



FR 4.9 | Definition of Credit Hours

The institution has policies and procedures for determining the credit hours awarded for courses and programs that conform to commonly accepted practices in higher education and to Commission policy.

Compliance Finding: IN COMPLIANCE

Narrative:

The University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB) has policies and procedures for determining the number and level of credit hours awarded for courses and programs. These policies and procedures conform to commonly accepted practices in higher education and to Commission policy, regardless of format or mode of delivery. The credit value of each course is determined by the amount of engaged learning time per week for one semester, as defined in [USC system Policy ACAF 2.03](#). On [June 16, 2014](#), the USCB Administrative Council endorsed this policy and approved it as USCB policy.

Definition of Credit Hours and Types of Credit

The various credit definitions are delineated in system policy ACAF 2.03 and are the same regardless of mode of delivery. While specific meeting times are not delineated, online courses are designed with contact time and content equal to the traditional face-to-face delivery of courses. (See syllabi for [traditional NURS B310](#), [online NURS B310](#), [hybrid NURS B401](#).) Other alternate delivery methods are variable credit, independent study/special topic, internships, and clinical courses. USCB uses the following definitions.

- Traditional/Variable credit: course that can be taken more than once until the maximum number of credit hours for the course have been earned.
- Independent study/special topic: courses allowing students to pursue an area of academic interest not adequately covered by the regular course structure.

- Internship: courses in which students meet program-specific learning outcomes and course objectives in an applied environment. They are offered for a range of credits, and include a formal mechanism for evaluating the achievement of objectives.
- Clinical: courses intended to address a specific professional development need (e.g., nursing, education), and that are not regular program offerings.
- Laboratory: hands-on application of course content or learning objective.

Table 1 details how credit hours for these methods are determined:

Table 1: Credit Hour Calculation for Alternate Delivery Method Courses

Department	Variable Credit	Independent study/ special topic	Internships	Clinical	Laboratory
Business Administration	Per long standing departmental agreement, one credit hour for one contact variable credit, (1-3 credits)	Per long standing departmental agreement, one credit hour for one contact variable credit, (1-3 credits)	9 hours per week for a 3 credit internship, 6 hours per week for a 2 credit, and 3 hours for a 1 credit (hence 135, 90, or 45 work hours per semester)	NA	NA
Education	NA	NA	Per South Carolina Department of Education requirements, interns are in the schools five days a week for a minimum of 600 hours (40 x 15 = 600)	Per South Carolina Department of Education requirements, students are in the field four hours a week for 15 weeks with a minimum of 60 hours (4 x 15 = 60=1 credit hour)	NA

Department	Variable Credit	Independent study/ special topic	Internships	Clinical	Laboratory
English and Theatre	See ENGL B466 Writing Internship	All independent study contracts and syllabi are reviewed by the Chair and EVCAA before the course can be listed. These materials list required hours and credits. Special topics course syllabi are submitted for department chair review every semester. Special topics courses carry the same credit hours and workload as standard 400-level courses.	ENGL B466 Writing Internship: minimum of 80 service hours for 1 credit hour	NA	Grammar usage lab; credit is determined by faculty recommendation and Chair review/approval
Hospitality Management	NA	Credit is determined by faculty recommendation and Chair review/approval	No contact hours, but does require 400 hours of work experience	NA	NA

Department	Variable Credit	Independent study/ special topic	Internships	Clinical	Laboratory
Humanities and Fine Arts	Faculty member teaching course specifies in syllabus the required hours and the credits for the course per course description in the Bulletin. The syllabus is submitted for department chair review every semester. For each credit hour, the course should be reasonably expected to require of the student approximately 50-60 hours of class related activity	All independent study contracts and syllabi are reviewed by the Chair and EVCAA before the course can be listed. These materials list required hours and credits. Special topics course syllabi are submitted for department chair review every semester. For each credit hour, the course should be reasonably expected to require of the student approximately 50-60 hours of class related activity	Credit given based on contract, quality of work and completion of the minimum 150 hours required	NA	The Humanities and Fine Arts Dept. does not have separate lab courses but does have hands-on application of course content or learning objective inside the actual courses (Studio Art, Foreign Languages, etc.)
Mathematics and Computational Science	Determined by faculty/student contract. One credit for one (50 min) contact hour	CSCI 499- Practical Field Experience in Computational Science (pending). One credit for 45 hours (minimum) of experience	NA	NA	Determined per faculty/student contract. One credit for one (50 min) contact hour

