University Policy 4080

Credit Hours

Effective Date

December 2013

Responsible Party

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, (208) 426-1202
Office of the Registrar, (208) 426-4249

Scope and Audience

This policy applies to all for-credit University courses at all levels (graduate, professional, and undergraduate) regardless of the mode of delivery including, but not limited to, self-paced, online, hybrid, lecture, seminar, and laboratory. Exempt from this policy are Professional Education credits that are delivered to meet continuing education requirements and are not countable as fulfilling degree requirements.

Additional Authority

- Idaho State Board of Education Policy, Section III.E.2

- U.S. Department of Education, Title 34 CFR 600.2 and 600.24 Institutional Eligibility under the Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended

- U.S. Department of Education, Title 34 CFR 668.8(k) general rules that apply to an institution that participates in any student financial assistance program authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (Title IV, HEA program)

1. Policy Purpose

To support Boise State University's compliance with the Northwest Commission on College and Universities' Policy on Credit Hour, Idaho State Board of Education policy, and U.S. Department of Education policy.

2. Policy Statement

This policy defines credit hours and the assignment of credit hours. Such definitions are important because there are many types of educational experiences with which Credit Hour assignments are associated. Additionally, definitions are required for compliance with federal law and accreditation standards as well as accurate academic measurement and cross-campus comparability.

3. Definitions

3.1 Credit Hour

Time-based reference for measuring educational attainment used by American universities and colleges.

3.2 Clock Hour

A 50 to 60 minute, class, lecture, laboratory, internship or recitation in a 60 minute period.

4. Responsibilities and Procedures

4.1 Credit Hour Requirements

a. For each Credit Hour granted, students must have successfully met the academic requirements with an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that reasonably approximates not less than:

- 15 Clock Hours of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of 30 Clock Hours of out-of-class student work; or

- 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, workshops, independent study, hybrid, online, and other academic work leading to the award of Credit Hours.

- For example, for a fifteen week semester, one Clock Hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and two hours of out-of-class student work each week would be granted one credit.

b. The expectation of contact time inside the classroom and student effort outside the classroom is the same in all formats of a course whether it is fully online, a hybrid of face-to-face contact with some content delivered by electronic means, or one delivered in lecture or seminar format. Courses with less structured classroom schedules, such as workshops, research seminars, independent studies, internships, practica, studio work, or any other academic work leading to the award of credit hours, at a minimum, should state clearly learning objectives and expected outcomes and workload expectations that meet the standards set forth above.

4.2 Verification and Compliance

Credit Hours are examined for compliance by various campus units.

a. Departments and colleges will verify that credit amounts being offered for their courses are consistent with this policy.

b. The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and the Graduate Council will verify that credit amounts for new courses being approved are consistent with this policy.

c. The Registrar and/or the Division of Extended Studies will verify compliance when courses are scheduled to be offered.

Revision History