The College of Charleston employs sound, standard practices for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for courses, regardless of format, location, or mode of delivery.

The College of Charleston complies with the definition of a credit hour supplied by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education:

**CREDIT HOUR** A unit of measure that represents the equivalent of an hour (50 minutes) of instruction that can be applied to the total number of hours needed for completing the requirements of a degree, diploma, certificate or other formal award.

At the College of Charleston, the process of creating a new course begins in the academic department. The academic department determines the number of credit hours and level of credit to be awarded for the course and assigns a course number consistent with disciplinary norms and best practices related to student learning outcomes. Graduate level courses must require research and application. Each department and school has specific guidelines to account for the nuances and requirements of the particular fields of study.

The department completes a formal proposal for a new course. The proposal is reviewed and approved by: department or program faculty, the Department Chair, Dean of the School(s), the Provost, the Faculty Curriculum Committee, and the Faculty Senate.

Fall and spring semester courses are scheduled for 15 weeks, excluding holidays, spring/fall break but including a week of final exams, resulting in roughly 14 weeks of class meetings or 2100 minutes of instruction for 3 credit courses. Courses follow the guideline of 700 minutes of instruction per credit hour.

In 2000, after wide consultation and in keeping with best practices in the discipline, the Studio Art department initiated a four-hour block schedule for studio courses. Typically studio art courses meet one time per week for four hours over the course of a fall or spring semester. Thus, one credit of studio art = 80 minutes of studio instructional time.

Labs associated with natural science courses meet one time per week for 180 minutes each.
For classes that meet on campus, the College of Charleston provides the following approved meeting pattern time guidelines:

- Three-credit hour daytime courses that meet three days per week meet for 50 minutes per class session. These courses meet for 42 sessions per term.
- Three-credit hour daytime courses that meet two days per week meet for 75 minutes per class session. They meet for 28 sessions per term.
- Fall or spring evening courses may meet one or two nights per week. The total number of meeting minutes per semester is used in the calculation of the total length of each class meeting for evening courses (2100 minutes for a 3 credit course).

Within the fall and spring semesters, Express I and Express II sessions constitute half-semester accelerated terms. Courses meet twice a week for 150 minutes per meeting for 7 weeks and one additional day assigned for final exams in each session.

The College of Charleston has five sessions during the summer term:

- The Maymester session is a two-week session during which courses meet five days per week for three and one-half hours (210 minutes) per day for a total of 10 class meetings per session.
- The Summer I and Summer II sessions are each four weeks in duration, during which courses meet five days per week. Courses meet for 105 minutes per meeting for a total of 20-21 meetings.
- The May Evening and Summer Evening session are each six weeks in duration during which courses meet twice per week. Courses meet for three hours (180 minutes) per meeting for a total of 12 meetings.

Though the schedule for the summer sessions courses is compressed, the total number of instructional hours remains the same as the total number of fall and spring instructional hours and the course credits remain the same.

For courses designed to include significant out-of-class experiences (e.g., student teaching, internships, etc.) and Independent Studies, Tutorials, and Bachelor’s Essays, guidelines are set by the academic department for how the instructional time frame will meet credit guidelines outlined above. These courses require individual enrollment accompanied by a detailed contract specifying the nature of the student work product, learning outcomes, the frequency of meetings between the faculty member and student, and the method of final evaluation (grading).

Courses delivered with technology, in whole (online 50% or more) or in part (hybrid), emphasize academic engagement and student preparation in determining time of instruction but otherwise follow the same guidelines as face-to-face courses. Academic engagement may include, but is not limited to, submitting an academic assignment, listening to class lectures or webinars (synchronous or asynchronous), taking an exam, completing an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction, attending a study group that is assigned by the institution, contributing to an academic online discussion,
initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course, conducting laboratory work, and completing an externship or internship. Student preparation is typically homework, such as reading and study time, and completing assignments and projects.¹

College of Charleston courses delivered abroad or at other off-campus settings are developed by faculty to take full advantage of the unique location and be consistent with the expectations for academic engagement and instructional time articulated in this policy.

In summary, within the relevant semester time frame, the policy is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credit Type</th>
<th>Time Requirement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One credit of lecture</td>
<td>50 minutes of class time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One credit of studio (art)</td>
<td>80 minutes of studio time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One credit of lab</td>
<td>180 minutes of class time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four credit lecture/lab class</td>
<td>330 minutes of class time (150 min. lecture /180 min. lab)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Policy Manager and Responsible Department or Office**

Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs

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**Purpose/Reason for the Policy**

Academic credit provides the basis for measuring the amount of engaged learning time expected of a typical student enrolled in academic courses. Students, institutions, employers, and others rely on the common currency of academic credit to support a wide range of activities, including the transfer of students from one institution to another. The federal government relies on credits as a measure of student academic engagement as a basis of awarding financial aid.

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¹ Accrediting Commission of the Distance Education and Training Council, Washington, DC; “Determining Clock/Credit Hours, C.13” 2011. [http://www.detc.org/actions/approval/october2011/other%28100711%29C.%2013.%20Determining%20Credit-Clock%20Hours.pdf](http://www.detc.org/actions/approval/october2011/other%28100711%29C.%2013.%20Determining%20Credit-Clock%20Hours.pdf)
### Departments/Offices Affected by the Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Affairs (Academic Schools and Departments, Registrar’s Office, Enrollment Planning, Financial Aid, Summer School)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Affairs (Treasurer)</td>
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</table>

### Procedures Related to the Policy

Faculty in Departments, Department Chairs, Deans, appropriate faculty committees, and the Provost’s Office reviews the amount and level of credit as new courses are proposed or significant changes are made to courses using the approved process of curriculum review at the institution.

The Registrar ensures that course schedules are consistent with the clock to credit formula outlined in this policy by utilizing an approved meeting schedule.

### Related Policies, Documents or Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review Schedule</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issue Date:</strong> 3/4/2013</td>
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</table>