

Campus Policy for Assignment of Credit Hours

Farmingdale State College	Approved By: Dr. Lucia Cepriano, Provost Effective Date: June 4, 2015
	Category: Academic Affairs Contact: Office of the Provost

A. SUMMARY

All credit-bearing degree and certificate programs at Farmingdale State College are approved by the New York State Education Department (NYSED). Calculation of credit hours for these programs follows NYSED guidelines, which are consistent with the U.S. Department of Education's definition of a credit hour and reflect the State University of New York (SUNY) Credit/Contact Hour Policy.

The State University of New York (University), like most American higher education, has adopted a variant of the traditional "Carnegie Unit" as a measure of academic credit. This unit is known in the University by the familiar term, "semester credit hour", and is the primary academic measure by which progress toward a degree is gauged. It is recognized that such a unit measures only a part of a composite learning experience, based upon formally structured and informal interactions among faculty and students. As part of the State University of New York, Farmingdale State College abides by the Credit/Contact Hour Policy (*document number 1305*)

http://www.suny.edu/sunypp/documents.cfm?doc_id=168 of the State University of New York, which is in compliance with policies set forth by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

B. POLICY

In accordance with the SUNY Policy, the semester credit hour has been defined as one 50 minute session of instruction per week including two hours of out-of-class preparation by the student for a semester of not less than fifteen weeks. This basic measure may be adjusted to reflect modified academic calendars and formats of study. On-line and hybrid courses and other formats of learning should contain the same amount of academic activity as provided in a traditional setting and in accordance with the credits assigned.

Although the SUNY Board of Trustees or their representatives retain final control and approval of the curriculum, the faculty and program administrators are responsible for developing, maintaining and evaluating the curriculum within an academic program. Assignment of credit hours for courses is determined within the program based on faculty expertise and course learning objectives. Existing courses will be evaluated for adherence to the federal credit hour regulation during the curriculum review process. Faculty, administrators and external evaluators will ensure that all courses are in compliance. New courses will, upon review and approval at the program level, be reviewed by the College Wide Curriculum Committee and recommended for approval or denial.

The College Wide Curriculum Committee is charged with following the FSC Policy on the Assignment of Credit Hours in their review and approval of all courses and curricula and for certifying that the expected student learning for the courses meets the credit hour standard.

Approved courses are sent to the Office of the Registrar for inclusion in the College Catalog and posted to the Degree Audit System. The Office of the Registrar reviews the class schedules prior to the start of each semester to ensure that all classes are scheduled for the minimum number of minutes corresponding to the credits assigned, or otherwise notes when course schedules do not match assigned credit hours. Any discrepancies are brought to the attention of the appropriate department for correction or explanation.

The following provides general guidance on the credit hour translation to particular instructional methods.

I. Lectures and Seminars

These courses are designed to engage multiple students in various forms of group instruction under the direct supervision of a faculty member. A semester credit hour is an academic unit earned for fifteen 50-minute sessions of face to face classroom instruction with a normal expectation of two hours of outside study for each class session, resulting in approximately 37.5 hours of academic activity for each credit hour. Typically, a three-semester credit hour course meets three 50-minute sessions per week for fifteen weeks for a total of 45 sessions or two 75-minute sessions per week for fifteen weeks for a total of 30 sessions.

II. Activity supervised as a group (laboratory, field trip, practicum, workshop, group studio, clinicals)

Courses in this category are those with a focus on experiential learning under the direct supervision of a faculty member where the student performs work within the context of the activity.

For instructional laboratory activity, a semester credit hour is awarded for the equivalent of fifteen periods of such activity in an instructional laboratory setting, where each activity period is 100 to 150 minutes (or a total of 25-37.5 hours) in duration with a minimum of out of class student work equal to half of the activity period per week.

For field trip, practicum, workshop, or group studio activity, a semester credit hour is also awarded for the equivalent of fifteen periods of such activity, where each activity period is 150 minutes (or a total of 37.5 hours) in duration with essentially no outside preparation expected.

Clinical courses with a focus on experiential learning under the direct supervision of a faculty member when the student performs work in a clinical setting. The minimum contact time per credit is typically three times that of a lecture (3-1 ratio) with minimum out of class student work expected.

III. Individual academic activity (independent study, individual studio, tutorial)

One credit for independent study will be awarded for the equivalent of forty-five 50-minute sessions (or a total of 37.5 hours) of student academic activity.

Credit for tutorial study will be awarded on the basis of one semester hour credit for each equivalent of fifteen contact hours of regularly scheduled instructional sessions assuming the student is working for an additional 2 hours outside each of the sessions. Tutorials can have more or less contact hours as long as the total learning time is 37.5 hours per credit hour.

IV. Full-time Independent Study (student teaching, practicum)

If a student's academic activity is essentially full-time (as in student teaching), one semester credit hour may be awarded for each week of work.

V. Experiential Learning (internship)

Credit hours may be awarded for courses of study in which a faculty member regularly interacts and directs student outcomes with periodic contact, but where the actual learning environment takes place off- campus at an approved site or at a site on campus that has been designated for the learning experience. When life or work experience is to be credited as a concurrent portion of an academic program design, as in an internship, one semester credit hour will be awarded for each 40-45 clock-hour week of academic activity that provides learning considered necessary to the program of study.

VI. Credit by Examination

Semester hour credits may be awarded 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.

