



Nichols College

Learn. Lead. Succeed.

Credit Hour Policy

Nichols College, a NEASC accredited institution, recognizes the "Carnegie Unit" as the measure of a traditional semester credit hour and as the primary measure of degree attainment that may be awarded on the basis of a combination of both formal and informal activities and learning experiences. The Nichols College definition of credit hour follows the definition of credit hour established by the United States Department of Education and is consistent with the [New England Association of Schools and Colleges \(NEASC\) guidelines](#).

United States Department of Education Definition of the Credit Hour:

For purposes of the application of this policy and in accord with federal regulations, a credit hour 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 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

2. At least an equivalent amount of work as required outlined in item 1 above for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practicums, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Policy Guideline:

Courses offered at Nichols College for full time day students and/or graduate and professional studies students may be delivered in a traditional 15 week semester, in 7 week accelerated modified HyFlex and/or in online formats. Regardless of learning modality, courses deliver equivalent learning experiences. The following factors would be fair indicators of equivalency.

- **Learning outcomes** for the same course in varying formats should be stated identically. The statement should be sufficiently abstract that multiple and varied learning activities and assessments would serve to demonstrate accomplishment of the outcomes.
- **Equal numbers of instructional hours across formats for a course**, activities delivered in class and online outside the physical classroom.

Direct faculty instruction time includes but is not limited to classroom instruction, e-learning, laboratory work, field work and internships. Additional academic activities include, but are not limited to, readings, reflections, essays, reports and group or teamwork.

Each of these basic measures for undergraduate, accelerated and graduate programming may be adjusted to reflect modified academic calendars, delivery modalities, and formats of study. It is expected that for every hour of instruction time students will have at least an additional 2 hours of outside classroom work.

Table of Direct Faculty Instruction Time

Credit hour	Total "clock hour time" of instruction	Direct faculty instruction time per week in a 7-week semester	Direct faculty instruction time per week in a 15-week semester
1	15 hours	1 hour, 47 minutes	50- 60 minutes = 1 clock hour
2	30 hours	3 hours, 34 minutes	1 hour, 40 minutes
3	45 hours	5 hours, 21 minutes	2 hours, 30 minutes

External Sources:

- http://cihe.neasc.org/downloads/POLICIES/Pp111_PolicyOnCreditsAndDegrees.pdf
- <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/reg/hearulemaking/2009/credit.html>