

Northern Marianas College
Board of Regents Policy

SUBJECT:	Academic Affairs	EFFECTIVE:	December 12, 2019
SECTION:	3031	POLICY NAME:	Credit Hour
WSCUC Standard/Policy:	Standard Two CFR 2.2		

The Code of Federal Regulations mandates that institutions are required to comply with regulations regarding the definition and assignment of credit hours under Title 34, sections 600.2 and 600.24.

The purpose of this policy is to establish the Carnegie Unit as the basis for all credit hours at NMC and to identify the process and evidence by which Northern Marianas College ensures reliability and accuracy of the assignment of credit hours to activities earning academic credit.

It is the policy at Northern Marianas College that a semester credit hour reasonably approximates but is not less than:

- (1) Fifty minutes to one hour of direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class or the equivalent amount of work over a deferred period of time; or
- (2) At least an equivalent amount of work for other academic activities such as distance education, laboratory work, internships, practical, clinical, studio work, and other work that earns academic credit.

Semester credit hours for a given course are intended to allow for the amount of work needed to accomplish the intended student learning outcomes and thereby provide evidence of student achievement as it relates to program learning outcomes in a single semester.

Lecture, seminar

A semester credit hour is an academic unit earned for fifteen 50-minute sessions of classroom instruction with a normal expectation of two hours of outside study for each class session. Typically, a three (3) credit hour course meets three 50 minute sessions per week for 15 weeks for a total of 45 sessions.

Activities supervised as a group (laboratory, fieldtrip, etc.)

One to four weekly contact hours per credit.

- (1) There may be *fewer* contact hours per week for laboratories which have higher expectations for outside independent work.
- (2) There may be *more* contact hours per week for laboratories which have lower expectations for outside independent work.

Experiential (Internship, practicum, field experiences, clinical, etc.)

Contact between instructor and student is required but variable and not necessarily on a weekly basis.

- (1) *Fewer* contact hours will be necessary for an experiential course in which a considerable amount of the student's time is devoted to reading, research, and other academic activities to which the field experience is supplemental. *More* contact hours will be necessary if the academic component involves a less significant proportion of the student's time.

- (2) *Fewer* contact hours in the setting will be necessary for an experiential course in which the student receives a significant amount of supervision and instruction from a regular member of the faculty. *More* contact hours in the setting will be necessary if the student receives less direct supervision or less time devoted to instruction, from the faculty.

Independent Study

Contact between instructor and student is required, but variable and not necessarily on a weekly basis. Learning outcomes as outlined in the course guide are required to be met.

Credit by Examination

The institution may award semester hour credits for mastery demonstrated through credit-by-examination. When such credit by examination is allowed, it may be used to satisfy degree requirements or to reduce the total number of remaining hours required for a degree.

Accelerated Sessions

Credit hours may be earned in short sessions proportionately to those earned for the same activity during a regular term of the institution.

It is not the intent for the credit hour definitions given in this document to describe all individual courses across the institution, but rather, to describe typical practices within course types.

- (1) Programs proposing courses whose expectations lie significantly outside of those delineated above shall provide a justification within the course proposal.
- (2) For existing courses, each department will review their courses and determine if each course adheres to the guidelines delineated in this credit hour policy.
- (3) Departmental course credit hour review will be requested every five years by the Office of Learning and Student Success.

HISTORY:

New Policy