

CREDIT HOUR POLICY

To define SUNY Maritime College's policy on the assignment of semester/credit hours and the method by which the College's compliance with credit hour assignment is assured.

Office of the Provost

2016-17

State University of New York – Credit/Contact Hour Policy

SUNY Maritime College's calculations of credit hour follow the [State University of New York \(SUNY\) Policy](#) which is applicable to its Community Colleges and State-Operated Campuses. The Policy is below:

Summary

The State University of New York (University), like most American higher education, has adopted a variant of the traditional "Carnegie Unit" as a measure of academic credit. This unit is known in the University by the familiar term, "semester credit hour," and is the primary academic measure by which progress toward a degree is gauged. It is recognized that such a unit measures only a part, albeit a major part, of a composite learning experience, based upon formally structured and informal interactions among faculty and students.

Policy

Over the past several years, for academic purposes, some faculties have allowed modifications of the classical Carnegie definition of a semester credit hour, which has stipulated that one semester credit hour be awarded for fifteen sessions of 50-minutes duration in classroom lecture-recitation each requiring two hours of outside preparation by the student. Today there are many types of educational experiences with which credit hour assignment may properly be associated.

In the interest of accurate academic measurement and cross-campus comparability, the following definitions and practices apply in controlling the relationship between contact and credit hours. These definitions constitute a formalization of current and historic policy in order to ensure consistency throughout the University. Courses may be composed of any combination of elements described, such as a lecture course which also has required laboratory periods or a lecture course having an additional requirement for supervised independent study or tutorial activity.

A semester credit hour is normally granted for satisfactory completion of one 50-minute session of classroom instruction per week for a semester of not less than fifteen weeks. This basic measure may be adjusted proportionately to reflect modified academic calendars and formats of study.

New York State Education Department – Guidelines

All credit-bearing degree and certificate programs at SUNY Maritime College are approved by the New York State Education Department (NYSED). Calculations of credit hours for these programs follow NYSED guidelines, which are consistent with the SUNY's adoption of the Carnegie definition of a credit hour.

Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York, Title 8 – Education Department, Chapter II – Regulations of the Commissioner, Subchapter A – Higher and Professional Regulations, Part 50 – General,

Section 50.1 (o) stipulates the following: *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.*

Section 52.2(c)(4) stipulates: *A semester hour of credit may be granted by an institution for fewer hours of instruction and study than those specified in subdivision (o) of section 50.1 of this Subchapter only: (i) when approved by the commissioner as part of a registered curriculum; (ii) when the commissioner has granted prior approval for the institution to maintain a statement of academic standards that defines the considerations which establish equivalency of instruction and study and such statement has been adopted by the institution; or (iii) in the event of a temporary closure of an institution by the State or local government as a result of a disaster, as defined in section 50.1(w) of this Title, when the commissioner has granted approval for the institution to maintain a statement of academic standards that defines the considerations which establish equivalency of instruction and study and such statement has been adopted by the institution.*

NYSED – Determining Time on Task in Online Education

The College adheres to the New York State Education Department's Office of College and University Evaluation policies on "[Determining Time on Task in Online Education](#)," which is excerpted below.

Time on task is the total learning time spent by a student in a college course, including instructional time as well as time spent studying and completing course assignments (e.g., reading, research, writing, individual and group projects.) Regardless of the delivery method or the particular learning activities employed, the amount of learning time in any college course should meet the requirements of Commissioner's Regulation Section 50.1 (o), a total of 45 hours for one semester credit (in conventional classroom education this breaks down into 15 hours of instruction plus 30 hours of student work/study out of class.)

"Instruction" is provided differently in online courses than in classroom-based courses. Despite the difference in methodology and activities, however, the total "learning time" online can usually be counted. Rather than try to distinguish between "in-class" and "outside-class" time for students, the faculty member developing and/or teaching the online course should calculate how much time a student doing satisfactory work would take to complete the work of the course, including:

- *reading course presentations/ "lectures"*
- *reading other materials*
- *participation in online discussions*
- *doing research*
- *writing papers or other assignments*
- *completing all other assignments (e.g., projects)*

The total time spent on these tasks should be roughly equal to that spent on comparable tasks in a classroom-based course. Time spent downloading or uploading documents, troubleshooting technical problems, or in chat rooms (unless on course assignments such as group projects) should not be counted.

