TITLE:	Credit Hour

POLICY STATEMENT:

The U.S. Department of Education has created a series of new regulations for institutions that wish to retain their Title IV financial aid eligibility. One regulation requires that institutions develop and adopt guidelines to ensure that all courses offered by the institution meet newly stated federal credit hour regulations. The purpose of this policy is to provide the University of Bridgeport's definition of a credit hour and to explain how the definition is applied across the course modalities and lengths offered by the University.

The federal regulation defines the credit hour as follows:

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 15 weeks for one semester 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.

In compliance with this federal definition, the University of Bridgeport calibration of the credit hour is as follows.

CREDIT HOUR REQUIREMENTS (*FEDERAL CREDIT HOUR DEFINITIONS)			
In the federal definition of the credit hour, the formula is quite specific in determining the numbers of hours of direct instruction required plus the hours of student work needed beyond direct instructional hours to earn academic credit. The University of Bridgeport recognizes and adheres to these Federal Guidelines. In doing so, faculty members are expected to adhere to the following guidelines on contact hours.			
Number of Course Credits	**Direct Faculty Instruction ("Class time") In-Person, Hybrid & Online** ACTIVITIES can be counted as either direct faculty instruction or student work depending on how the activity is designed. To be considered direct faculty instruction, the activities should be related directly to	**Student Work ("Homework") In-Person, Hybrid & Online** Work done by the student on their own by reading assigned materials or completing course projects with other students does not qualify as faculty instructional time. Researching, PowerPoint (standalone	**Total Instructional Hours**

	the objectives of the course, should have some direct oversight or mediation by the faculty member and should in some form be equivalent to the types of instructional activities conducted in the classroom. Direct faculty instruction may not be considered to be focused on time that the student spends accomplishing homework assignments or other tasks.	without instructor voice over), video reviews, WebQuest activities, reading articles, etc. are considered "homework" assignments. Review of other resources (e.g., optional readings) are counted as student work.	
1 Credit Course	**15 Hours Direct Faculty Instruction** 18 Week Term, 1 Week = .83 Hour 15 Week Term, 1 Week = 1 Hour 10 Week Term, 1 Week = 1.5 Hours 7 Week Term- 1 Week = 2.14 Hours	**30 Hours Student Work** 18 Week Term, 1 Week = 1.67 Hours 15 Week Term- 1 Week = 2 Hours 10 Week Term, 1 Week = 3 Hours 7 Week Term- 1 Week = 4.3 Hours	**45 Total Instructional Hours**
2 Credit Course	**30 Hours Direct Faculty Instruction** 18 Week Term, 1 Week = 1.67 Hours 15 Week Term, 1 Week = 2 Hours 10 Week Term, 1 Week = 3 Hours 7 Week Term, 1 Week = 4.28 Hours	**60 Hours Student Work** 18 Week Term, 1 Week = 3.33 Hours 15 Week Term, 1 Week = 4 Hours 10 Week Term, 1 Week = 6 Hours 7.5 Week Term, 1 Week = 8.5 Hours	**90 Total Instructional Hours**
3 Credit Course	**45 Hours Direct Faculty Instruction** 18 Week Term, 1 Week = 2.5 Hours 15 Week Term, 1 Week = 3 Hours 10 Week Term, 1 Week = 4.5 Hours 7 Week Term- 1 Week = 6.23 Hours	**90 Hours Student Work** 18 Week Term, 1 Week = 5 Hours 15 Week Term, 1 Week = 6 Hours 10 Week Term, 1 Week = 9 Hours 7 Week Term- 1 Week = 12.85 Hours	**135 Total Instructional Hours**
4 Credit Course	**60 Hours Direct Faculty Instruction** 18 Week Term, 1 Week = 3.33 Hours 15 Week Term, 1 Week = 4 Hours 10 Week Term, 1 Week = 6 Hours 7 Week Term- 1 Week = 8.57 Hours	**120 Hours Student Work** 18 Week Term, 1 Week = 6.67 Hours 15 Week Term, 1 Week = 8 Hours 10 Week Term, 1 Week = 12 Hours 7 Week Term- 1 Week = 17.14 Hours	**180 Total Instructional Hours**
NOTES: Hybrid or Face to Faces Courses: 15 weeks in a semester (18 for Acupuncture and Chiropractic programs) | Online Courses: 18, 15, 10 or 7 weeks in a term ***Federal Credit Hour Definitions from the U.S. Department of Education**			

Other Learning Formats:

Clinics, Studios, Practica, and Laboratory-Based Class: The student is expected to participate in 2.5 hours of laboratory, clinical or studio activity per week based on a 15-week term.

