

CREDIT HOUR REQUIREMENTS

Credit Hour Requirements Policy

In accordance with ABA Standard 310, a credit hour is determined as follows:

For each credit hour, a student should be expected to engage in at least 42.5 hours of academic work.

1. Classroom hours

For courses that involve regular direct faculty instruction in regularly scheduled classes, those 42.5 hours are ordinarily met through the following components:

- a. Direct instruction of a minimum of 700 minutes per student. For classes scheduled over the course of a 14-week semester, this standard is met through a class meeting time of 50 minutes per credit hour per week.
- b. Evaluation methods involving at least 50 additional minutes of engagement, and
- c. Out-of-classroom assignments that on average will result in 1800 minutes of out-of-class student work (approx. 120 minutes/week over the semester and exam period for each credit).

2. Other hours

For all other courses, field placements, clinical, co-curricular, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours, students should be required to complete and report a record of 2700 minutes (45 clock hours) of academic work.

3. Cancelled classes

Regularly scheduled classes that meet on Mondays or Fridays will not have sufficient classroom hours over the course of a 14-week semester because of Monday holidays and the Friday exam reading day. Therefore, faculty in these courses will need to provide additional minutes. Likewise, circumstances sometimes require cancellation of a regularly scheduled class meeting, necessitating makeup. For these situations, faculty are required to notify the associate dean for faculty in writing of the method by which sufficient student work will be required. This can be accomplished through:

- a. scheduling a makeup class
- b. adding time to the regularly scheduled course to make up the missing classroom minutes,
- c. providing an online class equivalency, so long as this method provides a method of verifying student engagement' or
- d. assigning an additional amount of work for students to complete that would be the equivalent of 3 clock hours of academic work for each missed 50-minute class session.

4. Courses with limited classroom instruction

Where a course or clinic has less than 700 minutes of regularly scheduled direct instruction per credit hour, the remaining minutes must be fulfilled through a method that meets the standards for individual or field work.

Faculty determination of in-class and out-of-class student work

Faculty members may balance the in-class and out-of-class student work but should be mindful that an apportionment of roughly 1/3 in-class work to 2/3 out-of-class work is preferred.

Based on the standard apportionment, faculty shall require out-of-class student work that reasonably approximates a minimum of 120 minutes per course credit hour per week.

That out-of-class work may include, but is not limited to: reading assignments, additional reading of treatises and course related materials, case briefing, written assignments other than examinations, problem sets, participating in out-of-class simulations and role playing exercises, research assignments, posting to an on-line discussion board, court or other observations, meetings with the instructor, practice questions and practice exams, CALI exercises, participating in study groups, review sessions, and other work that assists in the comprehension of course content, such as outlining and studying for examinations. Readings and other assignments shall be indicated on the course syllabus.

When creating class assignments, faculty should estimate the amount of time students are expected to spend on particular assignments based on factors such as the following:

- a. level of class (1L, 2L, 3L)
- b. complexity of material (caselaw, social science, case materials, commentary, etc.)

- c. supplemental course requirements (hypotheticals, problem sets, group projects, presentations)
- d. complexity of assignment
- e. level of faculty or other professional supervision and degree of collaboration or group work with other students, clients, or community partners.

Ensuring adherence to the policy

The law school ensures adherence to this policy through the following procedures:

New course proposals:

- Curriculum and Assessment Committee review includes review of the credit to be set for the course based on the instructional minutes planned for the course.

Existing courses:

- Professors teaching existing courses will review their syllabi to ensure compliance with this policy.
- Every three academic years, Associate Dean for Faculty and Academics will select a sampling of courses including doctrinal, clinical, and other experiential courses and request the faculty member teaching the course to describe how the course meets Standard 310 for in- and out-of-classroom student work engagement. The Associate Dean will work with the faculty member if any adjustments are warranted.

Ongoing compliance:

- The policy is published with all other academic policies to facilitate faculty and student awareness.
- The Associate Dean for Faculty and Academics, with the assistance of the law school registrar, is responsible for interpreting this Policy to ensure compliance with ABA standards.