In determining the time on task for an online course, useful information includes

- *the course objectives and expected learning outcomes*
- *the list of topics in the course outline or syllabus; the textbooks, additional readings, and related education materials (such as software) required*
- *statements in course materials informing students of the time and/or effort they are expected to devote to the course or individual parts of it*
- *a listing of the pedagogical tools to be used in the online course, how each will be used, and the expectations for participation (e.g., in an online discussion, how many substantive postings will be required of a student for each week or unit?)*

Theoretically, one should be able to measure any course, regardless of delivery method, by the description of content covered. However, this is difficult for anyone other than the course developer or instructor to determine accurately, since the same statement of content (in a course outline or syllabus) can represent many different levels of breadth and depth in the treatment of that content, and require widely varying amounts of time.

Middle States Commission on Higher Education – Credit Hour Policy

SUNY Maritime College’s calculations of credit hour comply with [Credit Hour Policy of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education](#) (MSCHE). The policy excerpted here:

Context

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education expects all candidate and accredited institutions to demonstrate that they use acceptable and consistent methods for assigning credit hours to all courses and programs of study. The credit hour is defined by the U.S. Department of Education as a basic institutional measure of the level of instruction and academic rigor that establishes eligibility for federal funding. Both within and between institutions, consistency in credit hour determinations has implications for the transferability of credit and for demonstrating that all courses and programs—regardless of teaching and learning formats or delivery mode—are of sufficient academic rigor, content, and depth.

The purpose of this document is to guide institutions in assigning credit hours in ways that are consistent with U.S. Department of Education credit hour regulations and that allow for flexibility.

Definition

The U.S. Department of Education defines “credit hour” 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 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.”*

The U.S. Department of Education establishes the credit hour as the basis for measuring an institution’s eligibility for federal funding. The Carnegie unit, represented in point (1) above, has served as the traditional unit of measure, but the Department also recognizes that institutions are developing other measures of educational content and credit equivalency. The purpose of the credit hour policy is to ensure that credit hour measures are reasonably equivalent regardless of how institutions award credit hours to courses and programs in various modes of instruction and teaching and learning formats.

Policy

The Commission recognizes that institutions may use one or both of the options identified in the definition of credit hours when assigning credit hours.

State Maritime College – Credit Hour Policy

All semester/credit hours awarded by SUNY Maritime College will conform to the definitions listed above. Therefore, all credits awarded are in compliance with policies set forth by SUNY, NYSED and MSCHE.

The academic calendar for SUNY Maritime College follows a semester system with fall and spring semesters consisting of 15 academic weeks, which includes one week for exams. Summer terms are typically less than 15 weeks but adhere to the policy in terms of meeting time and the amount of work required. Terms for certain academic programs (for example, compressed summer schedules) have been adjusted but nonetheless adhere to the policy in terms of the amount of work required. A brief winter session with a 3 week period of instruction is used in rare situations, and only if it is possible to adhere to the credit hour policy in terms of meeting time and the overall amount of work required.

Department faculty are responsible for developing, maintaining, and assessing the curriculum within an academic program. Assignment of credit hours for courses is determined within the program based on faculty expertise and student learning outcomes. New courses are introduced only after review and approval at the department level, by the Curriculum Committee, and finally by the Faculty as a whole.

In their review and approval of new courses and major revisions of existing courses, the academic department, the Curriculum Committee and the Faculty are charged with following the policy on credit hours and certifying that the expected student learning for the course meets the credit-hour standard.

The following tables summarize how the credit hour translates to the particular instruction method. Please note that for these calculations, time is in hours where 1 contact hour = 50 minutes and a semester is 15 weeks in duration.

1 Credit Awarded	Instructional Time		Student-Work Time		Minimum Total Instructional and Student-Work Time/Semester
	Minimum Inside-Class Contact Hours/ Week	Minimum Inside-Class Contact Hours/Semester	Minimum Outside-of-Class Student Work/Week	Minimum Outside-of-Class Student Work/Semester	
Lecture	1	15	2	30	45
Lab	2	30	1	15	45
Recitation	2	30	1	15	45

The Academic Dean adds newly approved courses to the College Catalog. The Registrar reviews the class schedules prior to the start of each semester to ensure that all classes are scheduled for the number of hours specified in the approved course description. Any discrepancies are brought to the attention of the appropriate academic department for correction.

Independent Study

Courses of study in which a faculty member regularly interacts and directs student outcomes with periodic contact. Minimum credit hours are determined based on faculty instructional contact minutes and student outside work time. In all such instances, such courses must match the total amount of instructional and student work time as indicated in the table above, and the faculty member is required to keep records of the meeting times and student work assigned so that contact hours can be calculated.

