

Credit Hours Awarded for Courses and Programs

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the credit hours awarded for courses and programs.

II. Scope

This policy applies to students, faculty, and academic administration.

III. Policy

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:

1. Not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out- of- class student work each week for approximately 15 weeks for one semester
2. – OR – at least an equivalent amount of work as required outlined in item 1 above 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.

Courses taught in traditional classroom format during regular academic term:

DSCC requires 750 minutes of instruction per semester hour of credit for courses taught in a traditional classroom format during a regular academic term. In determining the length of a regular academic term, DSCC adheres to TBR policy 02.04.00.00 Academic and Registration Calendar.

The credit hour is determined by the amount of class time and/or the amount of work both in and outside the classroom for successful acquisition of the stated learning outcomes.

To accommodate the required minutes of instruction, DSCC requires 55 minutes of instruction per class meeting for courses that meet three times per week; 85 minutes of instruction per class meeting for courses that meet twice a week and 170 minutes of instruction per class meeting for courses that meet once a week.

For fall and spring semesters, DSCC adheres to TBR policy 02.04.00.00 Academic and Registration Calendar, which requires a minimum of 15 weeks of instruction during the fall and spring semesters.

To comply with the 750 minutes of instruction per credit hour for courses taught in the traditional classroom setting during these terms, the following dictates each of these summer terms:

- May and Winter Sessions – Three credit hour courses require a minimum of 12 days of instruction and must meet a minimum of 190 minutes daily. Adjustments are made for courses greater than three credit hours.

- Summer Term, First and Second Sessions – Three credit hour courses require a minimum of 24 days of instruction and must meet five days a week for a minimum of 95 minutes daily. Adjustments are made for courses greater than three credit hours.
- Summer Term Full Session – Three credit hour courses require a minimum of 47 days of instruction and must meet five days a week for 55 minutes daily. Adjustments are made for courses greater than three credit hours.

Courses taught in a distance learning format: For these courses, a combination of course elements is provided and may come from the following possible equivalencies:

- Lecture/discussion/chat sessions delivered synchronously directly by the instructor via D2L;
- Required and faculty-involved asynchronous interaction via discussion boards, blogs, wikis or other appropriate social media;
- Proctored tests/exams or student evaluation tasks delivered through D2L;
- Assignments (reading, writing, video) that exceed assignments required in a face-to-face course.

Courses taught in a laboratory or clinical setting: Courses for which instruction is provided in a laboratory or clinical setting which is included in assigning the number of credit hours for the course must include a minimum of two hours of laboratory or clinical instruction for the credit hour associated with the laboratory or clinical instruction. For example, a 4-credit hour science course must contain a minimum of three hours of lecture and two hours in the laboratory (3 x 55 minutes of classroom instruction + 2 x 55 minutes of laboratory instruction = 275 minutes of instruction per week).

Cooperative Education Work Experience: Courses offered as a part of the Cooperative Education Work Experience must adhere to the standard of a minimum of 750 scheduled minutes of instructional time or the equivalent per credit hour.

The number of credit hours required in degree programs will be in accordance with TBR Policy 2:01:00:00 – General Education Requirements and Degree Requirements.

The number of credit hours required in certificate programs will be determined by the academic division offering the certificate.

IV. Compliance

All DSCC full-time and adjunct faculty will adhere to this policy.

V. Definitions

VI. Revision History

Policy written May, 2005. Policy revised October 2012; Policy revised September 2016 and approved by Administrative Council on September 28, 2016; approved by Administrative Council on April 27, 2023