VII. Short Sessions (accelerated courses)

Courses offered outside of a standard 15 week semester in which the credit hours offered are the same as regular semester courses and the content and substantive learning outcomes are the same as those in the typical semester. These courses must meet the standard amount of instruction and student work time even though they are delivered in an accelerated time frame. Typically, credit hours may be earned in short sessions, normally at no more than one credit per week (37.5 hours) of full-time study.

VIII. On-line and Hybrid Courses

For every hour of credit, students must engage in 37.5 hours of academic activity. Online and hybrid courses should be assigned credit hours based on a similar understanding, even though the activities for electronic instructional time will be different from traditional face-to-face instruction. The course content provided by the instructor in an online or hybrid course would therefore be equivalent to the course content that would be provided by the instructor in a face-to-face course with the same number of credit hours.

In accordance with SUNY policy, traditional lecture courses include two hours of student learning outside of instructional time for each semester credit hour. The number of hours spent outside of instructional time can be difficult to determine based on learning styles, abilities, rates of content retention, subject matter of course, and so forth. A general guideline is that students should expect to spend twice the amount of instructional time in activities and assignments, which is the same as would be expected in a face-to-face course of the same subject. Examples of such activities include:

- Writing papers
- Readings
- Group work or independent work
- On-line learning materials
- Presentation preparations

- Completing assignments
- Practice quizzes
- Other activities that do not include direct instructor interaction and involvement

C. DEFINITIONS

Asynchronous: Web Based Instruction in which the communication does not take place at the same time; examples include private mail and bulletin boards.

Carnegie Unit: Time based reference for measuring education attainment used by American universities and colleges; the Carnegie Unit assesses secondary school attainment, and the student hour, derived from the Carnegie Unit, assesses collegiate attainment.

Credit Hour: Also known as the Student Hour or Semester Credit Hour, is approximately 1/10 of the Carnegie Unit and equivalent to one hour (50 minutes) of instruction for a single student per week over the course of a 14-16 week semester, including two-hours of out-of-class preparation by the student. (*Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York, Title 8 – Education Department*)

Hybrid Course: A course that is delivered in a physical classroom (face-to-face) and through the institution supported course management system. This blended format reduces face to face time by incorporating an online component. The web delivered components meet best practice standards used for online courses and achieve learning while reducing the amount of classroom time. *See FSC Distance Learning Policy* [INSERT LINK](#))

Independent Study: Study which is given initial guidance, criticism, review and final evaluation of student performance by a faculty member.

Online Course: A course that is delivered exclusively on-line, through the institution supported course management system, where students access instructions, instructor's office, all course materials (lectures, assignments, resources, etc.), submit assignments for grading, and communicate via email, discussions, and/or chats with the instructor and other students. Online classes have 100% of the content delivered through the electronic means. Examinations and other student work submitted for grading or evaluation by the instructor are either conducted online or administered in proctored facilities accessible by all students registered for the online course.

Short Sessions: Short sessions include summer sessions and intersessions as well as accelerated schedules.

Synchronous: Web Based Instruction in which communication is simultaneous. Examples include chat rooms, two-way interactive voice chat and interactive video.

Tutorial Study: Study which is given initial faculty guidance followed by repeated, regularly scheduled individual student conferences with a faculty member, and periodic as well as final evaluation of student performance.

Assignment of Credit Hours
Guideline Tables

Lecture and Seminar: Courses with multiple students which meet to engage in various forms of group interaction under the direct supervision of a faculty member.

Lectures and Seminars: Classroom/ Faculty Instruction and Outside Student Work			
Credits awarded	Minimum Contact time per week	Minimum instructional time Total for 15 Weeks (Contact time X Weeks)	Minimum Out of Class Student Work per week
1	50 contact minutes	750 contact minutes	100 minutes
2	100 contact minutes	1500 contact minutes	200 minutes
3	150 contact minutes	2250 contact minutes	300 minutes
3	200 contact minutes	3000 contact minutes	400 minutes

Laboratories: Courses with a focus on experiential learning under the direct supervision of a faculty member where the student performs work in a laboratory setting. The minimum contact time is typically twice that of a lecture (2:1 ratio)

Laboratory : Classroom/faculty Interaction and Outside Student Work			
Credits Awarded	Minimum Contact time per week	Minimum instructional time Total for 15 Weeks (Contact time X Weeks)	Minimum Out of Class Student Work per week
1	100 contact minutes	1500 contact minutes	50 minutes
2	200 contact minutes	3000 contact minutes	100 minutes
3	300 contact minutes	4500 contact minutes	150 minutes
4	400 contact minutes	6000 contact minutes	400 minutes

Clinical Sessions: Courses with a focus on experiential learning under the direct supervision of a faculty member when the student performs work in a clinical setting. The minimum contact time per credit is typically three times that of a lecture (3-1 ratio).

Clinical Sessions : Classroom/faculty Interaction and Outside Student Work			
Credits Awarded	Minimum Contact time per week	Minimum instructional time Total for 15 Weeks (Contact time X Weeks)	Minimum Out of Class Student Work per week
1	150 contact minutes	2500 contact minutes	0 minutes
2	300 contact minutes	4500 contact minutes	0 minutes
3	450 contact minutes	6750 contact minutes	0 minutes
4	600 contact minutes	9000 contact minutes	0 minutes