

Guidelines



Title Calculating Credit Course Sections

Maintained by: Academic Services

Creation Date: 12/01/2000

Revision Date: 08/23/19

The following guidelines are based on the Federal Credit Hour definition “34 CFR 600.2”

(<https://www.greatlakescollegeaccess.org/mglstatic/sharedcontent/forms/regulations/fed-reg-CFR-600.pdf>) and the (ACS) Activity Classification Structure (<http://www.michigancc.net/acs/acsmanual2017.pdf>). See also definitions at end of guideline.

Credit hour: 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.

Reference: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2011-title34-vol3/pdf/CFR-2011-title34-vol3-sec600-2.pdf>
<https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/assignment-of-credits.html>

Note: 34 CFR 668.8 (k) and (l) discuss clock hour formulas

Course credit and contact hour determination occurs via the Curriculum Committee process. For scheduling course sections, the following guidelines apply:

1. A contact hour shall be defined as 800 minutes of instructional activity.
2. When scheduling, one hour consists of 50 minutes of instructional activity, except for the last hour which can meet up to 85 minutes without a break.
3. For classes taught in Weekend College and Summer semesters, a contact hour shall be 55 minutes of instructional activity, except for the last hour which can meet up to 85 minutes without a break. (See 2016-19 MAHE Agreement Article VI, Section Three, J.1)
4. For Credit-to-Clock Hour Conversion, a credit hour must include at least 37.5 clock hours.
5. Clinical Courses are calculated at 60 minutes of instructional activity.

To calculate for Fall & Winter semesters:

- Number of contacts X 800 minutes = total minutes needed
- Total minutes needed ÷ number of weeks = minutes needed per week
- If class meets more than one time per week:
 - Minutes per week ÷ number of class meetings per week = minutes per class meeting

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Example (4 contact hour course meeting twice a week):

$$4 \times 800 = 3200$$

$$3200 \div 16 = 200$$

$$200 \div 2 = 100$$

Class meeting follows #2 above to incorporate breaks. (Assume Mon/Wed or Tues/Thursday combination and 9 a.m. start time.)

1st hour: 9:00 a.m. – 9:50 a.m. = 50 minutes

2nd hour: 10:00 a.m. – 10:50 a.m. = 50 minutes

Therefore, class schedules for 9-10:50 a.m.

To calculate for Summer semester:

- Number of contacts X 800 minutes = total minutes needed
- Total minutes needed ÷ class meetings for semester = minutes per meeting

Example (4 contact hour course meeting four times a week for 6 weeks; Memorial day = Monday and July 4th = Saturday):

$$4 \times 800 = 3200$$

$$3200 \div 23 = 139.13$$

Class meeting follows #3 above to incorporate breaks. (Assume 9 a.m. start time.)

1st hour: 9:00 a.m. – 9:55 a.m. = 55 minutes

2nd hour: 10:00 a.m. – 10:55 a.m. = 55 minutes

3rd hour: 11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. = 30 minutes

Total class meeting = 140 minutes

Therefore, class schedules for 9-11:30 a.m., Monday through Thursday.

Fall Semester Only - Tuesday or Tuesday/Thursday classes:

For Fall semester, those Tuesday or Tuesday/Thursday classes that *begin the first week of the semester and end the last week of the semester* (i.e., there are 17 weeks total or 33 class meetings, respectively) have an extra class session in excess of the total instructional minutes required for the course.

Therefore, those 17 week classes that meet all or half of their weekly instructional minutes on Tuesdays are **should not** meet the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, unless used as make-up for an absence during semester.

NOTE: It is important that the extra session your class will not meet be communicated to your students, preferably on your syllabus, but certainly with enough lead time to avoid confusion. Since this extra class

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session is not a faculty absence, it should not be posted to the Faculty Absence Line, although, notifying your division secretary is highly recommended.

Fall Semester Only - First 8-week Monday or Monday/Wednesday classes:

Classes that are the first 8-weeks of the semester and meet on Monday, time must be accounted for due to the Labor Day holiday. Please be sure to add minutes to the remaining class meeting dates.

Fall Semester Only - Second 8-week classes:

The week of Thanksgiving is not included in the instructional minutes for sections in the second 8 weeks, so they are not required to meet unless used as make-up for an absence during semester.

For classes that meet only on Friday (Fall and Winter semester):

Courses that only meet on Fridays end on week 15 of the semester.

Consider having a specified 'break' in sections meeting more than 4 hours. See example below.

A 4-contact hour section, meeting Friday's only for 12 weeks could meet from 9 a.m. until 11:50 a.m., take a 'break' from 11:50 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. Class would resume at 12:30 p.m. and run until 2:40 p.m. This would give a total meeting minutes of 3240.

Example (4 contact hour course meeting one Friday a week for 12 weeks:

$$4 \times 800 = 3200$$

$$3200 \div 12 = 267$$

Class meeting follows #2 above to incorporate breaks. (Assume 9 a.m. start time.)

