

Credit Hour Policy

Policy Statement

All graduate and undergraduate courses are described in terms of academic credit hours. Southeastern Louisiana University adheres to a commonly-accepted definition of the academic credit hour in accordance with federal definitions ([Federal Register Vol 75 No 117 pg 34811](#) and [U.S. Office of Postsecondary Education Addendum](#)) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) [Credit Hours Policy Statement](#). Southeastern's definition of credit hour also complies with University of Louisiana System policy ([C-I, Academics, Section VII.A](#)).

Purpose of Policy

Students, institutions, employers, the federal government, and others rely on academic credits as a measure of student academic engagement. Thus, within and across academic institutions, some level of consistency is important, while allowing for reasonable flexibility to address differences that naturally occur among different academic fields and various course delivery formats. This policy provides direction and guidance for maintaining reasonable consistency in the awarding of academic credits across courses offered at Southeastern Louisiana University and with the federal definition of the credit hour and SACSCOC policy.

Applicability

This policy is applicable to all credit-bearing courses offered by Southeastern Louisiana University, regardless of course level (undergraduate/graduate), course type (e.g., lecture, lab), and mode of delivery (e.g., face-to-face, online, hybrid).

Policy

A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement. Southeastern adheres to the Carnegie unit, a nationally-recognized standard for equating time-based instruction and student work with course credit. Using 50 minutes as the recognized length of a classroom "hour," one semester credit hour for both undergraduate and graduate courses should strive to meet:

1. a minimum of 50 minutes per week of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of 100 minutes per week of out-of-class student work for a fifteen-week semester, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time. Exams are considered classroom/instructional time. Thus, each semester credit hour would strive to correspond to a minimum total of 750 minutes of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of 1500 minutes of out of class student work for one semester credit hour. This is the standard for traditional, face-to-face lecture and seminar courses; this standard also applies to telecourses and compressed video courses.

OR

2. at least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this policy for courses delivered online, in a hybrid (combination online and face-to-face) format, or other distance delivery format as indicated below:

100% Online Courses: These courses are offered via the internet using a Learning Management System (LMS), with no face-to-face meetings. Contact time is satisfied by several means, including, but not limited to,

- a) regular interaction with a faculty member each week during the semester
- b) academic engagement via interactive tutorials, online group discussions moderated by the faculty member, virtual study/project groups, engaging with class peers, and computer tutorials graded and reviewed by the faculty member.

Hybrid Courses: Hybrid courses are those for which 25% to 99% of the course is delivered via the internet, compressed video, and/or as a telecourse, with the remaining portion delivered via face-to-face class meetings. Contact time is measured using the criteria listed in (a) item 1 (above) for the face-to-face and any telecourse and/or compressed video portions of the course and (b) the above section titled *100% Online Courses* for portions of the course delivered via the internet using an LMS.

An online or hybrid version of a course will be considered to have met the credit hour requirement if it covers the same amount of material with the same level of assessment as if the course were delivered in a traditional format.

OR

3. at least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this policy for other academic activities or instructional modes of delivery as established by the institution including laboratory courses, studio courses, internships, practica, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours (e.g., performance/recital hour, student teaching, thesis/dissertation).

In the event of a natural disaster or other emergency resulting in a temporary University closure, classroom or direct faculty instruction time may be rescheduled or substituted with student work assignments, depending on the length of the closure and as mandated by the University President.

The University's curriculum review and course approval process ensures that credit hours are assigned to courses in accordance with this policy. Throughout this process, academically qualified faculty and university academic administrators, including, but not limited to, program directors, department heads, deans, and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs are responsible for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for courses regardless of format, or mode or location of delivery.

[end of policy]