

Credit Hour Policy

Northwest Indian College

1. Guidelines for Assigning Credit Hours at Northwest Indian College

The number of academic credits assigned to a course is a measure of the total time commitment expected for a student to meet the course's learning objectives.

Total time consists of three components:

- (1) Time spent in class, usually in a lecture or seminar format;
- (2) Time spent in class for structured activities, which include laboratory, studio, or field work;
- (3) Time spent outside of class devoted to class related work, such as reading, studying, problem solving, writing, or preparation for the class.

Northwest Indian College follows the commonly used "Carnegie Unit" as the guideline for ascribing credit to courses. Each credit (one Carnegie Unit) represents 30 hours of student work per quarter or an average of 3 hours per week for a standard 10-11 week quarter, not counting holidays. The 30 hours per quarter is apportioned between each of the three components according to the course type and modality. The course types are lecture, lecture with laboratory, physical education, or internship/practicum. The course modalities are face-to-face, online, or independent. An internship or practicum course requires 40 hours participating in the internship/practicum per credit per quarter.

The relationship between credits and time spent for each of the three components:

- (1) In Class Lecture and Seminar Component** – Each lecture or seminar credit represents an average time commitment of at least 1 hour of face-to-face lecture or seminar class time per week for a standard length quarter. This represents at least 10 hours of face-to-face time per quarter.
- (2) In class Laboratory or Studio Component** – Each laboratory or studio credit represents an average time commitment of at least 2 hours of structured laboratory/studio time per week for a standard length quarter. This represents at least 20 hours of structured laboratory/studio time per quarter.
- (3) Out of Class Component** – Each credit awarded to a student expects 3 hours per week for a typical quarter or a total of 30 hours per quarter devoted to the course. Whatever amount of the 30 hours per credit not covered in the first two components is expected to be spent outside of class time focused on class work.

Amount of time devoted to each component for different course types and modalities:

- **A face-to-face lecture or seminar class**, which includes ITV classes, represents an average time commitment of 1 hour of face-to-face lecture or seminar class per week and 2 hours per week spent out of class on class work. This represents at least 10 hours of face-to-face time and 20 hour of out of class time per quarter.
- **A lecture course with a laboratory or studio component** contains a combination of face-to-face lecture components and laboratory/shop components. The ratio of each is not fixed so long as each the total number of hours fulfills the definitions for the three components. For example, a 5 credit lecture course with a laboratory component expects 15 hours devoted to the class per week for a typical quarter (5 credits x 3 hours per credit). The class may have 4 hours of lecture, 2 hours of laboratory time with the remaining 9 hours expected per quarter. Alternately, the course may allocate 30 hours to lecture and 40 hours to lab if a greater lab component is necessary.
- **An online or independent course** that has no face-to-face component, including courses with IL or OL section code, represents an average time commitment of 3 hour of out of class time per week. This represents at least 30 hours of out of class time per quarter.
- **A physical education (PHED) course** represents an average time commitment of 3 hour of face-to-face physical education activity per week and no requirement for out of class work. This represents at least 30 hours of physical education activity per quarter.
- **A hybrid lecture class** typically represents an average time commitment of half as many hours of face-to-face time per week as a standard lecture course and a commensurate increase in the time spent out of class on class work. The out of class time may include an online or an independent component. Hybrid courses may have less than or more than half as much face-to-face time as a standard lecture course, in which case the out of class component is increased or decreased as needed to represent an average of 3 hours per week or 30 hours per quarter for each credit earned.
- **An Internship or Practicum Courses** - One internship or practicum credit hour represents an expectation of at least 40 hours of student internship or practicum work per quarter or an average time commitment of at least 4 hours per week for a standard length quarter.

- A **learning contract (LC section) or individualized learning (x89)** course may contain some face-to-face component and the time commitment should be such that students commit an average of 3 hours per week or 30 hours per quarter for each credit earned.

The tables below provide examples of different types and modalities for a 5 credit hour course. The table on the left lists the number of hours a student is expected to devote to each of the three components for the 5 credit hour course each week for a standard ten week quarter. The table on the right lists the same information for an entire quarter. This table is useful for determining the number of hours in each component for courses taught in non-standard timeframes. Note that 50 minutes of face-to-face class time constitutes 1 hour of class meeting time, which allows for breaks and time for students to move between classes.

Number of hours student spends per week
for a 5 credit class assuming a 10 week quarter

	In Class	In Lab/Studio	outside of class	Total
Lecture (face to face)	5	0	10	15
Lecture w/ Lab OR	3	4	8	15
	4	2	9	
Online or Independent	0	0	15	15
Physical Education	15	0	0	15
Hybrid Lecture	2.5	0	12.5	15
Internship/Practicum	20	0	0	20

Number of hours student spends per quarter
for a 5 credit class

	In Class	In Lab/Studio	outside of class	Total
Lecture (face to face)	50	0	100	150
Lecture w/ Lab OR	30	40	80	150
	40	20	90	
Online or Independent	0	0	150	150
Physical Education	150	0	0	150
Hybrid Lecture	25	0	125	150
Internship/Practicum	200	0	0	200

2. Monitoring Adherence to the Guidelines for Assigning Credit Hours

Northwest Indian College's Curriculum Committee will apply these guidelines in assigning credits in the process of creating or revising academic courses. The Curriculum Committee is responsible for ensuring that the number of credits assigned to a course is appropriate to the course's learning outcomes and course type. These guidelines will also be applied as courses are implemented as classes in quarterly and annual class schedules. For classes that include a face-to-face component, appropriate processes will be applied by the College's instructional leadership in scheduling the classes, such as by the use of formulas or tables described above in order to determine and assign the minimum number of contact hours that the class meets based on its course type, the number of days the class meets each week, and the total number of weeks that the class meets in the quarter. Classes that are taught for non-standard timeframes, either shorter or longer periods of time than the standard quarter, will also adhere to the same guidelines. In order to ensure that adherence to the credit hour guidelines is comprehensive, accurate, and applied reliably, the instructional leadership of NWIC will monitor the assignment of credits on an ongoing basis to ensure that all classes adherence to these guidelines by reviewing quarterly and annual class schedules prior to approval and making corrections, as needed, prior to approval and publication.

3. Variations from the Guidelines for Assigning Credit Hours

Any variance from the guidelines for assigning credit hours to an academic course will only be made if:

1. There is good cause, such as the course has qualities that are not adequately described by the guidelines for assigning credit hours, and the course is thus different from existing courses at NWIC, and .
2. The assignment of credit conforms to commonly accepted practices used in higher education.

When the Curriculum Committee approves a variance the rationale for assigning credit will be documented in the Curriculum Committee minutes and in the course creation or revision form. The documentation will explain why the variance was made, how the assignment of credit is appropriate to the learning outcomes and course type. It will also describe how it conforms to commonly accepted practices in higher education.