

Determining Credit Hours Awarded for Courses and Programs

OPERATIONAL POLICY STATEMENT

For academic purposes, Yavapai College uses Carnegie units to measure semester credit hours awarded to students for course work. A Carnegie unit of credit equates to three hours of student work per week (1 fifty (50) minute session of classroom instruction plus 2 hours of homework) for 15 weeks. In certain circumstances, it is possible to have more hours, but not less.

For example:

1. For lecture classes, a semester credit hour consists of the equivalent of at least one credit hour per semester of "seat time" in-class and a minimum of two (2) hours per week of out-of-class student work for fifteen (15) weeks. Hence, a standard three (3) semester credit hour lecture class meets for at least forty-five (45) contact hours per semester, plus a minimum average of six (6) hours of activities outside of the classroom per week for fifteen (15) weeks.
2. For completely self-contained laboratory classes, one (1) semester credit hour consists of the equivalent of a minimum of three (3) hours of laboratory work per week for fifteen (15) weeks.
3. For non-self-contained laboratory classes, which require outside preparation by the student, one (1) semester credit hour consists of the equivalent of a minimum of two (2) hours of laboratory work per week for fifteen (15) weeks.
4. For studio art laboratory classes, one (1) semester credit hour consists of the equivalent of a minimum of (2) hours of laboratory work per week for fifteen (15) weeks.
5. For clinical laboratory courses, a course activity in which students, under the supervision of a faculty member, are involved with the direct treatment or observation of patients/clients, one (1) credit hour consists of the equivalent of a minimum of (2) hours of clinical work per week for 15 weeks, plus a minimum of one hour out of class student work. This formula is variable by program and will be determined in accordance with recommendations of program specific accrediting bodies or state regulations.

6. For online (distance education) courses, student learning outcomes and requirements are the same as those used when the course is offered through any instructional method (i.e. face-to-face, classroom & web, computer based), and therefore the definition of the credit hour measurement is the same.
7. For individual instruction classes, instructors should make adjustments so that the total number of hours of work required by students is equivalent to that of a traditional class that meets face-to-face.
8. For classes offered in a shortened format, the hours are prorated so the classes contain the same total number of hours as if the classes were scheduled for a full fifteen 15-week semester. Ultimately, the responsibility for protecting the academic integrity of curricula, programs, and class schedules rests with the College's Vice President of Academic Affairs. The College may adjust its basic measure for awarding academic credit proportionately to reflect modified academic calendars and formats of study as long as it meets the aforementioned criteria.

Regardless of the mode of instructional delivery or class scheduling, the College will assign academic credit consistently across academic programs as well as for transfer credit among accredited institutions of higher education. In all cases, the student learning outcomes must be equivalent.

PROCEDURE

I. Review and Approval Process

1. Course developers will ensure that the required quantity of student learning per credit is the equivalent to at least forty-five (45) hours of coursework over a fifteen (15)-week semester through instructional activities that address and demonstrate student competencies in defined learning outcomes. These instructional activities should draw upon instructional practices approved by the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
2. The College Curriculum Committee recommends to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the President the appropriate semester credit hour definition and application according to the following guidelines:
 - a) The College's semester calendar will not violate any accreditation standards, or federal/state guidelines.
 - b) The College's semester calendar will facilitate the educational attainment of the College including the process for the award of transfer credit; and
 - c) A semester credit hour will be consistent throughout all the academic programs of the College.

II. Operational Policy Administration

1. For each academic term, the College Registrar will assist Deans/Associate Deans, Department Chairs, and Program Directors/Coordinators to schedule classes in conformity to the College's semester credit hour operational policy.
2. Classes that meet for more than seventy-five (75) minutes consecutively will include a ten (10)-minute break for each seventy-five (75)-minute segment.

3. Prior to the beginning of student registration, the College Registrar will deliver an official student information system report verifying that all proposed class schedules meet the College's semester credit hour operational policy to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for approval.
4. If proposed class schedules do not meet minimum time requirements, the Vice President of Academic Affairs will direct Instructional Deans to adjust class schedules to conform to the College's semester credit hour operational policy.
5. Periodically, the Curriculum Committee and the Vice President of Academic Affairs will review the semester credit hour operational policy as defined by Carnegie unit measure and forward recommendations to the President for approval.

III. Definitions: Types of classes

1. Lecture class: The most standard form of instruction - the instructor lectures the class and leads discussion.
2. Self-contained laboratory class: Laboratory classes are characterized by hands-on activity. Students interact with each other and the instructor guides students as needed. No outside preparation is required by the student.
3. Non-self-contained laboratory class: Laboratory classes are characterized by hands-on activity. Students interact with each other and the instructor guides students as needed. Outside preparation is required by the student.
4. Studio art laboratory class: Studio art laboratory classes are hands-on activity classes which concentrate on the creative, technical, and practical aspects of art disciplines such as drawing, design, ceramics, photography, etc. Instructor guides students as needed.
5. Individually-paced-instruction class: Students, with faculty guidance, work at their own pace to complete course requirements. Students are expected to exhibit weekly progress and to follow the start/end dates specified in the class schedule.

OPERATIONAL POLICY HISTORY

Adopted April 7, 2015

Revised to "Operational" Policy, owner reassigned, and changed Vice President for Instruction and Student Development to Vice President of Academic Affairs 3/5/2021
