

Proposal 0: (John's original draft)

Proposal 1: (The original, marked up to match existing policy and to give guidance to the committees regarding 2,3, and 5 credit courses, too.)

One unit of credit requires the equivalent student effort of 3 hours per week for one academic quarter, performed while actively engaged in learning. Typically this includes one hour of class time and two hours of outside work. For instance, justification for 4 hours of credit for a class that meets 3 hours per week during the term must demonstrate that the average student will spend the additional three hours in study or other preparation in order to meet the course requirements. The University Committee on Courses requires evidence that the standard of 30 hours of effort spent in learning for 1 course credit awarded will be maintained to justify acceptance of any increased units of credit. This can be demonstrated by one of the following or an equivalent:

1. The hours of class meetings each week matches the number of credits.
2. Reading assignments that call for an extra three hours per week for each extra unit of credit awarded.
3. Extra writing projects that would involve 30 hours of student effort per additional unit of credit.
4. Extra participation in class time that requires 30 additional hours of outside preparation for each additional credit.
5. Homework problems, experiments, or projects that are in addition to the normal preparation that would actively engage students three hours per week, or a total of 30 hours per quarter.

In addition, the justification for the course credit should include a demonstration of some means by which the student's performance of the work outside of class is assessed. This should be specified in the syllabus provided the committee.

Mark up copy: [Key: -{deletion}- + {addition}+]

One unit of credit -{shall}- requires + {the equivalent student effort of}- 3 hours + {per week for one academic quarter}+ -{work , normally}- + {, performed while actively engaged in learning. Typically this includes}+ -{including}- one hour of class time and two hours of outside work. + {For instance}+ justification for 4 hours of credit for a class that meets 3 hours per week + {during the term}+ must demonstrate that the average student will -{need to}- spend the additional three hours in study or other preparation in order to meet the course requirements. The University Committee on -{the Curriculum}- + {Courses}+ requires evidence -{of one of the following or the equivalent}- + {that the standard of 30 hours of effort spent in learning for 1 course credit awarded will be maintained to justify acceptance of -{the}- + {any}+ increased units of credit. + {This can be demonstrated by one of the following, or an equivalent:}+

1. -{four}- + {The}- hours of class meetings each week - {matches the number of credits.}+
2. -{Heavy}- Reading assignments -{that cannot be completed in the six hours per week

normally expected in a 3-credit course and}- that call for an extra three hours per week + {for each extra unit of credit awarded.}+

3. Extra writing projects + {that would involve 30 hours of student effort per additional unit of credit.} - {above the normal requirements for a 3-credit course}-

4. Extra participation in class time that requires - {the extra}- - {30 additional}- hours of outside preparation + {for each additional credit.}+

5. Homework problems, experiments, or projects that are in addition to the normal preparation - {for a 3-credit course}- + {that would actively engage students three hours per week, or a total of 30 hours per quarter.}+

In addition, the justification - {for the course credit}- should include a demonstration of some means by which the student's performance of the - {extra}- work + {outside of class} + is - {ensured.}- - {assessed. This should be specified in the syllabus provided the committee.}+

Proposal 2: (Specifies a method of monitoring)

1) Both the College Curriculum Committee and the University Committee on Courses will assume that four-credit, lower-division courses will have four contact hours per week, with a eight hour per week out-of-class workload requirements, as required by accreditation standards. While it is permissible for four-credit, lower-division courses to have only three contact hours per week, it is expected that this "fourth contact hour" be fulfilled in a specific manner, as detailed on the syllabus, such that the required number of weekly out-of-class hours still meets this accreditation standard.

2) Concern has arisen among the two curriculum committees and the Undergraduate Council that an adequate monitoring of these "4-credit/3-contact hour" classes is not currently in place. We are aware that many outside observers, such as the state legislature, assume that course credits should equal "seat time." There are pedagogical reasons why such rigidity is undesirable, but a clearly articulated policy of an alternative method appears warranted.

3) Departments/programs should submit (by January 18th, the CAS curriculum deadline), to both the CAS College Curriculum Committee and the University Committee on Courses, a departmental policy regarding such courses and a description of how these courses will be monitored. This policy should describe the various ways in which the additional contact hour can be met, i.e. discussion sections, additional papers, reports, projects, field trips, film attendance, BEYOND the already required out-of-class workload. In addition, there should be a description of how this policy is to be monitored by the department. This policy will be used in the assessment of subsequent curricular proposals submitted by the department and/or program.

