



KECK GRADUATE INSTITUTE

A Member of The Claremont Colleges

Credit Hours Policy

Purpose or Overview of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to define the amount of instruction and student work expected for each credit hour (or unit of credit).

Scope of Policy

This policy is intended to reflect the University's commitment to the principles, goals, and ideals by defining KGI's standards of academic credit, and to adhere to federal regulations under Section 600.2 and 600.4, revised July 1, 2020 of the Higher Education Act and 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (l) of the Code of Federal Regulations, and is consistent with the requirements of the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). These requirements require the WSCUC to review the institution's definition of credit hour and an institutions' processes and policies for ensuring the credit hour policy is followed.

Policy Statement

I. Definitions

KGI's academic year consists of terms in Summer, Fall and Spring, and each term is approximately 15 weeks in length.

Credit Hour: Except as provided in 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (l), 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 not less than:

1. One hour of classroom, direct faculty instruction, or other instructional activity 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
2. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, research, internship, practicum, experiential or clinical work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Instructional hours includes classroom hours with direct instructor contact in a physical or virtual classroom, as well as asynchronous instructional content for online or hybrid courses. This includes class meeting times for lecture, exams, classroom discussion, and other supervised learning activities, as well as asynchronous self-guided learning activities.

Non-classroom hours: supervised or non-supervised student work out of class.



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Total work hours: Combined classroom and non-classroom hours. Instructors may reasonably adjust the classroom and non-classroom work hours depending on course and scheduling needs such as holidays and emergencies, but the total work hours must remain consistent.

II. Credit Hours Policy

In order to be considered full-time for purposes of federal financial aid, graduate students must be enrolled in at least 12 credits per semester. In order to be considered half-time, graduate students must be enrolled in at least six credits per semester.

KGI awards credits in accord with the following criteria: for each 1 credit, a course meets for 1 hour per week in a 15-week semester, as further defined in Section III below. For example, a three-credit course is expected to have a total of 45 contact hours and 90 hours of student work outside of class per semester.

The following examples represent KGI course credit hour calculations:

CREDITS	INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES	NON-CLASSROOM HOURS	EXPECTED TOTAL WORK HOURS
1.5	22.5	45	67.5
3	45	90	135
6	90	180	270

Credit hours are granted for various types of instruction as follows

1. Lecture, Discussion, Recitation Courses

A credit hour is assumed to be at minimum a 50-minute (not to exceed 60-minute) period. In courses, such as those offered online, in which “seat time” does not apply, a credit hour may be measured by an equivalent amount of work, as demonstrated by student achievement. For example, a three-semester credit hour course may meet for two 80-minute sessions or one 160 minute session per week for fifteen weeks.

2. Laboratory Courses

For a laboratory class, the hours per week spent in the lab are considered to be instructional activities, which may include lab activities such as experimental design, notebook journals, lab meetings, and practice in clinical skills labs. Thus, one unit is three hours per week of laboratory time. Forty-five 50-minute sessions of such activity would normally earn one semester credit hour. Where such activity involves substantial outside preparation by the student, the equivalent of fifteen periods of 100 minutes duration each will earn one semester credit hour.

3. Experiential Courses

When learning takes place in an experiential, clinical or other work setting and is to be credited as a portion of an academic program design, as in an internship, clerkship, or rotation, one semester credit hour will be awarded for each 40 to 45 clock-hour week of supervised academic activity that provides the learning considered necessary for the program.



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4. Independent Study and Research

One credit for independent study and research (defined as study given initial guidance, criticism, review and final evaluation of student performance by a faculty member) will be awarded for the equivalent of forty-five 50-minute sessions of student academic activity.

5. Short (Intensive) Courses

Intensive courses are prorated so they contain the same number of hours as if the course were scheduled for a full semester. To maintain the integrity of the instructional program, care must be taken when scheduling these intensive courses so that there is adequate time for students to learn the material, complete homework assignments and assessments, or complete laboratory assignments. The guidelines presented in Section II will be used to calculate semester hour and total work hour equivalents for intensive courses.

IV. Monitoring and Compliance

KGI faculty will evaluate the credit hour designations for approved curriculum in regular cycles to coincide with the campus accreditation cycle and through ongoing curriculum and program review processes. No later than one year prior to the submission of the WSUSC reaccreditation documents, each school will be required to provide a certification of all of their approved courses meeting the guidelines above.