

## CREDIT HOUR POLICY

Credit hours assigned to courses will be aligned with:

- Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) regulations  
<http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/chapter31/s31.22.html>
- Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) common calendar  
PASSHE Board of Governors Policy 2002-04: Common Academic Calendar
- PASSHE's Standard – Length of Class Meeting Time – Schedule of Classes – SA-400
- Carnegie Unit of credit assignment

A typical semester meets for fourteen weeks of instruction, after which the final exam may be given in the fifteenth week.

One credit is defined as fourteen hours of classroom instruction. An "hour" is equivalent to fifty minutes.

The typical instructional time for a lecture-type class is fifty minutes per credit per week. A one-credit course will meet 50 minutes, one day per week for 14 weeks. A three-credit course will meet 50 minutes, three days per week for 14 weeks (or 75 minutes, two days per week for 14 weeks).

It is recommended that a student invest two hours of out-of-class time for every hour of in-class time.

The assignment of one semester hour of credit indicates no less than forty-two hours of effort by the student per semester. Not all effort is necessarily while in face-to-face contact with an instructor; each hour of directed faculty instruction will be accompanied by a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work. (1 hour in-class + 2 hours out-of-class = 3 hours total per week; 3 hours per week x 14 instructional weeks = 42 hours)

Laboratory courses generally award one credit hour for two hours of scheduled lab work. A science course may combine two semester hours of lecture with one semester hour of lab for a total of three semester hours. This will require fifty-six hours of contact. (2 hours per week of instruction for lecture x 14 weeks of the semester = 28 hours plus 28 hours of laboratory as indicated below)

Studio-based courses award one credit hour for two hours of scheduled supervised studio work.

Online and individualized instruction courses are assigned the same number of semester hours of credit as an identical course delivered face-to-face, based on a determination that the student learning objectives and outcomes attained by the online or individualized instruction course are consistent with those of the face-to-face offering. Similar standards apply to the assignment of credit based acquired by life experiences or examination. Online courses for which there is no face-to-face equivalents and independent study courses will be designed and offered to achieve course learning objectives and outcomes that reasonably approximate not less than forty-two hours of effort by the student for each semester hour of credit.

Internships will have a minimum of forty-two hours of contact for each credit hour assigned.

Course and program approvals follow a structured curriculum approval process beginning within the academic department, then to the college curriculum committee, the curriculum integration subcommittee, university curriculum committee, Provost, and President for courses and to PASSHE's Board of Governors for programs. Credit hour assignments may be reviewed at each step.

The academic calendar, provided by PASSHE, is reviewed by a Meet and Discuss Academic Calendar Committee that makes recommendations for allowable non-instructional days. In addition the Academic Calendar Committee recommends make-up days to be included on the calendar in the event of inclement weather to accommodate university closings. This committee ensures that the required number of instructional days are included on the calendar.

Offerings that do not follow the standard 14-week pattern are reviewed to ensure the minimum number of instructional hours are met. For example, summer classes do not meet for fourteen weeks. However, the meeting patterns are adjusted accordingly.

The College Deans and Registrar review class meeting patterns to ensure minimum instructional time is met.