

NCA Self Study
Criterion 3 Documents

Eastern Illinois University

Year 2014

Credit Hour Policy
Council on Academic Affairs

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EIU PROPOSED CREDIT HOUR POLICY

Award of Credit

Eastern Illinois University awards credit in a manner that conforms to standards set by the Higher Learning Commission Policy (North Central Association; Commission Policy FDCR.A.10.020) and the Federal credit hour definition (Federal Register 75 FR 66832 p. 66946).

One **semester credit hour** is the amount of student effort that approximates **not less than 37.5 hours** of academic engagement in coursework (in-class/instructional time plus out-of-class student work) as represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement. The standard for one semester hour of credit in a traditional course is a minimum of 50 minutes of direct instruction and 100 minutes of out-of-class student work each week during a standard semester (15 weeks). This equates to a total minimum of 12.5 hours (750 minutes) of direct instruction and 25 hours (1500 minutes) of out-of-class student work per semester hour. The ratio of instruction time to out-of-class student work may vary; however, student academic engagement in coursework must meet the minimum of 37.5 hours per semester hour regardless of semester length, course type, or delivery method. All courses leading to the award of credit, including courses that have less structured classroom schedules such as independent studies, internships, practica, studio work, will, at a minimum, clearly state learning objectives, expected outcomes, and workload expectations that meet the standards set forth above.

Summary of Possible Student Academic Engagement Distribution for Different Course Types for 1 Semester Hour of Credit		
	Minimum Student Time in Direct Instruction (e.g. in class) per Semester	Minimum Out-Of-Class Student Work per Semester
Traditional Face-to-Face Courses	12.5 hours	25 hours
On-Line or Hybrid Courses The extent to which course content is delivered online or through other technological means does not affect the learning outcomes or total amount of student work per credit hour. In the case of distance education, academic engagement would include, but not be limited to, submitting an academic assignment; taking an exam, an interactive tutorial, or computer-assisted instruction; attending an assigned study group; contributing to an academic online discussion; and interacting with a faculty member to ask questions about the academic subject studied in the course. Merely logging into the electronic classroom does not constitute academic engagement.	Synchronous or asynchronous instructional time + out-of-class work = minimally 37.5 hours	
Labs, Studio, or Clinical Practica Often labs, studio classes and some types of clinical practicum require	25 hours	12.5 hours

a greater proportion of direct instruction with a smaller proportion of student preparation time outside of class.		
Activity Courses or Practica Some forms of activity or practicum courses may require most learning take place through direct or supervised instruction with little or no out-of-class time requirement.	37.5 hours	0 hours
Internship/Student Teaching An internship is a work experience related to the student's major or approved minor. This work experience must be directly related to the potential professional opportunities for graduates with the major or minor. While internships may vary in duration, credit, and requirements, a minimum of 37.5 hours is required for each semester hour of credit.	Supervised work at internship site + (classroom instruction in some cases) = minimally 37.5 hours (additional preparation time outside the work experience may be required)	
Independent Study Individualized study of a topic selected and self-directed by a student under the supervision of a member of the faculty. Independent study is a commitment of the student to a rigorous plan of investigation that focuses in a unique area of interest. An independent study involves relatively self-directed student effort in the pursuit of some clearly defined goals and learning objectives. Proposals for an independent study include a statement of the goals and a description of the intended final product of the project. Proposals must be on file in the department and approved by the faculty advisor and department chair prior to registration for the course.	Meetings with the professor for direct instructional activities may vary, however an estimate should be in the proposal. Student engagement with instructor + independent student work = minimally 37.5 hours	
Supervised Research or Thesis The amount of effort and learning outcomes required for one semester hour is determined by the supervising faculty and/or advisory committee.	Work on research with the professor + independent student work = minimally 37.5 hours	
Study Abroad or National Student Exchange Study abroad policy states that faculty-led study abroad program must demonstrate 12.5 hours of class time/lecture for every credit earned. It is expected that 25 hours of study time will also be included for every credit. The policy states that class time is lecture, actual meetings where students are sitting down for class. Study time is anything else that engages students with the learning objectives of the course. Excursions and class activities have academic relevance to the course; they are academically focused, not tourism. No more than 1.5 credits may be earned in one 7-day week. Transit/ transportation time may not count for class time or lecture. EIU Course Transplanted Abroad. This course of instruction is already available on EIU's campus and can be offered in an international setting. The CAA/CGS-approved course content and requirements are the same off-campus as they are on-campus. No substitution credit is permitted. It must be clearly demonstrated how each course will be enhanced by the international environment and will be scheduled and taught individually, meeting the same number of classroom hours and study time as it would if it were being conducted on campus. Unique Study Abroad Course. This is an EIU course created specifically for the study abroad experience; the course content is not	12.5 hours	25 hours

