

Section 10	Academic Policies	11/12/13 - Originated - Reviewed w/ changes - Reviewed w/o changes 11/12/13 -Effective Council of Deans - Author
Subject 10.1	Academic Programs	
Policy 10.1.5	Credit Hours	

Credit Hours

Definition

Credit Hour: Federal Regulation [34 CFR 600.2](#): “Except as provided in 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (l), 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 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.”

Policy

UTMB will use the credit hour as a measure of educational credit a student may receive. Distance education and hybrid courses will use the same credit hour requirements as face-to-face courses. This applies directly to the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, the School of Health Professions, and the School of Nursing. It applies indirectly to the School of Medicine for reporting or other purposes when necessary.

The use of the credit hour will follow the rules, regulations, and guidelines as specified by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, the federal government, the Texas Administrative Code, and the Liaison Committee on Medical Education all as specified in the references section of this policy.

Exception

The School of Medicine (SOM) does not use the credit hour as a measure for which students receive credit. However, the weeks of instruction may be converted to credit hours using the following methodology.

The Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), a specialized national accrediting body for all allopathic medical schools, accredits the SOM Integrated Medical Curriculum (IMC). The LCME requires a minimum of 130 weeks of instruction for the MD degree. The UTMB SOM curriculum is 164 weeks over 3.75 years. The 164 full-time weeks of credit are equivalent to 164 credit hours using the following:

Courses in years one (1) and two (2) of the SOM curriculum are relatively homogeneous with regard to structure, educational experiences, and contact

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Exception, continued

hours. Contact hours include but are not limited to lectures, laboratory, small group discussions, and problem solving patient contact. Average contact time per week is approximately 16 hours. Assuming a credit hour is based on at least a 15-17 week calendar and a class hour that varies from 45 to 60 minutes, one week of full-time instruction in the SOM curriculum is equivalent to one (1) credit hour. As a result, the credit hour equivalents of the first two years of the curriculum are:

Year 1 = 33 full-time weeks (equivalent to 33 credit hours)
Year 2 = 42 full-time weeks (equivalent to 42 credit hours)
Total = 75 credit hours

In the clinical experiences of the year's three (3) and four (4) clerkships, actual contact time is greater. Because the educational approach is fundamentally different, with less emphasis on formal didactic instruction and study and greater emphasis on experiential learning, the number of contact hours needed to meet the equation that one full-time week equals one (1) credit hour is increased to between 40-70 contact hours per week. The credit hour equivalents of years three (3) and four (4) of the curriculum are:

Year 3 = 49 full-time weeks (equivalent to 49 SCH)
Year 4 = 40 full-time weeks (equivalent to 40 SCH)
Total = 89 credit hours

Total Years 1 through 4 = 164 credit hours

References

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, [*The Principles of Accreditation, Federal Requirement 4.9, p.40*](#)

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges [Credit Hours Policy Statement](#)

Texas Administrative Code, [Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter A, Rule 4.6](#)

Federal Regulation [34 CFR 600.2](#)

[*Functions and Structure of a Medical School: Standards for Accreditation of Medical Education Programs Leading to the M.D. Degree*](#), Copyright May 2012, Liaison Committee on Medical Education, (ED-4), p.7
