

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

CREDIT HOUR POLICY

<u>Number</u>	02.01.50
<u>Division</u>	Academic Affairs
<u>Date</u>	August, 2006
<u>Purpose</u>	To formalize a <i>credit hour</i> policy for traditional (lecture) and non-traditional courses offered at UAH. This policy will ensure consistency in the awarding of credit for a variety of methods of delivery.
<u>Policy</u>	<p>The UAH definition of a credit hour is guided by requirements of the U.S. Department of Education, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), and the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE). A credit hour is an academic unit of credit awarded for the completion of educational activities. The amount of credit awarded depends on the expected amount of time required to complete in-class and out-of-class work during a semester for a course that is passed.</p> <p>For UAH purposes, a credit hour is generally defined in terms of the number of 50-55 minute time periods that a class meets for scheduled instruction (contact hours), plus additional work outside the classroom. Courses taught at UAH via other modes, however, generally have a greater number of <i>contact-hours</i> per week than the credit hours awarded. These courses include laboratory, studio, clinical, internship, and study abroad. Such courses will follow the guidelines detailed below.</p> <p>Time expectations for work outside of class are minimums and may be higher depending on the nature and level of the course as well as the ability, commitment, and learning style of the student. The institution reserves the right to make semester hour assignments that exceed the minimum time requirements stated.</p>
<u>Procedures</u>	<p>1) <u>Lecture Courses</u></p> <p>Each semester hour awarded for a lecture course at UAH requires at least one hour of classroom of direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester. A traditional (classroom) format course at UAH that awards one credit-hour of instruction meets once a week for approximately 50-55 minutes for the fifteen weeks of a semester (fifteen contact-hours per</p>

semester). Examples of the most commonly awarded blocks of credit and their corresponding contact hours are:

1. A 1-credit hour class will approximate 750 minutes of instruction/examination per semester.
2. A 2-credit hour class will approximate 1,500 minutes of instruction/examination per semester.
3. A 3-credit hour class will approximate 2,250 minutes of instruction/examination per semester.
4. A 4-credit hour course will approximate 3,000 minutes of instruction/examination per semester.

2) Laboratory Courses

All laboratory courses meet for a minimum of two *contact-hours* per week for one hour of credit awarded and the majority meet for three *contact-hours* per week for one hour of credit awarded, whether they are stand-alone laboratory courses or combined with a traditional-format course. For a laboratory course having less than three *contact-hours* per week to be approved, the department must demonstrate that: (1) the faculty have recently reviewed the number of *contact-hours* for each of their laboratory classes; (2) the proposed number of *contact-hours* per week conforms to the practice at many other U.S. Universities with teaching and research missions similar to UAH; (3) the faculty have determined that the proposed *contact-hours* per week are sufficient for a pedagogically sound laboratory; and (4) this practice is consistent with any specified standards for professional accreditation.

3) Clinical Courses

Clinical courses meet for three *contact-hours* per week for one credit hour awarded.

4) Studio Courses

Art Studio

In the Department of Art, Art History & Design, an undergraduate studio credit hour at UAH consists of at least 1.66 hours of in class instruction with a minimum expectation of at least 1.33 hours of work outside of class each week. For a three credit hour studio art course this would equate to at least five (5) hours in class and at least four (4) hours outside of class per week during a 15-week semester. Time expectations for work inside and outside of class are minimums and may be higher depending on the nature and level of the course, and for outside work, also on the ability, commitment, and learning style of the student.

Music Studio

Music ensemble courses meet for three *contact-hours* per week for one hour of credit. One-on-one instruction in music follows the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) recommendations.

5) Internship Courses

Internship courses other than those in Education and Nursing will average 10 hours of internship work per week for an entire semester for three hours of credit. Internships in Education and Nursing are subject to other guidelines specified by state and federal agencies.

6) Study Abroad Courses

Study Abroad courses must adhere to the rigorous academic standards of any other course taught at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. Over the period of the course, the requirement is fifteen contact hours for each hour of credit awarded. The policy states that such class time may be comprised of instructional and learning activities in the classroom and/or instructional and learning activities that take place during site visits, cultural experiences, and excursions. Course syllabi must demonstrate that such site visits, cultural visits, and excursions have clear academic relevance for the course.

7) Distance Education Courses

All courses taught at UAH via distance learning are also offered as traditional on-campus courses that conform to the statements above. When these courses are offered via distance learning, they must conform to the same requirements as those taught on campus via traditional format.

Review

Academic Affairs will review the policy every five years or at an earlier time if needed.

Approval

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APPROVED:

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