1st hour: 9:00 a.m. – 9:50 a.m. = 50 minutes

2nd hour: 10:00 a.m. – 10:50 a.m. = 50 minutes

3rd hour: 11:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.m. = 50 minutes

Total class meeting before break = 150 minutes.

4th hour: 12:30 p.m. – 1:20 p.m. = 50 minutes

5th hour: 1:30 p.m. – 2:40 p.m. = 70 minutes

Total class meeting after break = 120 minutes

150 minutes before break + 120 minutes after break = 270 x 12 meetings = 3240 total minutes

Therefore, class schedules for 9-11:50 a.m., break from 11:50 – 12:30 p.m., class resumes at 12:30 p.m. and runs until 2:40 p.m.

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Weekend Classes:

Weekend classes are 14 weeks in length. Scheduled to end the Saturday before Final Exam week; start date dependent on Labor Day holiday. Fall Semester does not meet on Labor Day weekend or Thanksgiving weekend and Winter Semester does not meet both weekends of Spring Break.

- Number of contacts X 800 minutes = total minutes needed
- Total minutes needed ÷ 14 weeks in the semester = minutes per meeting
- Class meeting follows #3 above to incorporate breaks.

Example (Assume 8 a.m. start time, 3 contact hour course)

3 contact hr. Saturday class X 800 minutes = 2,400 minutes needed

$2400 \div 14 \text{ weeks} = 171 \text{ minutes per meeting.}$

1st hour: 8-8:55 a.m. = 55 minutes

2nd hour: 9-9:55 a.m. = 55 minutes

3rd hour: 10-11:05 a.m. = 65 minutes

Total meeting time = $175 \times 14 \text{ weeks} = 2,450 \text{ total minutes}$

Class should run 8 – 11:05 a.m.

Open-entry/open-exit formatted sections (i.e., ETW):

The following guidelines should apply:

- * The total number of available lab hours must exceed the total contact hours for the course with the most contact hours. Faculty member submits available hours to Academic Services at the start of each semester.
- * Pay close attention to this for the summer semester. The lab days must be reviewed for overlap to Memorial Day and July 4th holidays and the hours or weeks adjusted as needed.
- * Example – Summer semester:
 - A course has 6 contact hours. Total contact time for the student is 4,800 minutes (6 contact hours x 800 minutes per contact hour).
 - Lab hours are scheduled for 8 weeks (16 lab days; no holidays) from 2:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Therefore, available lab hours are 5,720 minutes (6.5 hours per lab day x 55 minutes per hour x 16 days).
- * For ETW sections in all semesters, the permission of instructor is set to “Yes” after the end of drop/add. This allows the instructor to review the students’ ability to complete the course within the remaining semester before the student registers.

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Calculating Clinical Hour:

Clinical Clock hour X 800 minutes = minutes per clinical

Minutes / weeks of clinical = minutes per week

Minutes per week / number of days meeting each week = minutes per day

Minutes per day / 60 = hours per day

Example:

6 contact hour section X 800 minutes = 4800 minutes

4800 minutes / 6-week section = 800 minutes needed per week

800 minutes needed per week / 2 days per week = 400 minutes per day meeting

400 minutes / 60 minute hours = 6.7 hours per day or 6 hours and 45 minutes per day

Please note: Add 30 minutes if a meal is needed within the meeting time.

Quick Reference:

Full-Term - 16 weeks			
Credit/ Contact Hour	Meeting times per week (Fall and Winter semesters)		
	1 meeting	2 meetings	3 meetings
4	3 hours, 50 minutes (200 minutes, includes 30 minutes for break)	1 hour, 50 minutes (100 minutes, includes 10 minutes for break)	1 hour, 10 minutes (70 minutes, no breaks)
3	2 hours, 50 minutes (150 minutes, includes 20 minutes for break)	1 hour, 15 minutes (75 minutes, no break)	50 minutes (no break)
2	1 hour, 50 minutes (100 minutes, includes 10 minutes for break)	50 minutes (no break)	n/a
1	50 minutes (no break)	n/a	n/a

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Definitions referenced:

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- (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 of credit; or (2) at least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other activities as established by an institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading toward to the award of credit hours.

ACS Course Credit Hour Definition: A course credit hour shall be determined by the institution's predominant calendar system. A semester credit hour shall not be less than 800 instructional minutes. All other units should be measured proportionately.

Establishing a Norm for courses delivered in an alternative method: Faculty assign credit hours and contact hours based upon a documented set of institutional policies and procedures. The Norm process is to establish a measure or standard of attainment. The institutional measure or standard determines the proportionate instructional contact hours and associated credit hours that a student is expected to prepare for the instructional objectives.

Revision History:

12/01/2000	Created
9/7/2001	Clarification added
3/23/2015	Clarified examples and updated format
9/9/2015	Added Fall Tuesday information
8/5/2016	Added ACS and Federal definitions and clock-to-credit hour conversion formula
9/8/2016	Added information regarding Friday only sections
08/22/17	Added information regarding first 8-week classes in Fall with Labor Day and Friday only classes ending on week 15.
02/14/19	Updated information and references related to credit hour definition
08/23/19	Clarification added