Activities	
Reviewing online course content (audio/video lectures, podcasts, written lectures)	
Readings (assigned readings, additional readings, websites, articles)	
Practice problems or exercises (drills, practice problems, exam reviews)	
Total	

Example: This is for a 3-credit lecture class. Using the Federal definition of a credit, a 3-credit course should have an additional 6 hours per week of outside work per week for a total of 99 hours per quarter. The expectation is that there are 33 contact hours or instructional hours per quarter.

Worksheet #2: Overall Quarter Completed Example	
Instructional Hours	Estimated Hours/Quarter
On-campus meetings (direct instruction, in-class lectures, demonstrations, recitations)	29
Practical experiences (lab experiences, studio activities, clinical assignments, field experience)	
Group or team-based activities (group projects or presentations, debates, group assessments)	
Projects/Presentations (oral presentations, portfolios, multimedia presentations)	
Practice problems or exercises (drills, practice problems, exam reviews)	
Online discussions (discussion forums, wikis)	
Synchronous activities (videoconferences, audio chat, text chats)	
Research activities (literature review, individualized study, research study)	
Writing activities (papers, essays, journal entries, blogs)	
Quizzes or exams (written, computer-based, online)	4
Inquiry-based activities (webquest, problem-based or self-directed learning)	
Total	33
Outside Class Activities	
Reviewing course content (audio/video lectures, podcasts, written lectures)	33
Readings (assigned readings, additional readings, websites, articles)	33
Practice problems or exercises (drills, practice problems, exam reviews)	
Total	66

References

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