Independent Study: the student is expected to engage in a unique independent learning/research experience, although one still guided by the instructor to ensure the student meets the educational objectives and expected outcomes of the course. To maintain the academic integrity of these courses, the student is expected to complete a similar number of total instructional hours per credit hour, as defined above. Due to the nature of these experiences, the instructor will have the flexibility and discretion to negotiate the specific format and hours of direct contact, in a manner appropriate for the project or experience.

Identifying Direct Faculty Instructional Activities for Online/Hybrid Courses:

The table below shows how standard assignments for students completed online would be classified in terms of the credit hour definition. ***The table is by no means meant to reflect the only options available and faculty are expected to use judgment when adapting for their discipline.*** There are two key distinctions between the types of activities in the different columns. First, to be considered direct faculty instruction, the activities should be related directly to the objectives of the course, should have some direct oversight or mediation by the faculty member, and should in some form be equivalent to the types of instructional activities conducted in the classroom. Second, direct faculty instruction may not be focused on time that the student spends accomplishing homework assignments or other tasks.

Activity	Description	Rate of Equivalency
Blogs, Journals, Logs	Students' opportunity to apply learned concepts or for reflection on learning experiences; to be shared with instructor and/or classmates for thoughtful analysis, feedback and assessment.	1 private posting= 1/2-hour instruction 1 shared posting (required to read all classmates' postings) = 1 hour instruction
Case studies & problem solving scenarios*	In-depth analysis requiring utilization of higher order analytical skills which relate to course objectives and is shared with instructor and/or classmates for feedback and assessment.	1 case study analysis & posting = 1-3 hours instruction
Chat rooms for class or group projects	Instructor led opportunities for collaborative, synchronous learning with specific expectations for participation & feedback. (Chats are posted for review.)	1 hour chat = 1 hour instruction
Conference calls	Instructor led opportunities for collaborative, synchronous learning with specific expectations for participation & feedback. (When possible, calls to be recorded for review.)	1/2-hour call = 1/2-hour instruction
Discussion Board	Instructor-guided or mediated threaded discussion that directly relates to course objectives and which has specified timeframes, expectations for participation, and thoughtful analysis.	1 posting = 1/2-hour instruction 1 posting (requires reading all postings and reply to a minimum of 2) = 1 hour instruction
Field trips or tours (to include virtual tours)	Students participate as individuals or in groups in analyzing an activity & preparing a paper or presentation, to be shared in whole or in part with instructor and/or classmates.	Facilitator or Instructor-Led 1 hour tour = 1 hour instruction Student(s) alone without instructor or facilitator = 1 hour tour plus reflection paper = 1 hour instruction
Group projects	An instructor-mediated culminating activity with specific learning	1 hour per week for duration of project

	objectives; students collaborate via e-mail, chat rooms, discussion boards, and/ or face- to- face contact to research, analyze, synthesize, & prepare project with instructor receiving periodic updates & providing guidance to group.	
Guided Project	An instructor mediated culminating individual project with specific learning objectives; student and facilitator collaborate via email, chat, discussion boards, and/or face-to-face to research, analyze, synthesize & prepare project with instructor receiving periodic updates and providing guidance and feedback.	1 hour per week for duration of project
In-Class Instruction, Presentations, & Tests	Instruction, presentations, and tests provided in person in live classroom setting.	1 hour = 1 hour instruction
Instructional CDs, PowerPoints, Videos*	Instructor-mediated to expand upon and clarify course concepts and objectives.	Reviews & posts response to 1 unit = 1 hour instruction
Lecture activity written or audio	Opportunity for students to develop questions, comments, or observations, to be shared with classmates & instructor through discussion board postings or participation in chat rooms.	Reviews 1 lecture & posts response = 1 hour instruction
Library Research* (instructor-led)	In-depth instructor led opportunity for students to research scholarly articles or professional journals that relate to course objectives; to be shared with class in a designated manner.	1 five-page project = 1 hour instruction 1 3–5-page paper = 1 – 2 hours of instruction
Online Quizzes	Opportunity for instructor to assess students' subject knowledge and provide feedback on students' progress.	1 hour test = 1 hour of instruction
Refection Paper or Article Review*	Instructor guided activity for students to apply learned concepts and relate practices to personal experiences or apply higher order analytic skills in assessing scholarly articles or professional journals.	1 private posting = 1/2-hour instruction 1 shared posting (required to read all classmates' postings) = 1 hour instruction
Service Learning Project	An instructor led service project with specific learning objectives that integrates community service with academic study; faculty provides guidance, support, and feedback to students and students shares experience and reflection with fellow classmates via emails, chats, discussion boards, and/or face-to-	1 hour per week for duration of project

