



## SUBJECT: Credit Hour

March 20, 2023

### Instruction 1324

(OUR)

#### ABSTRACT

This Instruction assigns the responsibilities and prescribes the procedures to be followed in defining the rendering of the academic credit hour for transcription of Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) coursework.

**A. Purpose.** This Instruction is to establish standards for various instructional methods to convert contact time to semester credit hour for coursework taught by USU faculty. This Instruction cancels and replaces PPM-010-2017, "Federal Definition of Credit Hour and Procedures of the Awarding of Transfer Credit to Graduate Students," (*Reference (a)*).

**B. Background.** This Instruction upholds the structure of the Department of Education's (DoE) Federal Definition of Credit Hour while taking into account the methods of learning in the health science programs at USU within the Department of Defense (DoD) environment. Previously, the DoE formula required a ratio of 1 in-class hour to 2 out-of-class hours. Now the DoE regulations permit institutions to consider out-of-class equivalent time when determining the number of credit hours.

**C. Reference.** See *Enclosure 1*.

**D. Applicability.** This policy applies to all USU academic coursework transcribed as University credit.

**E. Federal Definition of Credit Hour.** Semester credit hour is defined in accordance with the Federal Definition of the Semester Credit Hour, which states that a semester credit is 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:

1. Not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester hour or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour or credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time, or

2. At least an equivalent amount of work as required outlined in item a) above 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.

**F. Responsibilities.**

1. **The Academic Program** shall:

- a. Determine the course contact time when developing curriculum;
- b. Apply the School/College credit hour formula when approving curriculum;
- c. Forward approved curriculum to Office of University Registrar (OUR) for recording in the University Catalog and the student record;
- d. Routinely assess curriculum and coordinate changes with OUR.

2. **The OUR** shall:

- a. Record credit hours determined by School/College Curriculum Committees/Authorities in the University Catalog and on the student record; Apply credit hour changes to the University Catalog and student records as indicated by School/College Curriculum Committees/Authorities;
- b. Provide institutional academic data to the Office of Accreditation and Organizational Assessment (AOA) for annual University performance statistics required by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE).

**G. Policy.** USU adopts the Federal definition of semester credit hour unit. Where applicable, calculations to derive alternative unit equivalency to semester credit hours are detailed by School or College.

1. **F. Edward Hebert School of Medicine (SOM)– Medical Degree (MD)**

a. The Executive Curriculum Committee of the SOM is the faculty body that oversees the medical education program as a whole, and makes recommendations to the Dean for the overall design, management, integration, evaluation, and enhancement of a coherent and coordinated medical curriculum. Furthermore, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) accredits the MD program and defines the program length in terms of weeks of instructions. The LCME requires that a program of medical education leading to the MD degree include at least 130 weeks of instruction which the USU SOM program exceeds as evidenced by the degree plans published in the University Catalog.

b. The SOM defines program length is based on LCME requirements and calculates equivalency to semester hours as follows:

- 1) Pre-clerkship: One week of full-time instruction in the curriculum is equivalent to 1 credit hour.
- 2) Core Clerkship: One week of clinical clerkship activity is equivalent to 1 credit hour.

3) Post Clerkship: One week of full-time instruction in Bench to Bedside and Beyond period, one week of clinical clerkship activity, and one week of Capstone activity is equivalent to 1 credit hour.

4) Military Medicine: One week of instructional activity extended over the pre-clerkship or post-clerkship timeframe is equivalent to 1 credit hour.

<b>School of Medicine - MD Program</b>	
Number of Contact Hours Equal to 1 Credit Hour	
Type of Instruction	Foundational Sciences Course and Electives
Contact Hours	Clinical Science Courses, Electives, and Research Activity
Contact Hours	16
Semester Credit Hours	1

2. SOM – Graduate Education (GEO)

a. The Graduate Education Committee (GEC) for the SOM consists of the faculty that oversee the graduate medical education programs as a whole, and makes recommendations to the Associate Dean of GEO and the Dean of SOM for the overall design, management, integration, evaluation, and enhancement of the graduate curriculum.

b. The GEO credit hour is based on 16 contact hours and calculates contact equivalency to semester hours as follows:

1) Lecture, Seminar, Group: comprises hours of lecture, student presentations, conference, term paper, special projects or comparable instructional activity approximately 16 hours to equal 1 semester credit.

2) Lab / Practical / Research Activity: Approximately 48 hours of laboratory instruction in the curriculum is equivalent to 1 credit hour.