Proposal 3: (Focus on student workload management as primary goal of accurate crediting.)

Obligations from family, work and studies all make demands on our students' time. To deal with these commitments and to manage their time effectively, students must know, and plan for, the requirements of a particular course of study.

The number of credits assigned to a course is the primary tool available to students for anticipating the time commitment of a course. These credits should usefully reflect the estimated time commitment as realistically as possible.

Considerable individual variability exists in translating course credits into practical terms of time commitment for individual students. Students have differing goals, personal performance standards, innate abilities, habits and acquired training when they enter a particular course. Students learn from their own experience how course credits may apply to the expectation of time demands in their own situations. To make these personal adjustments meaningful, too, course credits need to be assigned consistently.

The design of a course should reflect the expected time demands of the typical student for which the course is designed. And the assignment of a particular number of course credits should match the expected demands of a course throughout its lifetime in the curriculum.

Our catalog states: One course credit represents approximately three hours of the student's time each week, for one term in a lower division undergraduate course. This frequently means one hour in the lecture hall or laboratory in addition to two hours spent in outside preparation.

This standard applies for the typical student for which a course is designed. The three hour can be designed around any activity in which the student is actively engage in learning, and is assessed by the student's active demonstration of that learning.

For examples, this time can be as

- class meetings,
- reading assignments for which a critical response is required,
- writing projects,
- extra preparation for class presentations,
- field trips,
- homework as problem assignments, projects, experiments, or investigations, or
- use of electronic learning tools, such as monitored electronic discussion fora.

Time spent primarily in acquiring background that is not assessed is not to be considered as part of the time commitment represented by course credit. Nor is time spend in learning, or relearning, subject material of another course taken by the student, including the subject material of a pre-requisite.

Departments have the primary responsibility to assure that course crediting is realistic throughout the lifetime of a course. Means for periodically assessing student time involvement should be

reviewed in departments that already perform this task formally, and should be established formally in departments in which this is done only informally now. Because methods of instruction vary widely according to the demands of varying course subjects, one single method may be inapplicable in some disciplines. Methods that departments can find useful include

- student self reporting, such as at the time of the mandatory course evaluations, or
- faculty estimates of time spent based upon assessed student work, or
- actual study time monitored electronically, by tools such as the library’s “Blackboard.”

[— what else???

[And then, what do we do with this?]

[It has been suggested to make this part of the more frequent program review process that is likely to be implemented. Crediting would be reviewed in the context of the overall curriculum concept. And it would have the imprimatur of other than just UO faculty.]

Individual Colleges should have the authority to make stricter department review or reporting guidelines, as needed.

Appendix: Relevant sections from Accreditation Handbook, Commission on Colleges, 1994.

“The granting of credit must be consistent throughout the institution, with academic departments responsible for approving in advance each course or program offering credit. Credit for special activities or experience, independent study, and intensive contact with an instructor should be compatible with regular practice and should require at least as much student effort as when a comparable amount of credit is allowed for more customary modes of educational experience.”—pp. 62-63.

“Credit, Unit of. A quantification of student academic learning. One unit represents what a typical student might be expected to learn in one week (40-45 hours including class time and preparation) of full-time study. Thus, a six week summer session might, if full time, equate to six units. An alternative norm is one unit for three hours of student work per week (e.g.), one hour of lecture and two of study or three of a laboratory) for ten weeks a quarter or 15 weeks a semester. A full-time undergraduate student program is usually about 15 units but not less than 12; a full-time graduate program is usually 10 to 12 units. Considerable excess allowed on ground of student ability should be subject to special analysis and approval.”—p. 193.

“Provision must be made for periodic assessment of needs in order to provide responsive programming. Program and course development should be done in consultation with user groups and, particularly in the case of credit offerings, the appropriate academic departments. Program and course continuity should be considered so as to provide for sequential offerings whenever possible. Evaluation of programs and courses must be established practice.”—p. 62.

“Review the awarding of credit for time-shortened offerings. What requirements are there to ensure that the content is comparable to the standard of quarter hour of credit for 30 hours or one semester hour of credit for 45 hours of student involvement.”—p. 67.