	face.	
Web-Quest* (Internet Research)	Instructor guided opportunity for students to research information on the Internet that enhances student learning and addresses specific course outcomes; findings shared with the instructor and classmates.	1 in-depth posting = 1 hour instruction
*Researching, PowerPoint/video reviews, Web-Quest activities, reading articles, etc. are considered "homework" assignments. The Rate of Equivalency denoted pertains to posting, reviewing, sharing, and providing student-to-student and/or instructor-to-student feedback.		

Identifying Time on Task:

Work done by the student on their own including reading assigned materials researching, creating a PowerPoint presentation, viewing videos, listening to audio presentations, reviewing websites, analyzing and example, writing a paper and practicing are considered homework assignments. The following table provides guidelines for determining how long students may take to complete independent work, outside of direct instruction as defined above.

Time On Task "Homework"	Examples	Rate of Equivalency
Viewing a 30-Minute Video	Instructor Lecture. YouTube, Ted Talk, Alexander Street, Demonstrations	1:1 30 minutes
Listening to a 30-Minute Audio	Music, Medical, History, Speeches, Radio, Nature, Podcasts	1:1 30 minutes
Reviewing Lectures and Exploring Web Links	Reviewing Lectures and Exploring Web Links	½ hour
Posting a Short "Knowledge Check" Self-assessment Statement	Self-assessment	½ hour
Reading Assignments (descriptive and technical text)	Textbooks and reference materials, both online and traditional.	Approx. 3 minutes per page
Reading (online screens w/no interactivity)	PowerPoint Slide Shows, Syllabus, Announcements, Case Studies, Journals	Approx. 2 minutes per screen
Reading (online screens with interactivity)	Multimedia, Tutorial	Approx. 4 minutes per screen
Completing a 10-item Online Quiz	Quiz	30 minutes
Completing an Exam	Exam	2 hours
Small Group Project Meetings	Small Group Project Meetings	1 hour
Work on Final Research Paper and Presentation	Work on Final Research Paper and Presentation	1½ Hour
Writing Assignments	Essays, Report,	1 hour per page
Conduct and Write-up Research	Conduct and Write-up Research	2 hours
Solving Homework Problems	Solving Homework Problems	20 minutes per problem
Completing Projects and Major Assignments	Research Essay, Literature Review, Annotated Bibliography, Reflective Journal, Critical Review or Analytical Review, Case Study, Lab/Practical or Experiment Write Up, Project Report	4 hours
Preparing Presentations	Powerpoint, Google Slides, Prezi,	2 hours

	Google Sites	
Simulations and Gaming	Virtual Laboratories. Hands-on learning. Mock Criminal Trials. Virtual Field Trips	15 minutes per simulation
Outside Online Short Training Courses	Courses taken, usually from Government sources (e.g., FEMA Online Training courses) as one requirement in an online course	50 minutes per outside course

PUBLISH POLICY STATEMENT (CLICK ON BOX NEXT TO OPTION-SELECT ALL THAT APPLY):

☒ UNIVERSITY CATALOG ☐ STAFF HANDBOOK

☒ FACULTY HANDBOOK ☒ STUDENT HANDBOOK

OFFICES DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY THE POLICY:

Academic Colleges

Registrar's Office

HISTORY: Adopted November 30, 2010 by University Senate

Updated with guidance September 30, 2024

Updated with 10-week courses January 2025

EFFECTIVE DATE:	Spring Semester 2011
RESPONSIBLE OFFICE (ONLY ONE):	Academic Affairs
REVIEW DATE:	Annually

APPENDIX: N/A