This formula is subject to change by exception under the GEC curriculum approval process in accordance with DoE guidelines.

<b>School of Medicine - Graduate Programs</b>	
Number of Contact Hours Equal to 1 Credit Hour	
Type of Instruction	Lecture / Seminar / Group
Contact Hours	Lab / Practical Coursework / Research Activity
Contact Hours	16
Semester Credit Hours	1

### 3. Daniel K. Inouye Graduate School of Nursing (GSN)

a. The Curriculum Committee of the GSN is the faculty body that oversees the nursing education program as a whole, and makes recommendations to the full nursing faculty for the overall design, management, integration, evaluation, and enhancement of a coherent and coordinated nursing curriculum.

b. The GSN defines program length based on outcome requirements and calculates equivalency to semester hours as follows:

1) Didactic hours comprise formal content delivery with high volume of information and minimal interaction from the student. These hours may be delivered via several methods including lecture, podcast, etc. Didactic (1:1) hour calculations are 15 hours per 1 semester credit.

2) Seminar (1:2) hours are less formal and more interactive than didactic hours, with an emphasis on instructor-led discussion with and amongst a small number of learners. Seminar hour calculations are 30 hours per 1 credit semester credit.

3) Lab (1:3) hours are directed experiences in which the student practices procedures or skills under the supervision of an instructor in a safe environment where patient harm is not possible. Lab hour calculation are 45 hours per 1 semester credit.

4) Clinical / Dissertation/ Independent Study (1:6) hours are experiences where the student applies skills previously learned to real-world situations, or conducts research with support from the instructor or advisor. Clinical hour calculations are 90 hours per 1 semester credit.

<b>Graduate School of Nursing</b>				
<b>Number of Contact Hours Equal to 1 Credit Hour</b>				
<b>Type of Instruction</b>	<b>Didactic (1:1)</b>	<b>Seminar (1:2)</b>	<b>Lab (1:3)</b>	<b>Clinical (1:6)</b>
<b>Contact Hours</b>	15	30	45	90
<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>	1	1	1	1

### 4. Postgraduate Dental College (PDC)

a. The Curriculum Committee for the PDC is the faculty body that oversees the dental education program as a whole, and makes recommendations to the Dean for the overall design, management, integration, evaluation, and enhancement of a coherent and coordinated curriculum.

b. Program length requirements for all Advanced Dental Education Residencies within the PDC Master of Science (MS) in Oral Biology Degree are discipline-specific and mandated by the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation (ADA CODA). Credit hours for each course within the curriculum are calculated based on the table below.

Post Dental College		
Number of Contact Hours Equal to 1 Credit Hour		
Type of Instruction	Didactic /Lecture / Seminar	Clinical / Research / Laboratory
Contact Hours	16	40
Semester Credit Hours	1	1

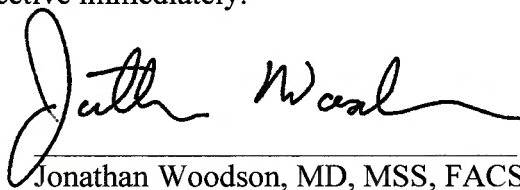
5. College of Allied Health Sciences (CAHS)

a. The Curriculum Committee for the CAHS is the faculty body that oversees its portfolio of academic programs, and makes recommendations to the dean for the overall design, management, integration, evaluation, and enhancement of curriculum.

b. The CAHS accelerated education and training design is based on an eight-hour day instead of a three to six hour-day as in a traditional setting. The CAHS typically delivers 35-40 hours over a five day period in an accelerated manner, meeting the 2021 DoE guidelines of instructor contact-hours.

College of Allied Health Sciences				
Number of Contact Hours Equal to 1 Credit Hour				
Type of Instruction	Lecture / Seminar / Group (Laboratory)	Clinical Coursework / Phase II Activity	Clinical Hours Required by Accreditor	Blended / Online
Contact Hours	28	45	30	15
Semester Credit Hours	1	1	1	1

H. **Effective date.** This Instruction is effective immediately.



Jonathan Woodson, MD, MSS, FACS  
President

March 20, 2023

Date

Enclosures:

1. References

**REFERENCES**

- (a) USU PPM-010-2017, "Federal Definition of Credit Hour and Procedures of the Awarding of Transfer Credit to Graduate Students." dated February 10, 2017 (hereby canceled).
- (b) Title 34 Code of Federal Regulation Section 600.2
- (c) United States Department of Education: Office of Postsecondary Education; Gen-11-06.