



# Assignment of Credit Hours

Policy AA015

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Responsible Administrator(s): Vice President for Academic Affairs and Director of Records and Registration

Responsible Office(s): Academic Affairs and Office of the Registrar

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## Policy Statement

As part of the Fashion Institute of Technology's commitment to providing the best educational experience possible for students, the college has set clear procedures and guidelines to assign appropriate number of credit hours per course based on the criteria set forth in this policy. FIT's four academic schools operate under a semester credit hour system. The Assignment of Credit Hours policy codifies practice across FIT's schools regarding course credit hours and out-of-class student work in accordance with federal, state, and accreditation guidelines.

## Reason for the Policy

The U.S. Department of Education establishes the credit hour as the basis for measuring eligibility for federal funding. This policy reflects regulations specified in 34 CFR §600.2, §602.24, and §668.8 as well as NYS Department of Education compliance with section 50.1 from NYS Commissioner of Education Regulations and SUNY. Additionally, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education expects all accredited institutions to demonstrate that they use acceptable and consistent methods for assigning credit hours to all courses and programs of study.

FIT follows New York State, SUNY, and U.S. Department of Education's definition of a credit hour. All semester/credit hours awarded by FIT will conform to the definitions listed in the text of the policy to ensure consistency across credit-hour application and instructional time and will conform to federal and state definitions and accreditation expectations. These guidelines comply with policies set forth by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

## Who is Responsible for this Policy

- Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Director of Records and Registration

## Who is Affected by this Policy

- Faculty
- Department Chairpersons
- Academic School Deans

- College-Wide Curriculum Committee
- Office of Registrar
- Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness
- Office of Academic Affairs

## Definitions

N/A

## Principles

FIT follows New York State, SUNY, and U.S. Department of Education’s definitions of credit hour and clock hour to measure the amount of academic work. This is represented by the intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement.

An institutionally established equivalency for credit hour reasonably approximates not less than:

Fifty (50) minutes of clock hour instruction, per lecture credit, per week in a 15-week semester. For abbreviated terms such as Winter or Summer sessions the equivalent is attained by scheduling more minutes of clock hour instruction per week for fewer weeks. The clock hour instruction is complemented by at least 100 minutes each week of outside assignments/study (or the equivalent thereof for semesters of different lengths);

**OR**

At least 100 minutes of clock hour instruction, per laboratory/studio credit, per week in a 15-week semester. For abbreviated terms such as winter or summer session the equivalent is attained by scheduling more minutes of clock hour instruction per week. The clock hour instruction is complemented by at least 50 minutes each week of outside preparation/study;

**OR**

At least an equivalent amount of work for courses with alternative formats including internships, online, hybrid courses, and independent study.

- **Courses in Alternative Formats**  
Online and Hybrid courses mirror the credit-hour definition as these courses have the same learning goals and rigor as their lecture counterparts.
- **Other alternative formats.**  
The standards applied to other alternative formats adhere to best practice and commonly accepted practice in higher education. Other formats for course delivery outside of traditional in-class instruction include internships, study abroad courses, and independent studies. As these offerings vary by academic department, the department chairperson, in collaboration with the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs (AVPAA), monitors and ensures that requirements are achieved.

Evidence demonstrating the rigor and quantity of student work required include syllabi, mandated faculty interactions with students, and learning outcomes achieved. Specific examples of these alternative formats are:

- **Internships:** Internships are offered at 2 credits (78 hours required at worksite), 3 credits (123 hours required at worksite), and 4 credits (168 hours at worksite).
- **Independent study:** Independent study is provided in a tutorial manner outside of a regularly offered class schedule. Participating students work with their sponsoring faculty member to create a course of study and learning outcomes for the independent study and sign an Independent Study Agreement Form to adhere to these learning outcomes. The faculty member assigns the credit value to the course based on the anticipated learning outcomes and scope of work required during the course of study. The faculty member and department ensure this application is consistent with the credit-hour policy.

All credit-bearing experiences require syllabi, which will include the number of credit hours, class meeting times or minimum number of hours required at an alternative site, and a schedule of required assignments. Course descriptions in the course catalog delineate the structure and requirements of all types of credit-bearing courses. The [course catalog](#) is available in print and online for student and faculty reference.

## Responsibilities

N/A

## Procedures

- The Academic School Deans and Departmental Chairpersons are responsible for assuring that curricula from their school and department establish, maintain, and follow appropriate procedures and protocols as outlined in the policy above for assigning credit hours to courses of all delivery modes or formats.
- The Curriculum Committee reviews and recommends all courses and curricula from the academic schools. During this process, the committee determines whether the proposed course meets FIT's Assignment of Credit Hour policy including whether there is sufficient course content to substantiate the credit hours required. Additionally, a periodic review of this policy is incorporated into each school's established academic program review/self-study procedures.
- Recommended courses are sent to the Dean's Council for final approval and for inclusion in Banner and the College Catalog.
- The Registrar reviews the class schedule prior to the start of each semester to ensure that all classes are scheduled for the minimum number of clock hour minutes corresponding to the credits assigned or otherwise notes when course schedules do not match assigned credit hours.
- Discrepancies are brought to the attention of Academic Affairs and the appropriate dean for correction or explanation.

## Violations

N/A

## Related Policies

- [Campus Grading](#)
- [Syllabi, Textbooks and Required Course Materials](#)

## Related Documents

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [FIT Articulation Agreements](#)
- [Guidelines for Courses or Programs](#)
- [Independent Study Agreement](#)
- [Middle States Commission of Higher Education \(MSCHE\) Credit Hour Policy](#)
- [National Association of Schools of Art and Design \(NASAD\): Standard III. A. 2](#)
- [New York State Department of Education \(NYSED\): Chapter II, Regulations of the Commissioner, 50.1 N, 50.1 O](#)
- [State University of New York \(SUNY\) – Credit/Contact hour policy](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education Guidance to Institutions and Accrediting Agencies Regarding a Credit Hour](#)

## Contacts

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