

# CREDIT HOUR AND COMPLIANCE POLICY

D'Youville University operates under a system of semester credit hours. The Credit Hour Policy codifies practices across the University regarding course contact hours and out-of-class student work in accordance with Federal, State, and accreditation guidelines, as well as licensure requirements for many disciplines. The course credit shall be the academic currency to be used in all schools of D'Youville University in measuring students' progress toward a degree and shall be the official unit of record.

As part of D'Youville University's commitment to providing the best educational experience possible for our students and to ensure compliance with applicable academic accreditation standards and legal requirements, each program of D'Youville University must assure that it has clear procedures and that it maintains appropriate records with respect to assigning an appropriate number of credit hours and contact time per course based on the criteria set forth in this policy. Programs may determine contact time over the minimum requirements if needed.

The measure of this instructional contact time may be adjusted to reflect different formats of study or lengths of academic sessions. These adjustments are reflective of the intended student outcomes and established equivalencies of the semester credit hour set by D'Youville University and reasonably reflect the requirements established by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) in its Credit Hour Policy in July 2022 that requires MSCHE institutions to comply with the U.S. Department of Education's definition of credit hour (MSCHE Credit Hour Policy (2022)

<https://msche.box.com/shared/static/o965z7wbir3leva2ci18sbm9ha73903z.pdf>).

The MSCHE Credit Hour Policy and Procedures state that institutions may use different methodologies for determining the assignment of credit hours. The methodology for assigning credit hours should accurately represent the level of instruction, academic rigor, and time requirements of a course taken and educational programs should be of sufficient content, depth, and program length appropriate to the objectives of the degree or credential. Both within and between institutions, consistency in credit hour determinations has implications for the transferability of credit and minimizing the loss of credit for students. The definitions for clock hour and credit hour were updated to align with revised federal regulations in 34 C.F.R. 600.2.

Definitions: D'Youville University defines a credit hour as a reasonable approximation of the student learning outcome equivalency of an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that reasonably approximates not less than, at a minimum, the federal definition:

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 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; and (2) permits an institution, in determining the amount of work associated with a credit hour, to take into account a variety of delivery methods, measurements of student work, academic calendars, disciplines, and degree levels. (federal definition in 34 CFR § 600.2).

All D'Youville University degree and certificate programs are approved by the New York State Education Department (NYSED). D'Youville University's credit hour calculations for degree and certificate programs follow NYSED guidelines – which are based on the U.S. Department of Education's definition of credit hour.

## NYSED – Credit Hour Definition

All courses and degree programs at the University must comply with Section 50.1 (o) of the New York State Commissioner of Education Regulations: (o) Semester hour means a credit, point, or other unit granted for the satisfactory completion of a course which requires at least 15 hours (of 50 minutes each) of instruction and at least 30 hours of supplementary assignments, except as otherwise provided pursuant to section 52.2(c)(4) of this Subchapter. This basic measure shall be adjusted proportionately to translate the value of other academic calendars and formats of study in relation to the credit granted for study during

the two semesters that comprise an academic year (Source: NYSED Commissioner of Regulations, 8 CRR-NY 50.1)

Procedures: The faculty in each program is responsible for all aspects of the curriculum and degree program requirements. D'Youville University has a faculty curriculum committee that reviews proposed new and revised courses and degree programs, including the credit hours associated with each.

Per each credit hour awarded, for lecture-based courses, the minimum instructional time per week is 50 minutes (750 minutes for a 15-week semester); for labs, internships, practica, clinicals and externships the minimum instructional time per week is 100 minutes (1500 minutes for 15-week semester).

Lab – courses where the major focus is on experiential activities to support student learning. Minimum contact time is based on 2 times the amount of contact time of a lecture (2:1 ratio). Through scheduling of classes and/or syllabi, academic departments must demonstrate that the proportion of lab/activity meets the minimum contact time required of 2:1 of lab/activity experiences contact minutes to lecture contact minutes.

Internships, Practicum/field experience, Clinical, Externships – courses developed for independent learning or experience involving self-directed and often off-site learning. These courses are taught on a minimum 2:1 ratio.

Online Courses – courses developed for fully online delivery of the educational experience. For every credit hour associated with the course, students are expected to do at least 150 minutes of course-related work each week of the 15-week session or 300 minutes of coursework each week for the 8-week session. This includes work done completing assigned readings, studying for tests and examinations, preparing written assignments, and other course-related tasks.

Accelerated Courses – courses offered in terms of length less than the traditional 15-week semester.

These courses offer the same semester credit hours as traditional semester-length classes. Within the shortened time frame, an accelerated course must meet the minimum contact hour requirements of the Lecture format or of any of the other categories of study at a 2:1 ratio.

Responsible Unit: Academic Affairs

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Next Review Date: 2025