Internships

Courses of study in which a faculty member regularly interacts and directs student outcomes with periodic contact, but where the actual learning environment takes place on or off campus at an approved site. The learning experience will typically involve a site supervisor or preceptor, and directed activity/learning will occur outside of a lecture setting. Contact time and outside student work requirements must be established and documented and must match the total amount of instructional and student work time as indicated in the table above. The faculty member or department chair responsible for the experience is required to keep records of amount of supervised work and the amount of outside

work assigned so that contact hours can be calculated. However, total hours will exceed the minimum hours per credit requirement.

Accelerated Courses

Courses offered outside of a standard 15-week semester in which the credit hours offered are the same as standard semester courses and the content and substantive learning outcomes are the same as those in the standard semester. These courses must meet the total amount of instructional and student work time as indicated in the table above even if delivered within an accelerated time frame.

Online/Hybrid Courses

Online courses are offered entirely online without any onsite face-to-face meetings. These courses have the same learning outcomes and substantive components as a standard lecture/seminar course with an alternate delivery method. Contact time is satisfied by several means. In all instances, online courses must meet the total amount of instructional and student work time as indicated in the table above even if delivered online and asynchronously.

Hybrid courses combine online and face-to-face instruction, delivering a *substantial proportion* of the content online and typically using online discussions and a reduced number of face-to-face meetings. Contact time is assessed using both onsite definitions (for the onsite portion) and online definitions as above (for the online portion). In all such instances, these courses must meet the total amount of instructional and student work time as indicated in the table above even if delivered online or asynchronously.

Maritime Education and Training Courses

Many credit-bearing courses offered as part of the US Coast Guard (USCG) Licensing program have requirements such as sea-days, individual assessment of KUPs (Knowledge, Understanding and Proficiency areas), classroom instruction with little or no new material, vessel maintenance & repair, and watchkeeping that do not easily follow the usual calculation of credits for the total amount of instructional and student work time. However, total hours will exceed the minimum hours per credit requirement.

- ENGR 510/520/530 – Summer Sea Term I/II/III
- ENGR 521 – Cadet Commercial Vessel Shipping (in lieu of Summer Sea Term II)
- MT 510/520/530 – Ship Operation and Management I/II/III (Summer Sea Term I/II/III)
- MT 521 – Cadet Commercial Vessel Shipping (in lieu of Summer Sea Term II)
- MTDO 524/525 – Cadet Commercial Vessel Shipping Limited Tonnage I/II
- MTEO 521/522/523 – Cadet Commercial Vessel Shipping Assistant Engineer I/II/III

These courses are audited by the USCG and the Maritime Administration (MARAD) every five years, where all course materials are reviewed during an on-Campus visit by a joint USCG-MARAD evaluation

team. A mid-cycle internal audit must be conducted by the College and the results presented to the visiting team at the time of the audit.

Class Schedule

The Office of Registrar uses the grid below to schedule each course that is offered by the College.

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:00 AM					
8:30 AM					
8:50 AM					
9:00 AM					
9:45 AM					
9:50 AM					
10:00 AM					
11:15 AM					
11:30 AM					
12:45 PM					
1:00 PM					
1:30 PM					
1:50 PM					
2:00 PM					
2:45 PM					
2:50 PM					
3:00 PM					
4:15 PM			REGIMENTAL ACTIVITIES		REGIMENTAL ACTIVITIES
4:30 PM					
4:30 PM					
5:45 PM					
6:30 PM					
6:30 PM					
(50-minutes) 7:20 PM					
(75-minutes) 7:45 PM					
(100-minutes) 8:10 PM					
(150-minutes) 9:00 PM					

Procedures

1. All courses offered at the College will be reviewed periodically by the department faculty, department chair and the Curriculum Committee for evidence of compliance with the semester/credit hour definitions as set forth by New York State, the U.S. Department of Education and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Information indicating such compliance will be shared with the Registrar to ensure ongoing compliance of assignment of credit hours to courses.

2. Courses which appear to be out of compliance will be evaluated and immediate measures taken to rectify the discrepancies. New courses or changes to existing courses and curriculum will normally be evaluated as part of the work of the Curriculum Committee.
3. The College Catalog shall serve as the official College publication providing information on credits assigned to each college course.
4. Records of credits assigned for each course will be maintained by the Registrar.