



Standards for Semester Credit Hour

**1-001
Academic Affairs**

1.0 DEFINITIONS

- 1.01 Credit Hour: A measure representing the amount of work required to achieve student learning outcomes for a specific course.
- 1.02 Carnegie Unit: For a traditional format course, one (1) Carnegie Unit is equal to fifty (50) minutes inside the classroom.

2.0 POLICY

- 2.01 The semester-credit-hour is the standard and traditional unit of credit to be used by Oklahoma Panhandle State University in evaluating a student's educational attainment and progress for all programs. For purposes of calculation and monitoring, credit hours will be measured as Carnegie units.
- 2.02 Oklahoma Panhandle State University strictly adheres to the policies of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education regarding the semester credit hour (OSRHE Academic Affairs Policy, Section 3.19.2).
- One semester-hour of credit is normally awarded for completion of a course meeting for 800 instructional minutes, reference clock hours and credit hours 34 CFR 600.2 (i.e., 50 minutes per week for sixteen weeks), exclusive of enrollment, orientation, and scheduled breaks. Organized examination days may be counted as instructional days.
 - Laboratory credit is normally awarded at a rate not to exceed one-half the instructional rate. One semester-hour of credit is normally awarded for completion of a laboratory meeting a minimum of 1600 minutes (i.e., 100 minutes per week for sixteen weeks).
 - Instruction offered through a combination of class and laboratory meetings would normally observe the standards set forth above on a pro rata basis. For example, a course offered for four semester-hours of credit might meet for 100 minutes of organized instruction plus 200 minutes of laboratory per week for 16 weeks.
- 2.03 To ensure that academic standards are maintained for instructional time, OPSU has adopted the following definitions of a semester-credit hour. These standards apply to all for-credit traditional and/or synchronous coursework.

- A. Theory Class: One semester credit hour requires a minimum of 800 minutes of instructional meeting time.
 - B. Laboratory Class: Laboratory credit is awarded at a rate not to exceed one-half the theory rate. One semester credit hour requires a minimum of 1600 minutes of laboratory meeting time.
 - C. Theory/Laboratory Class: Theory/Laboratory credit is awarded on a prorated basis according to the rates set for Theory and Laboratory Classes.
 - D. Internship: One semester credit hour requires a minimum of 2475 minutes of employer-supervised work time.
 - E. Clinical Class: One semester credit hour requires a minimum of 2400 minutes of supervised time in a clinical setting.
 - F. Theory/Laboratory-Simulation/Clinical Class: Theory/Laboratory-Simulation/Clinical credit is awarded on a prorated basis according to the rates set for Theory, Laboratory and Clinical Classes.
 - G. Co-Requisite Model Plus Courses: The co-requisite model Plus courses (e.g., ENGL 1115, MATH 1475, MATH 1515, MATH 1525) count 5 hours toward load, but 3 credit hours toward graduation.
 - H. Music Courses: Using best practice models from National Association of Schools of Music, OSU, and peer institutions, music faculty load for applied lessons and ensembles will be calculated using contact hours with the students instead of credit hours. For example, a 1 credit hour lesson meets face-to-face for 30 minutes and will be calculated as .5 hours towards load. Likewise, 1 credit hour for an ensemble meets for 3 contact hours per week and should be counted as 3 hours towards load.
- 2.04 Block or alternative course schedules may also occur within the dates set forth for a semester or summer session. Courses offered during academic terms shorter than a semester will observe the same academic standards involving instructional hours per semester-credit-hour as those courses offered during a standard academic semester.
- 2.05 Alternative Formats: Standards set for credit offered in fully asynchronous courses, courses with asynchronous components, and other non-traditional formats must have commensurate content, rigor, and assessment of student learning as those established for a normal academic semester or delivery mode.
- 2.06 There are alternatives to reliance on time-in-class as the basis for determining academic credit-hours earned. The achievement of academic credit-hours should be linked to demonstrated student learning either through regular class assignments and evaluations or

demonstration of competencies. It is the responsibility of faculty to translate student demonstrated competencies to academic credit-hours earned. When determining the appropriate academic credit for non-traditional or accelerated format courses, institutions must adhere to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Handbook of Accreditation Standards. HLC requires institutions to rigorously assess student learning outcomes consistently across all formats.

- 2.07 The above calculations represent a minimum number of minutes required for each type of course offering. Excessive amounts of instructional contact time should be avoided, and in no case may a course's meeting time exceed its minimum meeting time by the equivalent one-half of one credit hour.
- 2.08 The above calculations indicate only the instructional contact time requirements for semester credit hours. Out-of-class preparation by the student is not only expected but required.

3.0 PROCEDURE

- 3.01 The Office of Academic and Student Affairs will work with Deans and Department Chairs to determine the number of credit hours a student may earn for each course.
- 3.02 The Department Chairs and Deans, or by his/her designee, are responsible for ensuring that courses scheduled by their departments and colleges comply with Carnegie Units.
- 3.03 Any exceptions to the calculated seat time for a course must be approved by the appropriate academic Dean, Vice-President of Academic and Student Affairs, and the Registrar.
- 3.04 The Office of Academic and Student Affairs will check the final draft of the schedule each term prior to student registration identifying any courses not meeting the required amount of Carnegie Units. Identified courses will be shared with the Office of the Registrar, Department Chairs, and Deans.
- 3.05 If a course is identified as not meeting the required number of units, the Office of Academic and Student Affairs will:
 - a. Request the Office of the Registrar make the necessary Carnegie Unit adjustments; and
 - b. Notify the Department Chairs and Deans that action to correct the course has been taken.

Policy History

Latest Revision: November 2023

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