

Concordia University Credit Hour Policy Approved 2012, Revised July 2022

This policy outlines the definition of the credit hour in use at Concordia University based on federal regulations. The university policy adheres to the Federal Definition of a Credit Hour, found in 34 CRF 600.2. Additionally, this policy specifies the manner in which faculty work to ensure and document that each of their courses meets the credit hour minimum with regard to instructor-student interaction and student preparation assignments, regardless of instructional method.

Definition

A credit hour is defined as instructional interaction time plus student preparation time, which equals total student effort. Forty-five hours per credit is the standard for the university; however, depending on the program, level, or instructional method, there may be variations of up to three hours per credit (allowing for a range of 42 to 48 total hours per credit). All courses have a minimum of 42 hours of total student effort per credit hour. .

16 Week Courses

One credit hour in the 16-week semester format is typically one 50-minute session of scheduled instructor-student interaction (instructional interaction) per week with two additional hours of homework (student preparation hours) per week outside the classroom. A one-credit course would meet one 50-minute hour for 15 weeks (15 hours) and involve two additional hours of student preparation per week (30 hours), for total student effort of 45 hours. The schedule for the typical 16 week, three-credit course, is 150 minutes (three 50-minute hours) of instructor-student interaction each week (45 hours) with six additional hours per week of homework (90 hours), for 135 hours of total student effort.

Six- or Eight-Week Courses

In shorter or compressed courses, there may be fewer scheduled hours, and in those cases, student preparation outside the classroom is a larger portion of the total student effort.

For example, the MBA program uses an instructor-facilitated model where students in three-credit courses meet with instructors four hours per evening over eight weeks (32 hours) and have a greater number of homework hours (12 to 13 per week for eight weeks), to constitute the total of 135 hours of student effort.

Internships, Clinicals, and Practica Courses

Internships, clinical, and other practica courses are evaluated for credit hours based on the combination of the number of hours students work in the setting and in completing outside preparation work. These courses range from 42 to 48 hours of work per credit hour.

Syllabi Documentation

University syllabi describe how a course addresses the credit hour, including the scheduled hours, instructor-student interaction activities, the amount of student preparation, and the total hours of student effort per credit.

Course Scheduling Based on Credit Hours

Concordia outlines available instructional methods in Section 5.6.O of the Faculty Handbook. In the fully face-to-face and virtual instructional methods, 100% of the instructor-student interaction hours, or 15 fifty-minute hours per credit, are scheduled. In blended courses, a portion of the instructor-student interaction hours are scheduled and a portion of the instructor-student

interaction hours take place via online asynchronous instructor-facilitated learning activities and experiences. In fully online asynchronous courses, where traditional synchronous classroom instruction does not occur, all of the instructor-student interaction is comprised of relevant instructor-facilitated learning activities, including audio or video instructor feedback, online discussion, and assignments using collaborative online learning tools.