

General Information

Instructional contact time combined with student preparation determines course credit hours regardless of format or semester schedule, ranging between 42 and 48 hours per credit hour awarded across the various programs and formats of the university. Forty five hours per credit is the standard for the university, but there are variations of up to 3 hours, depending on the program, level, and delivery mode.

In delivery modes where traditional classroom lecture is not present, the traditional classroom time is replaced with other relevant instructor-facilitated learning activities. In compressed modes, student preparation is a larger portion of the total time devoted to the credit hour than the instructor-student contact hours. All courses have 42 hours per credit-hour minimum of student work.

The new syllabus format implemented July 1, 2012 calls for every instructor to define the type and number of hours of interaction with the course content and instructor per credit. This provides for additional transparency with students about the credit-hour basis of course and credits.

Undergraduate

Fall and spring semesters are approximately 16 weeks long. Compressed schedules in Winterim (January term) and Summer terms are three-weeks in length, with two terms in the summer calendar. The precise number of class days per term or semester may vary due to small differences in calendars from year to year. In addition to class time interaction with the instructor, students taking classes in the semester format are expected to prepare at least two hours per week outside of class as a part of each credit hour.

One credit hour in the semester format is typically one 50-minute lecture period a week of instructor-student contact time with two hours of student preparation per week outside the classroom, constituting 45 hours of combined instructor-student contact and student preparation for each credit hour.

Internships, clinical, and other practica courses are also evaluated for credits hours based on the combination of the number of hours students work in the setting and on doing preparation work. For these credits, there is also a range of 42 to 48 hours per credit hour.

Three credit hour courses in the adult education accelerated learning undergraduate format consist of six four-hour face-to-face classroom meetings over six weeks and two hours of online discussion, in addition to 15 to 20 hours of student preparation per week, constituting 12 hours of instructor student-contact and at least 30 hours of student preparation time per credit, for a combined 42 hours per credit hour.

In non-traditional adult education accelerated learning programs, three-credit courses are offered in subsequent blocks of four 6-week mini-terms during the non-traditional term of 6 months or 24 weeks (see non-traditional calendar). A student taking classes every week of the non-traditional calendar would take 8 courses per calendar year.

The accelerated BSN completion program has classes that run from 5 to 8 weeks in length, with classes meeting from 2 – 5 hours, depending on the number of credits. Student work outside of class brings the total number of combined instructor-student and student preparation hours to 42 hours per credit.

Graduate

Graduate and professional studies courses are either designed in a semester format (traditional programs) or in a compressed format (non-traditional programs). Instructional contact time combined with student preparation determines course credit hours regardless of format or semester schedule, ranging between 42 and 48 hours per credit hour for all graduate and professional courses. Non-traditional compressed courses are generally at the 42 hour level per credit, with some exceptions, while traditional Pharmacy courses likely have a greater number of hours of student work per credit at about 48.

In traditional graduate or professional programs, students attend fifteen week terms similar to traditional undergraduates, though Pharmacy School terms are at least one week longer. In nontraditional graduate programs, compressed schedules vary, especially in the summer, though in each case the combination of instructor-student contact time and student preparation is not less than 42 hours per credit. In compressed non-traditional schedules, such as the MBA schedule of eight weeks of one four-hour session per week, students have 32 hours of instructor-student contact time but a greater amount of time spent in student preparation. Students in compressed schedules complete a greater number of student preparation hours in the total number of hours per credit than students in traditional semester formats.

In many non-traditional graduate programs, three-credit courses are offered in three eight-week mini-terms during the non-traditional term of 24 weeks or six months (see non-traditional calendar). A graduate student taking classes every week of the non-traditional calendar would take six courses per calendar year, though some programs, such as the Graduate Education program, offer five courses per year and time during the summer to work on competency portfolios or other tasks not tied to specific courses.

Internship, clinical, and practica courses are also evaluated for credits hours based on the combination of the number of hours students work in the setting and the number of hours of expected student preparation. For these credits, there is also a range of 42 to 48 hours per credit hour throughout the university.

Online – Undergraduate and Graduate

All online courses and programs address the credit hour with the Concordia standard number of hours (between 42 and 48 per credit-hour) of instructor-facilitated student learning activities and student preparation. Instructional Designers in the Office of Distance and Continuing Education guide instructors in course development and support the creation of instructor-facilitated learning activities which take the place of classroom seat-time hours.