

BERKELEY COLLEGE CREDIT HOUR ASSIGNMENT POLICY

PURPOSE

This Credit Hour Assignment Policy is intended to ensure that (1) the number of credits awarded for the completion of each Berkeley College course reflects United States Department of Education (USDOE) and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) requirements for classroom hours and recommended out of class course work, and is appropriate for the pursuit of identified learning outcomes; and (2) credits awarded for the completion of programs that do not adhere to the standard definition of a “credit hour,” (such as online, blended learning and internship courses, as well as credits awarded for prior learning) are consistent with those assigned to traditional onsite courses, considering course content and expected learning outcomes.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the assignment of credit hours to all current and new Berkeley College programs, including graduate and health studies courses, as well as related review and assessment processes.

I. DEFINITION OF A “SEMESTER CREDIT HOUR”

Consistent with the requirements of USDOE and MSCHE, for in-person courses one semester credit shall be equal to not less than one hour (50 minutes) of classroom instruction plus two hours (120 minutes) of out-of-class course work over a span of not less than 15 weeks, or the equivalent amount of classroom instruction and out-of-class work over a different span of time.

II. OUT OF CLASS EFFORT REQUIRED

Consistent with the definition of a semester credit hour set forth in this policy, students in onsite lecture/didactic courses shall be expected to devote approximately two hours outside the classroom on related course work, such as study, preparation of written assignments and course-related projects. Instructors shall acquaint students with such expectations clearly at the beginning of each course and thereafter, as appropriate, to foster positive learning outcomes. In addition, standard syllabi shall include a clear notice apprising students of expectations for course-related out of class work.

For programs that do not adhere to the standard definition of a “credit hour” (such as online, blended learning and internship courses, as well as credits awarded for prior learning), overall effort required shall be consistent with that required in traditional onsite courses, with due consideration given to course content and expected learning outcomes. In addition, standard syllabi shall include a clear notice apprising students of expectations for overall course-related effort.

III. CREDITS ASSIGNED TO PARTICULAR TYPES OF COURSES

In assigning credits to courses, the College shall maintain consistent standards for courses of different lengths and delivery methods as follows:

Course Type	Credit Requirements
Onsite Lecture Courses	<p>One semester credit shall be equal to not less than one hour (50 minutes) of classroom instruction plus two hours (120 minutes) of out-of-class course work over a span of not less than 15 weeks, or the equivalent amount of classroom instruction and out-of-class work over a different span of time.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) A three-semester credit hour course that meets for two 75-minute sessions per week (for a total of 30 sessions) plus 360 minutes out-of-class work per week, over a span of not less than 15 weeks. (2) A three-semester credit hour course that meets for one 150-minute session per week (for a total of 15 sessions) plus 360 minutes out-of-class work per week, over a span of not less than 15 weeks
Online Courses	<p>The content of online courses shall closely approximate that of corresponding onsite courses, with comparable learning outcomes and student participation expected. Accordingly, online courses shall be assigned the same number of credits as the corresponding onsite courses.</p>
Practicum/Clinical Health Courses	<p>Clinical components of health studies programs shall conform to any applicable regulatory and accreditation requirements, as delineated in the programmatic accreditation criteria.</p> <p>Onsite courses that include practicums/clinicals shall include one additional semester credit for each 150 minutes of clinical time. Clinical components of health studies programs shall conform to any applicable regulatory and accreditation requirements.</p>
Laboratory Health Courses	<p>Laboratory components of health studies programs shall conform to any applicable regulatory and accreditation requirements, as delineated in the programmatic accreditation criteria.</p> <p>Onsite courses that include labs shall include one additional semester credit for each 100 minutes of laboratory time. Laboratory components of health studies programs shall conform to any applicable regulatory and accreditation requirements.</p>
Internship Courses	<p>Internship courses shall carry three credits and include one hour (50 minutes) of instruction per week and 120 hours of supervised experiential learning per semester.</p>

Course Type	Credit Requirements
Blended Learning Courses	Blended learning classes typically consist of equal time spent in classroom and online instruction. Credits awarded shall reflect the total time for both components, plus additional time comparable to the out of class requirements of traditional onsite courses.
Short-Sessions	Credit hours may be earned in short sessions (7-week modules, etc.) proportionately to those earned for the same activity during a 15-week College term.
Credit Awarded for Prior Learning	Shall be granted on the basis of students' demonstrated learning resulting from prior work, travel, program-related achievements or other relevant and valuable learning experiences. The number of credits awarded shall be determined by measuring learning outcomes equivalent to those offered in onsite courses. Measurements shall be based upon challenge examinations; national standardized tests (such as AP, CLEP, DANTES and Regents College Exams); StraighterLine course equivalencies; military training; portfolio evaluation; and/or published guides (such as the American Council on Education CREDIT program and the National College Credit Recommendation Service). Credit shall not be awarded merely for experience; awards shall be based upon a tangible demonstration of relevant learning derived from such experience.
Studio Courses	A typical three-semester credit studio course meets for four hours a week for 15 weeks for a total of 60 studio hours (and eight hours per week of outside study).

IV. ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Consistent with the definition of a semester credit hour set forth in this policy, Berkeley's academic calendar shall consist of three semesters, the Fall, Winter and Spring Semesters. Each semester shall be 15 weeks in duration. The Academic Calendar shall be posted in the Berkeley College Catalog on the College public website.

V. ONGOING ASSESSMENT OF SEMESTER CREDITS

The number of credits assigned to each course shall be considered in course design and syllabi. Expected student learning outcomes for each course shall meet the semester credit hour standard. Consideration of assigned credits shall be incorporated in the periodic review of syllabi by department chairs, regularly scheduled annual course assessments involving input from faculty and students, curriculum committee reviews, and formal program reviews conducted after the first two years for new programs and every five years thereafter. The School Deans shall review credits assigned to courses and submit their recommendations to the Office of the Provost for final approval in accordance with the standards prescribed in this policy.

VI. REVIEW AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

The Office of the Provost shall be responsible for maintaining "evidence and analyses demonstrating that these policies and procedures are consistently applied across programs and courses, regardless of delivery mode or teaching/learning format." ([MSCHE Credit Hour Policy, 10/30/12](#)). Documentation shall be maintained by the Office of the Provost. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness shall maintain the College's accreditation database, which shall include new program and program review documentation pertaining to course creation and review.