Semester Length, Credit Hour, and Instructional Time Equivalencies

Policy Statement

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education, in its Credit Hour Policy, requires institutions to verify compliance with Credit Hour regulations. Manhattanville College complies with U.S. Department of Education (USDE), New York State Department of Education (NYSED), and Middle States Commission of Higher Education (MSCHE) regulations pertaining to degree requirements and Credit Hours.

Entities Affected by the Policy

Students and faculty

Policy Background

College is in compliance with the 34 CFR Section 600.2 as well as the MSCHE regulations pertaining to degree requirements and Credit Hours.
Minimum Credit Hours for degree completion
- Undergraduate degrees require the successful completion of a minimum of 120 Credit Hours.
- All master’s degrees require at least 30 credit hours beyond the baccalaureate level. The number of credits required for master’s degrees and beyond is determined by the faculty and connected to the recommendations of professional associations and accreditors.

Minimum Semester Length
All semester formats, including traditional semester-length classes and the accelerated and summer formats, must comply with the Credit Hour definition.

Course Credit Hour Assessment
- All new courses are vetted by the appropriate curriculum committees, as defined by college and school bylaws, to ensure requirements meet with Credit Hour regulations.
- Existing courses are reviewed periodically by the School Deans, Office of the Registrar, and assessment committees to ensure that the work load is consistent with the potential Credit Hours to be earned.

Definitions
All courses, regardless of delivery format, must adhere to the U.S. Department of Education’s definition of a credit hour:

The U.S. Department of Education, at 34 CFR Section 600.2, defines “Credit Hour” as: “...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 or direct faculty instruction 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, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of Credit Hours.”
Manhattanville Credit Hour Definition:
• Unit measure of instruction for awarding credit.
• The college considers “one hour of direct faculty instruction” within the Carnegie unit to be 50 minutes, rather than the literal 60 minutes per hour.

Instructional Method or Course Format
Lecture/Seminar/Didactic
• Example: 3 credits = three 50 minute sessions of classroom instruction weekly (or two 75 minute classes, or one 150 minute class) and two hours of outside study per credit (45 total hours per credit with 90 total hours of out of class academic engagement equaling 135 total hours for three credits) over the semester.
• Academic course scheduling grid verifies time scheduled for each course format over the semester.

Clinical
• SNHS:
  o Clinical courses 1 credit = 4 hours of instruction
  o It is required that the ratio of students in undergraduate clinical sections is no more than 1:10.

Independent Study
• Credits vary; contact hours will vary based upon program and/or program requirements and will meet minimum Credit Hour requirements. All independent studies will require regular meetings. Independent Studies require review and approval within each school.

Internship
• SAS
  o Credits vary from 1-3 credits; 1 credit is granted per 40 hours in the field. Internships are approved within the school.
• SOE
  o Educational Leadership internships- 200 hours of fieldwork/instructor; equivalent to 2 credits; minimum of two semesters.
  o Meets the NYS ED mandated minimum number of hours totaling 400, including school and/or a district-based internship and a community-based internship.
• SPS
  o Credits vary from 1-3 credits; 1 credit is granted per 40 hours in the field. Internships are approved within the school.

Lab-based courses
• SAS:
  o Lab: 1 credit = 3 hours of instruction
- Some courses may be a 4 credit class, which combines the 3 credit lecture and the 1 credit lab period.

- **SNHS:**
  - Task Lab: 1 credit = 3 hours of instruction
  - Simulation Lab: 1 credit = 2 hours of instruction

**Student Teaching**

- 12 credits for one semester at the undergraduate level and 6 credits at the graduate level for 15 weeks, 6 hours per day/5 days per week in PK-12 classrooms and a weekly seminar of 15 weeks

**Thesis or Dissertation**

- Credits vary; contact hours will vary based upon program and/or program requirements and will meet minimum Credit Hour requirements. All dissertation and thesis supervisions will require regular and/or one-on-one meetings and are approved at the school-level.

**Online/Distance Learning format**

These courses have comparable learning outcomes and substantive components of a standard lecture course with alternate delivery methods. Minimum student preparation time as well as “in-class” time expectations equal that of a lecture course.

**Responsibilities**

**Academic Policy Committee**

- Responsible for reviewing, vetting, and approving proposed course curriculum that affects two or more schools or the College as a whole. This review ensures compliance with 34 CFR Section 600.2 as well as the MSCHE regulations pertaining to degree requirements and Credit Hours.

**School Curriculum Committees**

- Responsible for reviewing, vetting, and approving proposed course curriculum. This review ensures compliance with 34 CFR Section 600.2 as well as the MSCHE regulations pertaining to degree requirements and Credit Hours.

**Registrar**

- Responsible for monitoring compliance with 34CFR Section 600.2 as well as the MSCHE regulations pertaining to degree requirements and Credit Hours. One method of monitoring compliance is by adhering to the standard Manhattanville schedule while scheduling courses.
Vice President of Academic Affairs
   • Responsible for ensuring compliance with 34CFR Section 600.2, MSCHE regulations pertaining to degree requirements and Credit Hours, and this policy.

**Violations of the Policy**

Violations of this Policy will be handled in accordance with existing College policies.

**Interpreting and Implementing Authority**

Vice President of Academic Affairs

**Statutory or Regulatory References**

U.S. Department of Education, at 34 CFR Section 600.2

**Policy Adoption Review and Approval Authority**

Recommended approval by President’s Cabinet on January 19, 2021
Approved by President on January 19, 2021