<p>offered at the EIU campus and does not already have its own specific course prefix and number. Student credit hours must comply with University credit policy. All participants must earn the same number of credit hours for completion of the course. Subject to approval of appropriate EIU departments, the course may be counted as a substitute for curricular requirements. The course substitution form and the program proposal are reviewed and approved by the International Education Council prior to the study abroad experience.</p> <p>EIU Credit for students taking courses in Study Abroad from a Foreign university or in the National Student Exchange from an American university. When an EIU student studies away, they enroll in a place holder STA or NSE course at EIU. Course descriptions of planned study away courses are reviewed for EIU course equivalencies by department chairs before the student leaves, insofar as possible. When the student returns, their transcripts from the other institution are evaluated by the NSE or Study Abroad coordinator. The federal credit hour definition applies to all American universities. For foreign university courses, the evaluating department chair recommends the number of credit hours and the final credit hour determination is made by the standard Illinois foreign credential evaluation procedures. A request is then sent to the registrar that the credits are recorded as a particular course with an S (study abroad) or N (national exchange) behind the EIU course prefix and number.</p>		
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Any exception to these policies requires approval of the Council on Academic Affairs for undergraduate courses or the Council on Graduate Studies for graduate courses. Exceptions will appear in the course descriptions approved through the established curricular process.

Credit for Prior Learning - Eastern Illinois University awards credit for prior learning in the Organizational and Professional Development (OPD) program, the RN to BSN program through an OPD course, and the B.A. in General Studies Program (BGS) following the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) standards. Students must take a portfolio development course and submit a portfolio to document learning from their previous experiences. Portfolios are evaluated by faculty with expertise in the area sought for course credit. Evaluators determine the amount of credit earned based on the quality of the portfolio and how effectively the student communicates college-level learning gained from work experience. Program directors/ coordinators and/or portfolio course instructors review and approve credit. The B. A. in General Studies also accepts credit for trainings/certifications evaluated by the American Council on Education (ACE) as documented on an official ACE transcript.

Credit for Military Service- Certain experiences in military service may be submitted to the Office of the Registrar, for evaluation for advanced standing. The recommendations contained in “A Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services” by the American Council on Education are used as a basis for such evaluation. Credit is allowed when the recommendations can be considered as reasonable substitutes for work ordinarily accepted by the University.

Credit for Proficiency Exam- Proficiency examinations, if approved by an academic department, offer an opportunity to obtain credit for experience relevant to certain courses, for individual study of subjects, or for study of relevant courses in non-accredited institutions. EIU allows credit through College Level Examination Program (CLEP), College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB), Advance Placement (AP), and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs. The B. A. in General Studies accepts credit for DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST) exams. Credit by proficiency examination in a course is equivalent to credit earned by enrollment in that course. Rules for proficiency examinations for credit are explained in the undergraduate catalog and scores required for specific exams are maintained on the registrar's webpage.

Application and Implementation of Credit Hour Policy

Curricula committees at Eastern Illinois University are charged with following the policy on credit hours in their review and approval of all courses and certifying that the expected student engagement and learning for the course meets the credit hour standard. The determination of credit hours is made when a new course or a revision to an existing course is proposed. The submitted course proposal is examined for instructional contact time as well as for assignments and evaluation mechanisms. EIU collects course syllabi and assessment data regarding learning outcomes to ensure, through periodic checks, that there is compliance and consistency with the credit hour policy across diverse course delivery modes.

CAA Approval: February 20, 2014