

Assignment of Semester Credit Hour

ROWAN UNIVERSITY POLICY

Title: Assignment of Semester Credit Hour

Subject: *Academic Affairs*

Policy No: AA 2019:01

Applies: *University-Wide*

Issuing Authority: *Provost / Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs*

Responsible Officers: *Deans, University Registrar, Global Learning & Partnerships, Academic Scheduling,*

Adopted: January 2019

Last Revision: January 16, 2019

Last Reviewed: January 16, 2019

I. PURPOSE

1. To ensure University compliance with Federal and State regulations regarding the awarding of academic credit to students;
2. To ensure that the semester credit hour is a valid unit of measure of student learning;
3. To establish authority for defining academic value commensurate with the semester credit hour in terms of the instructional level, cognitive effort, and/or time requirement associated with student work;
4. To identify processes for assignment of the semester credit hour for all types of courses, disciplines, programs, credential levels, and formats, regardless of modality;
5. To describe procedures for course and term scheduling in accordance with the semester credit hour policy.

II. ACCOUNTABILITY

Under direction of the Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Office of the University Registrar, the Division of Global Learning & Partnerships (Rowan Global), and the Office of Academic Scheduling shall implement the policy and Deans and Department Chairs/Heads shall ensure compliance with the policy.

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all academic programs offered by Rowan University, exclusive of the professional medical degree programs offered by the Cooper Medical School of Rowan University and Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine. Although a related concept, faculty credit hours are assigned in compliance with the AFT master agreement or other applicable contractual agreement.

IV. REFERENCES

1. 34 CFR §600.2 *Definitions*.
2. N.J.A.C. 9A:1-1.2. *Definitions*.
3. N.J.A.C. 9A:1-2. *General Program Standards*.

4. Federal Register Vol. 75, No. 209. October 29, 2010. Rules and Regulations. Department of Education. *Definition of a Credit Hour* (§§ 600.2, 602.24, 603.24, and 668.8).
5. Office of Postsecondary Education GEN-11-06 “*Guidance to Institutions and Accrediting Agencies Regarding a Credit Hour as Defined in the Final Regulations Published on October 29, 2010.*”
6. University Senate Curriculum Process (Attachment 1)
7. University Academic Calendar Policy (Attachment 2)
8. Academic Scheduling Policies (Attachment 3)
9. Rowan Global Course Schedules (Attachment 4)

V. DEFINITIONS

1. **Federal definition of “credit hour”:** 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:
 - a. 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
 - b. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph 1. a. 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. (34 CFR §600.2 *Definitions.*)
2. **State definition of “semester credit hour”:** 150 minutes of academic work each week for 15 weeks in one semester, which is typically accomplished by 50 minutes of face-to-face class activity each week complemented by at least 100 minutes each week of laboratory or outside assignments (or the equivalent thereof for semesters of different length) but may also be accomplished through an equivalent amount of academic work as established by an institution, which may include additional class time, laboratory work, internships, practical studio work, and other forms of academic work. (N.J.A.C. 9A:1-1.2. *Definitions.*)
 - a. **See also:** N.J.A.C. 9A:1-2. *General Program Standards*; Federal Register Vol. 75, No. 209 *Definition of a Credit Hour*; Office of Postsecondary Education GEN-11-06 *General Guidance*.

V. POLICY

1. Requirements
 - a. Semester credit hours shall be assigned to academic work and awarded to students for completion of academic work in compliance with Federal and State definitions of the credit hour and in accordance with commonly accepted practice in higher education.
 - b. As appropriate and feasible, term and course scheduling of class time should align to the units of time referenced in Federal and State definitions as the approximate equivalent of the credit hour to facilitate compliance.
 - c. Scheduling of class time for online courses shall be simulated through voice-over lectures, discussion activities, virtual office hours, and other tools commensurate with this approximate equivalent.
 - d. Where alignment of term and course scheduling of class time to this approximate equivalent is not appropriate or feasible, an institutionally established equivalency for semester credit hours to be assigned and awarded shall be determined based on a verifiable rationale and/or methodology.
2. Responsibilities
 - a. Semester credit hour assignment occurs through the curriculum process overseen by the University Senate Curriculum Committee. New courses and associated semester credit hour assignments as well as changes to existing credit hour assignments are reviewed and approved by the appropriate College Curriculum Committee, Chair of the University Senate Curriculum Committee, and the Office of the Provost.

- b. Semester credit hours assigned to courses are entered in the Banner system by the University Registrar.
- c. Scheduling of all classes in the Banner system, including data entry, data validation, and auditing of data, is performed by the Office of Academic Scheduling.
 - i. Schedules for traditional full semester classes are provided by the academic departments using the Contact Hour Grid. The Contact Hour Grid conforms to the provisions of the University Academic Calendar policy and to State and Federal definitions of the credit hour with respect to instructional time.
 - ii. Schedules for online classes, winter session classes, summer session classes, and extension classes are provided by Rowan Global and are constructed to ensure delivery of the same instructional hours per semester credit hour as a full semester class.
 - 1. For accelerated face-to-face courses, the equivalent amount of instructional time per credit is scheduled within the course duration.
 - 2. For online courses, the Rowan Online Instructional Designer facilitates the management and incorporation of simulated class time.
- d. In certain cases such as independent study, studio work, laboratory and clinical practice, experiential learning, study abroad, and thesis/dissertation projects, assigned semester credit hours may not align to scheduled class time. These and other such variances shall be approved by the appropriate Dean and/or Department Chair/Head based on a verifiable rationale and/or methodology, which may include evaluation of course equivalency in accordance with the transfer credit policy; review and endorsement by a programmatic accreditor; use of a commonly accepted approximation; or definition of a measure of student learning in terms of outcomes, products, performance or other means of verifying achievement of academic objectives represented by the semester credit hour.

VI. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: [University Senate Curriculum Process](#)

Attachment 2: [University Academic Calendar Policy](#)

Attachment 3: [Academic Scheduling Policies](#)

Attachment 4: [Rowan Global Course Schedules](#)