

Procedures for Awarding Credit

Credit Hour Value

The credit hour is a unit by which the College measures course work. The credit hour value for a course is determined primarily by the amount of time in class and/or lab, the intensity of the educational experience, and the amount of outside preparation required by the student. A lecture course with extensive reading or other out-of-class preparation shall result in one credit for each classroom or contact hour per week. A laboratory experience with moderate out-of-the class preparation shall equal one credit for a minimum of two classroom or contact hours per week. A laboratory/clinical experience with little out-of-class preparation shall equal one credit for a minimum of three classroom or contact hours per week.

The credit hour value assigned to a course for class time at Monroe County Community College is based on a 15 week semester, regardless of the length of a term within the semester. ¹ For example, a 3 three credit hour lecture class is equal to a minimum of 3 three contact hours of lecture per week multiplied by 15 weeks, or 45 total contact hours for the semester. In this case, the ratio of credit to contact hours is 1:1. A 2 two credit hour lec-lab class may be a minimum of one contact hour of lecture and 2 two contact hours of lab per week multiplied by 15 weeks. The total contact hours for the course would be 3 a minimum of three hours per week multiplied by 15 weeks for a total of 45 classroom or contact hours. In this case, the ratio of credit to contact hours for lecture is 1:1 and the ratio of credit to contact hours for lab is 2:1.

Each credit hour is equal to a minimum of 800 minutes of instruction. As noted above, many academic experiences are integral to courses and/or programs because they allow students to practice and apply learning. Instructional time in laboratory, clinical, or workplace requires additional contact hours to earn a credit hour. Additional credit may be awarded for courses that require students to have significant prep time beyond the 1 credit hour - 2 hours preparation outside of class rule (see Procedure 3.19). The calculations are based on a fifteen week semester with each classroom hour equated to 55 minutes: One contact hour equals 55 minutes of activity per week times fifteen weeks, regardless of whether the class section meets the course of the fifteen week semester. For example, a course may meet 7 weeks during a fifteen week semester.

A maximum of four (4) credit hours may be earned in cooperative work experience or any combination of a similar experience such as internship over the associate degree program.

Contact hours for Self-Directed Courses must be limited to a ratio of 1 credit hour to 16 contact hours *unless* it is clear from the course description that the contact hours reported are supervised by college personnel such as instructors or tutors. Examples of courses fitting this exception are nursing practica, clinicals, and independent studies.

Type of Course	Minimum Contact Hours Per Week	Course Credit Hours
Lecture	1	1
Lab	2- 3	1
Clinical	3	1
Cooperative, Self-Directed	16	1

It is expected that students who complete classes in the on-line and traditional formats demonstrate equivalent levels of knowledge, skill, or competency. The total amount of time spent accomplishing the learning outcomes for online and face-to-face classes is the same. As noted under Policy 4.09, a minimum of two hours of study and preparation time outside of class is required for each credit hour (see Procedure 3.19). For online classes, the two hours per credit hour are added to the total weekly contact hours for the course. For example, a three credit hour lecture course taught online over the duration of a 15 week semester requires that students spend a minimum of three hours of otherwise face-to-face class time on content and an additional minimum of six hours of preparation and study (2 hours per credit hour), for a total of 9 hours of time per week.

Exceptions to these procedures may be made with approval from the Vice President of Instruction.

¹ Monroe County Community College runs on a 15 week semester. Therefore, each classroom hour equates to 55 rather than 50 minutes.