

CREDIT HOUR

POLICY NUMBER: ACAD-CREDITHOUR

POLICY TYPE: ACADEMIC

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL TITLE: PROVOST & EXEC. VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: VICE PROVOST FOR UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

EFFECTIVE DATE: UPON APPROVAL – 6/21/2022

NEXT REVIEW DATE: PREVIOUS REVIEW PLUS FOUR (4) YEARS – 6/21/2026

SUPERSEDES POLICY DATED: 5/7/2014

BOARD OF REGENTS REPORTING (CHECK ONE):

☒ PRESIDENTIAL RECOMMENDATION (CONSENT AGENDA/VOTING ITEM):

☐ PRESIDENTIAL REPORT (INFORMATION ONLY)

I. POLICY STATEMENT

Purpose and Scope

Northern Kentucky University uses credit hours as the basis for measuring the amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement. This measurement of engaged learning delineates the units connected with student learning experiences in both traditional classroom settings and nontraditional classroom settings such as laboratories, studios, internships, practica and other experiential learning, and in semester and non-semester-based, face-to-face and distance learning delivery modes.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance consistent with federal regulations to faculty of Northern Kentucky University in setting credit hour expectations for NKU academic courses and programs.

Definition of Credit Hour

In order to comply with federal regulations and the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) policy, Northern Kentucky University has adopted the federal definition of the Credit Hour (see [34 CFR § 600.2](#)) as identified by SACSCOC in its [Credit Hours Policy Statement](#).

Note: For the purposes of the NKU credit hour policy, an “hour” of instruction is interpreted as 50 minutes of contact time or its equivalent. Thus each semester hour of credit involves 15 (meetings) x 50 minutes = 750 minutes per credit hour of contact time, or its equivalent, excluding formally-scheduled final examination periods during the period allotted for final examinations. Specific units (e.g. programs, departments, colleges) can establish greater requirements that require more student work per credit hour.

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, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Northern Kentucky University is responsible for determining the credit hours awarded for its academic courses and programs and will abide by the guidelines in the SACSCOC [Credit Hour Policy Statement](#) for flexibility in interpretation when assigning credit hours for student coursework, stated as follows:

- a) The institution determines the amount of credit for student work.
- b) A credit hour is expected to be a reasonable approximation of a minimum amount of student work in accordance with commonly accepted practice in higher education.
- c) The credit hour definition is a minimum standard that does not restrict an institution from setting a higher standard that requires more student work per credit hour.
- d) The definition does not dictate particular amounts of classroom time versus out-of-class student work.
- e) In determining the amount of work the institution's learning outcomes will entail, the institution may take into consideration alternative delivery methods, measurements of student work, academic calendars, disciplines, and degree levels.
- f) To the extent an institution believes that complying with the Federal definition of a credit hour would not be appropriate for academic and other institutional needs, it may adopt a separate measure for those purposes.
- g) Credits may be awarded on the basis of documentation of the amount of work a typical student is expected to complete within a specified amount of academically engaged time, or on the basis of documented student learning calibrated to that amount of academically engaged time for a typical student.

Alternative delivery modes that form a component of any course must maintain standards of educational integrity and must demonstrate a degree of engagement consistent with the intent of this policy.

II. ENTITIES AFFECTED

All faculty, staff, and students of Northern Kentucky University

III. AUTHORITY

Department of Education Requirement [34 CFR § 600.2](#)

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) [Resource Manual for The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement](#) (2020 edition) - Standard 10.7 (Policies for Awarding Credit)

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC): "[Credit Hours - Policy Statement](#)"

IV. PROCEDURES

Determination of credit hours for NKU academic courses and programs will be proposed by program faculty, recommended by the NKU Faculty Senate and approved by the Provost, according to the established university curriculum approval process.

Syllabus Guidelines – Required Credit Hour Policy Statement

Please see the [Unique Course Syllabus Template on the Academic Affairs website](#) for credit hour language required to appear in all NKU course syllabi.

V. REFERENCES AND RELATED MATERIALS

Related Forms and Policies

Unique Course Syllabus Template (including Credit Hour Policy Statement):

<https://www.nku.edu/academicaffairs/resources/faculty/ImportantForms.html>

[Final Exam Schedule policy](#)

Revision History

REVISION TYPE	MONTH/YEAR APPROVED
Minor Revision – Edits/Formatting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clarified last sentence in “Purpose and Scope” (sec. I)• Updated references in “Definition of Credit Hour (sec. I)• Changed the calculation of credit hour in sec. 1 to exclude the final exam week period as that is no longer required of all classes per the Final Exam Schedule policy• Clarified the SACSCOC source of items (a)-(g) (sec. I)• Formatted policy to policy template• Listed references and links in sec. III• Added reference to required syllabus language in sec. IV• Added link to Unique Course Syllabus Template in sec. V	June 21, 2022
New Policy	May 7, 2014 (by Board of Regents)

CREDIT HOUR

PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL

President

Signature

A. K. Vaidya

Date

6/21/22

Ashish K. Vaidya

BOARD OF REGENTS APPROVAL

BOARD OF REGENTS (IF FORWARDED BY PRESIDENT)

- ☒ This policy was forwarded to the Board of Regents on the **Presidential Report (information only)**.
Date of Board of Regents meeting at which this policy was reported: 9 / 14 / 2022.
- ☐ This policy was forwarded to the Board of Regents as a **Presidential Recommendation (consent agenda/voting item)**.
- ☐ The Board of Regents approved this policy on ____ / ____ / ____.
(Attach a copy of Board of Regents meeting minutes showing approval of policy.)
- ☐ The Board of Regents rejected this policy on ____ / ____ / ____.
(Attach a copy of Board of Regents meeting minutes showing rejection of policy.)

SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF REGENTS

Signature

Tammy Knochelmann

Date

9/15/2022

Tammy Knochelmann