

## CREDIT HOUR POLICY

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All credit-bearing degrees and certificate programs are approved by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE). Calculation of credit hours follows ADHE guidelines which are consistent with the U.S. Department of Education's definition of a credit hour.

U.S. Department of Education definition of a credit hour:

A credit hour is an amount of work that reasonably approximates not less than

- One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two clock hours of out-of-class work each week for approximately 15 weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or 10 to 12 weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or at least the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
- At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph 1 of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practicum, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours

The regulations make an exception to this definition in the case of programs that are subject to one of the clock-hour/credit-hour conversion formulas as described below:

- A semester hour must include at least 37.5 clock hours of instruction
- Conversion: Number of clock hours in the credit-hour program/37.5

U.S. Department of Education definition of a clock hour:

- A 50 to 60 minute class, lecture, or recitation in a 60 minute period;
- A 50 to 60 minute faculty-supervised laboratory, shop training, or internship in a 60 minute period; or
- 60 minutes of preparation in a correspondence course

Generally accepted standards under the Arkansas Department of Higher Education include:

- 1 semester credit for each 12.5 hour or 750 minutes of lecture
- 1 semester credit for each 25 hours or minimum of 1500 minutes of laboratory instruction
- 1 semester credit for 37.5 hours or minimum 2250 minutes of clock, clinical, practicum, internship, shop instruction, or other self-paced learning

Instructional Methods:

Face-to-Face Lecture: direct instruction with an instructor

Web Conferencing Course: equivalent to a face-to-face lecture course, but offered via web conference technology. These courses have the same learning outcomes and substantive components of a standard/lecture course with an alternate delivery method.

Laboratory: instruction with a focus on experiential learning under the direct supervision of a faculty member where the student performs substantive work in a laboratory setting.

Fieldwork: describes instruction in a supervised clinical/medical, social work, or school setting where students have an opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge they have acquired at an approved off-campus site. Contact time and outside student work must be established and documented.

Clinical: courses with a focus on experiential learning under the direct supervision of a faculty member or preceptor where the student performs substantive work in a clinical setting.

Internship: applied and supervised learning experience where students gain practical experience following a directed plan of study

Independent Study: instruction where a faculty member regularly interacts and directs student outcomes with periodic contact.

Online Course: courses offered entirely online without any face-to-face meetings. These courses have the same learning outcomes and substantive components of a standard/lecture course with an alternate delivery method. Contact time is satisfied by several means which can include but is not limited to a) regular instruction or interaction with a faculty meeting weekly during the duration of the course b) academic engagement through interactive components, group discussions, virtual group projects.

Hybrid Course: courses meeting with split interaction across face-to-face, interactive, independent, or online channels. These courses have the same learning outcomes and substantive components of a standard/lecture course with an alternate delivery method.

FLEX Course: courses offered outside the standard 15 week semester in which the credit hours offered are the same as the standard semester and the content and learning outcomes are the same as those in the standard semester. These courses meet the total amount of instructional and student work time even if delivered within an accelerated time frame.

At UA Cossatot, a standard semester consists of 15 weeks, plus a final examination week. The academic calendar is set by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Services and approved by the Board of Visitors. The semester start and end dates are selected to ensure the minimum number of days for all courses offered.

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**Policy History:**

July 9, 2018    March 2, 2015  
                    January 1, 2011

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**COMPUTATION OF CREDIT HOUR VALUES**

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Faculty and Division Chairs are responsible for developing, maintaining, and evaluating the curriculum within an academic program, although the Board of Visitors and Board of Trustees retain final control and approval of curriculum. Assignment of credit hours for courses are determined within the program based on faculty expertise and course learning objectives. Courses are evaluated for adherence to the federal and state credit hour regulations during routine program evaluations. The Curriculum Committee is charged with following the policy on credit hours in their review and approval of all courses and curricula and for certifying the expected student learning outcomes for the course meet the credit hour standard.

The following criteria must be met before a course may be offered to the general public:

1. Faculty and Division Chairs will work together to establish needed courses, criteria, outcomes, and curricula. Learning outcomes and appropriate assessment methods must be clearly defined in the course outline and syllabi.
2. The course meet state and federal regulations.
3. Course must be reviewed and approved by Academic Council and the Curriculum Committee. Programs, certificates, and degrees must be reviewed and approved by Academic Council, the Curriculum Committee, Chancellor Cabinet, Board of Visitors, Board of Trustees, and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education.
4. Have a syllabus filed in the Office of Academics.
5. Must have an approved instructor meeting Higher Learning Commission qualifications.
6. Enrollment records appropriate for audit must be maintained.

When a course is determined to have met the established criteria, the course will be placed on the schedule, in the catalog, and offered to the public.

**Standards**

In general, one hour spent in lecture should be followed by two hours of outside work. Outside work may include research, homework, study time, or projects.

Clinical courses and fieldwork will meet the minimum required by the respective professional accrediting or regulatory agency.

The college is a member SARA (State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements)

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| Lecture Classes | 1 hour of classroom or faculty instruction per week for 15 weeks plus 1 finals week for a total of 16 weeks equals 1 semester credit hour (1:1) |
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| Laboratory Classes                        | 2 laboratory hours per week for 15 weeks for a total of 16 weeks plus 1 finals week equals 1 semester credit hour (2:1)   |
| Technical Skills Laboratory               | 3 laboratory hours per week for 15 weeks plus 1 finals week for a total of 16 weeks equals 1 semester credit hour (3:1)   |
| Clock Hour Classes/Programs (Cosmetology) | 37.5 clock hours equals 1 semester credit hour  |
| Fieldwork (OTA program)                   | <p>Level I Fieldwork Clinical: no additional credits are assigned. Successful completion of the course requires students to pass both components (lecture and fieldwork).</p> <p>Level II Fieldwork Clinical: 4 credits equals full time attendance (40 hours per week) for 16 weeks in an approved facility.</p> |
| Clinical (LPN/RN programs)                | (1:8) ratio for clinical components of nursing programs   |
| Clinical Practicum (PTA program)          | 4 credit hours equals full time attendance for 4-5 weeks in clinical education site.  |

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**Procedure History:**

May 21, 2018

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