Department	Variable Credit	Independent study/ special topic	Internships	Clinical	Laboratory
Natural Sciences	3 classroom hours per week for lecture courses and 3 laboratory hours per week for each lab credit for 15 weeks in a 15 week semester or equivalent	3 classroom hours per week for lecture courses and 3 laboratory hours per week for each lab or research credit for 15 weeks in a 15 week semester or equivalent	NA	NA	3 laboratory hours per week or 2 laboratory hours plus one recitation hour for each lab credit for a 15 week semester or equivalent
Nursing and Health Professions	NUR B399 (1-3 credits) see next column HPRO B420 (1-3 credits) on a 1:3 ratio as with lab: 1 cr. = 3 contact/hrs./wk . (45 per sem.)	NURS B399 One credit hour for one contact variable credit, (1-3 credits)	HPRO B480 9 hours per week for a 3 credit internship, (135 hrs. for the semester)	NURS B202 (90), 326 (90), 356 (75), 358 (75), 412 (75), 416 (120), 424P (120), 426 (135), 441 (135) courses have a clinical component based on a 1:3 (theory: clinical ratio) translated as 3 contact hours per credit hour X15 weeks equals the required clinical practice hours indicated above	NURS B 202 (45), 312 (45), 326 (45), 356 (15), 358 (15), 412 (15), 416 (15), 424P (15), courses have a lab component based on a 1:3 (theory: lab ratio) translated as 3 contact hours per credit hour X15 weeks equals the required lab practice hours indicated above

Department	Variable Credit	Independent study/ special topic	Internships	Clinical	Laboratory
Social Sciences	Supervising faculty member outlines specific requirements in a proposed syllabus, which must be approved by Chair and in some cases, the EVCAA. For each credit hour, the course should be reasonably expected to require of the student approximately 50-60 hours of class related activity	Supervising faculty member outlines specific requirements in a proposed syllabus, which must be approved by the Chair and EVCAA. To merit 3 credit hours, the course should be reasonably expected to require of the student approximately 150-180 hours of class related activity (e.g., reading, writing, experiential exercises, etc.)	Human Services Internships – Consistent with Council for Standards in Human Service Education (CSHSE) standards, 120 service hours with additional meetings and course assignments for 3 credit hours. Communication Studies Internship – minimum of 150 service hours for 3 credit hours. Psychology Internships – minimum of 150 service hours for 3 credit hours	NA	PSYCH B201 – Two laboratory hours per week for 1 credit hour

Process for Determining the Credit Hours Awarded.

When new courses are developed, faculty members consider the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) when determining the course content, the contact hours, and the course credits. The USCB Courses and Curricula Committee evaluates all [new course proposals](#). As part of the course approval process, a [syllabus](#) must be submitted and approved, and must include a list of SLOs as mandated in the [Syllabus Policy](#) in the Academic Affairs Resource Guide. After the Courses and Curricula Committee has approved the new course, the [Faculty Senate \(p.6\)](#) gives final approval. Through this process, both the Courses and Curricula Committee and the Faculty Senate help ensure that the proposed credit hours are appropriate for the SLOs and engaged learning time.

The standard credit hour to clock hour conversion is based on the [IPEDS Credit Hour Definition](#) and the [IPEDS Clock Hour Definition](#). This credit value of each USCB course is referenced in the [University Bulletin](#) (p. 164).

Table 2: Credit Hour/Clock Hour/Carnegie Unit Conversion

Credit Hours	Clock Hours	Carnegie Units (minutes)
1	14	700
2	28	1400
3	42	2100
4	56	2800

Course Schedules

At USCB, Fall and Spring semester courses are offered in the following formats: full term (16 weeks), first 8 weeks, and second 8 weeks. Summer courses are formatted thus:

- Summer May
- Summer 1st half
- Summer 2nd half
- Summer 8 week
- Summer Full (16 weeks)

The [Spring 2014 Course Schedule](#) illustrates the format of the class, term, day, time, course credit value and other pertinent information. The [online dynamic term class schedule](#) shows start time, end time, meeting dates, and credit value for each course.

Supporting Documents

1. [USC system Policy ACAF 2.03](#)
2. [June 16, 2014 Administrative Council Minutes](#)
3. [Traditional NURS Syllabus](#)
4. [Online NURS Syllabus](#)
5. [Hybrid NURS Syllabus](#)
6. [New Course Proposal](#)
7. [Syllabus Example](#)
8. [Syllabus Policy](#)
9. [Faculty Senate Minutes—New Course Approval](#)
10. [IPEDS Credit Hour Definition](#)
11. [IPEDS Clock Hour Definition](#)
12. [University Bulletin—Course Credits](#)
13. [Spring 2014 Course Schedule](#)
14. [Online Dynamic Term Class Schedule](#)