



Unit of Credit Policy

The assignment of semester credit is initially based on requirements set by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and corresponds to Carnegie Unit Guidelines and the federal definition of a credit hour¹. NNMC faculty determine credit hour values based on the number and type of tasks that enable the achievement of learning objectives and the estimated time needed by students to achieve the learning objectives.

In recognition of the dynamic nature of the online classroom and that classroom instruction may happen at any time, no distinction is made between classroom or faculty instruction and “out-of-class” student work. Time estimates for assigning credit hours are defined as the total time spent by students in fulfillment of course requirements, which may occur inside or outside the classroom or learning management system.

There are three types of credit:

Theory (T): Students should expect to spend approximately 3 hours per week per credit hour engaged in coursework. In the case of synchronous (real-time) instruction, the three hours corresponds to 50 minutes of delivery of instructional content and the remaining time dedicated to study or work. For purposes of calculating the total time equivalent to credits, a standard semester is defined as 16 weeks with 48 expected hours of work for the entire semester. Specific activities composing the total time spent vary for each course.

Studio (S): Students should expect to spend at least 3 hours per week per credit hour engaged in coursework. In the case of synchronous (real-time) instruction, the three hours corresponds to 100 minutes of delivery of instructional content and the remaining time dedicated to study or work. For purposes of calculating the total time equivalent to credits, a standard semester is defined as 16 weeks with 48 expected hours of work for the entire semester. Specific activities composing the total time spent vary for each course.

Lab (L): Students should expect to spend at least 4 hours per week per credit hour engaged in coursework. In the case of synchronous (real-time) instruction, the three hours corresponds to 150 minutes of experiential learning and the remaining time

¹ Federal Credit Hour Definition: A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than: (1) one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or (2) at least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other activities as established by an institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading toward to the award of credit hours. 34CFR 600.2 (11/1/2010).

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Credit hours may be earned in short sessions (summer sessions, 8-week sessions, etc.) proportionately to those earned for the same activity during a regular term. This policy is applicable to all credit-bearing courses offered by NNMC, regardless of course level (undergraduate/certificate) and mode of delivery (e.g., face-to-face, online, hybrid).

Courses will be periodically evaluated to ensure appropriate credit hours are achieved.

Responsible Division/Unit: Office of the Provost

History: Approved by the Board of Regents on 3/26/2021