Introduction

Through this policy ACPHS affirms its use of the “credit hour” as the College’s basic institutional measure of instructional level and rigor. The College further acknowledges the definition of credit hour provided by the U.S. Department of Education (included below) upon which the details of this policy are based.

The U.S. Department of Education defines “credit hour” as “…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 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 academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.”

Academic Calendar

The Registrar is responsible for preparing the College’s Academic Calendar. Semesters are to be fifteen instructional weeks in length including fourteen weeks of scheduled course meetings and one week of final exams. The semester schedule is adjusted as necessary to ensure that there are an equal number of scheduled Mondays, Tuesday, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

Credit Hour Equivalencies

ACPHS awards credit for the various instructions settings as described below. Note that this represents the minimum expectation the College has for each setting.

Lecture, Seminar, Recitation

One credit hour is awarded for the equivalent of fifteen 50-minute instructional sessions (12.5 total hours) that includes an expectation of two hours of outside study associated with each class session (30 total hours). Classes not giving final exams are expected to assign an out of class activity or final project to account for these hours.
Laboratory
One credit hour is awarded for laboratory courses having the equivalent of:

- fifteen 150-minute instructional sessions for which little or no preparation is expected (2250 total instructional minutes, 37.5 total hours)
- no fewer than twelve 150-minute sessions for which significant outside work (no less than one hour per session) is expected (1800 total instructional minutes, 30 total hours)
- other combinations of laboratory and outside work that reasonably approximates the above

Combination Lecture and Laboratory Courses
Credit hours for courses including both lecture and laboratory components are calculated using the appropriate combination of lecture and laboratory guidelines.

Independent Study and Undergraduate Research Experiences
One credit is awarded for three hours of independent study work per week for fifteen weeks (45 hours). Likewise, one credit is awarded for three hours of research time per week for fifteen weeks (45 hours). Each of these is equivalent to fifteen 50-minutes lecture class sessions with two hours of outside work per session.

Experiential Learning
Expectations regarding the definition of and the awarding of credit for experiential learning varies by discipline and program specific accrediting body. At ACPHS, one credit hour is awarded for a minimum 40 hours of supervised academic activity in a professional setting. Expectations regarding required preparation outside of the supervised time varies by experience.

Online Courses
It is expected that the learning outcomes for online courses are consistent with those of their conventional counterparts. The College abides by the requirements of the NYS Department of Education that “Time on Task” (the total learning time spent by a student in a college course) be used in the granting of credit hours for online courses where one credit hour equates to 45 hours of time. Time on Task approximates the amount of time a student doing satisfactory work would take to complete the work of the course and includes:

- reading course presentations/ "lectures"
- reading other materials
- participation in online discussions
- doing research
- writing papers or other assignments
- completing all other assignments (e.g. projects)

Documentation of Course Expectations
The College uses a course approval process that, at a minimum, requires the approval of the department offering the course. Course approval requires the completion of a course proposal that documents the expected topic coverage and associated in-class schedule by week. It is the responsibility of the approving department to ensure the appropriateness of these schedules and consistency with the proposed credit hour assignment.

Expectations for independent study and research vary by student and experience. Specific requirements for each student are documented by faculty in the respective forms and approved by the Department Chair of the department granting the credit. These forms are submitted to and archived by the Registrar’s office.

Course Scheduling
The scheduling of courses is made by the respective Department Chairs and executed by the Registrar. Both hold responsibility for ensuring that the expectations of this policy are met.

**Alternate Schedules**

The awarding of credit for a course is not impacted by the calendar under which it is taught as long as the total hours remain unchanged. That is, a course carries the same credit hours whether offered under a regular semester schedule, during a summer session, or in an accelerated manner (e.g. in Vermont).

**Cancellation of Classes**

When a faculty member needs to cancel class for reasons such as illness, jury duty, professional service obligations, or attendance at a professional conference, it is expected that the total instructional hours of the class be maintained by holding a make up class, providing a recorded lecture, assigning an appropriate activity, or other approach. If the College is closed, faculty are expected to make up the instructional hours through one of the means listed above.

**References**

Middle States Commission of Higher Education Credit Hour Policy
[https://msche.my.salesforce.com/sfc/p/#46000000ZDJj/a/46000000XprZ/9QoYhBwk.X.JTjSqSgv4dqTw83Rvh7rJbVZB5IEUIQ](https://msche.my.salesforce.com/sfc/p/#46000000ZDJj/a/46000000XprZ/9QoYhBwk.X.JTjSqSgv4dqTw83Rvh7rJbVZB5IEUIQ)

GEN-11-06 Guidance to Institutions and Accrediting Agencies Regarding a Credit Hour as Defined in the Final Regulations Published on October 29, 2010

New York State Distance Education Program Policies, Determining Time on Task in Online Education

SUNY University-wide Credit Hour Policy
[https://www.suny.edu/sunypp/documents.cfm?doc_id=168](https://www.suny.edu/sunypp/documents.cfm?doc_id=168)