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### **DEFINITION OF CREDIT HOUR**

In accordance with Federal Regulation 34 CFR 600.2, Bethel University defines a credit hour (See Policy 5.100) as 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.

Bethel University conforms to the credit hour policy established by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS COC) of "Credits may be awarded on the basis of documentation of the amount of work a typical student is expected to complete within a specified amount of academically engaged time, or on the basis of documented student learning calibrated to that amount of academically engaged time for a typical student" (2011). The number of credit hours recognized is determined by the university faculty based on good educational standards and practices.

The university's credit hour policy reflects the common practice in higher education

of adherence to the Carnegie Unit for contact time (750 minutes per credit hour). In addition, the policy requires a minimum of 1500 minutes per credit hour of student driven “out-of-class” activities. The credit hour policy and procedures apply to courses in all delivery formats (face-to- face, blended, and online) and at all campuses (main campus, satellite campuses, and approved external instructional site). Courses offered in accelerated programs must adhere to the same guidelines used to define minimum in-class minutes, as well as the minimum number of minutes for out-of-classroom student work.

<b>Credits Awarded</b>	<b>Minimum In-class (minutes / hours)</b>	<b>Minimum Out-of-Class student work (minutes / hours)</b>	<b>Total of instructional contact time and out of class student work</b>
1	750 min / 12.5 hours	1500 min / 25 hours	2250 minutes / 37.5 hours
2	1500 min / 25 hours	3000 min / 50 hours	4500 minutes / 75 hours
3	2250 min / 37.5 hours	4500 min / 75 hours	6750 minutes / 112.5 hours

**CLASSROOM MINUTES**

Classroom minutes can include, but are not limited to the following types of activities and may be completed in a face-to-face or online environment: lecture – to include lecture video, assigned external video streaming, narrated PowerPoint presentations, Podcasts, and assigned external audio streaming; discussion - to include large and small group formats; live or virtual chat; role play exercises; assigned reading (online only); modeling and simulation; group activities; student presentations or performances; and formative and summative assessments.

**OUT-OF-CLASS STUDENT ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

Out-of-class student academic engagement may include, but not be limited to, activities such as assigned readings – to include supplemental material, course syllabi, facilitator announcements, and course specific materials; review of media clips, films, or dramatic productions – to include course specific videos available through the online library; group projects; written assignments – to include response to initial discussion board assignment, review and response to classmates’ discussion board posts, and assigned journaling; quantitative problem-solving; interviews; self-assessments; research – to include research of peer-reviewed articles required to complete assignments and discussion responses; preparation for individual presentations; creation of lesson plans; portfolio development; critiques; review feedback – to include facilitator feedback on graded assignments, tutor reviews

and comments; and problem-solving activities.

## **PROCEDURES**

During regular reviews of the curriculum for each program, including general education, faculty will evaluate the amount of time required for completion of assigned work for a typical student at the degree level based on the above standard. For individual courses, the university's Course Proposal Form must be completed and submitted to the appropriate Curriculum and Academic Policy Committee. If online or blended, the review of the completed course will implement the QualityMatters process under the supervision of the Chief Academic and Compliance Officer. Details of this process are included in the QualityMatters Course Review Policy and Procedure document (See Policy 5.700).

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The process for determination of adherence to Bethel University's policy regarding application of credit hours to online courses includes the primary stage of course audits by members of the appropriate Curriculum and Academic Policy Committee (CAPC). The course audits provide a foundation for standards and expectations that are applicable to online and face-to-face courses. The requirements represent minimums for average students. Deviations that exceed the requirements may occur, especially at the graduate level.

Online courses must meet the same review requirements as traditional courses. Online and traditional courses differ in format, but are similar in expected learning outcomes. The determination of credit awarded for online courses adheres to the same processes and policies as face-to-face courses. All components of an online course must be completed in order for a student to receive credit for the course regardless of the amount of credit attached to the course.

## **PUBLICATION**

University website