

NORTHWEST VISTA COLLEGE
PROCEDURE

Procedure Number:	AS 007
Procedure Title:	Credit Hour Definition

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the current procedure is to clarify the acceptable practices for determining the amount of credit awarded for courses at Northwest Vista College and to address SACSCOC standard 10.7, *Policies for Awarding Credit*. The semester credit hour provides the basis for measuring the amount of engaged learning time expected of a typical student enrolled in the traditional classroom settings and in laboratories, internships, studios, clinicals, practicums, and cooperative education experiences and in distance and correspondence education. The value of a credit hour can be determined by contact time, the educational experience, and out-of-class preparation by the student. All courses have an assigned credit-hour value, as listed in the Catalog and related official publications. All courses' assigned credit-hour value is further defined by total credit hours, lecture hours, and lab credits, or units, as applicable, which are identified in the Catalog.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Credit Hour Definition

A semester credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement, for the various modes of instruction offered at Northwest Vista College, in accordance with the following:

1. For traditionally-delivered courses during traditional long semesters, meet not less than one (1) hour each week during a traditional long semester, approximately sixteen (16) weeks. One instructional contact hour is equivalent to fifty (50) instructional minutes. This includes not less than one (1) instructional contact hour each week for approximately fifteen (15) weeks of direct faculty instruction, a minimum of two (2) hours of out-of-class student work each week for each credit hour, and additional contact hours for a final examination or final experience.
2. Face-to-face courses that are offered in less than a sixteen-week semester will consist of the same number of class contact hours, and have the same learner outcomes and quality of instruction as sixteen-week semester courses.
3. At least an equivalent amount of work is required for other academic activities including laboratories, internships, studios, clinicals, practicums, and cooperative education experiences and other academic work that lead to the award of credit as the work defined for a sixteen-week face-to-face course.
4. Online, hybrid and other nontraditional modes of delivery, may not meet the contact hours assigned above. In such instances, the semester credit hours are based upon the learning outcomes and estimated contact hours required to successfully meet those outcomes. Faculty review these courses to ensure that

NORTHWEST VISTA COLLEGE
PROCEDURE

the learning outcomes and quality of instruction is equivalent to traditionally-delivered (i.e., sixteen-week face-to-face) courses.

5. In determining the amount of coursework to achieve learning competencies and outcomes, Northwest Vista College considers alternative delivery methods, measurements of student work, academic calendars, disciplines, and degree levels.
6. The current definitions and procedure pertain to all courses offered by Northwest Vista College, regardless of location or mode of delivery.

Northwest Vista College adheres to the Texas Lower Division Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) for academic transfer courses and the Guidelines for Instructional Program in Workforce Education (GIPWE) for technical courses to determine the amount and level of credit awarded for all courses whether face-to-face, online, hybrid, or other delivery modes. The ACGM and the Workforce Education Course Manual (WECM) provide the expectation for lecture hours, laboratory hours, and contact hours based upon the semester credit hours assigned to the course, and includes recommendations for traditional lecture or lab-based coursework, practicums, internships, cooperative education, and clinical coursework.

Compliance with the above guidelines is monitored by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) through mandatory state reporting of all courses offered by Northwest Vista College, including all off-campus instructional sites, and all modes of delivery.

Contact for Interpretation: *Vice President for Academic Success*

Relevant Board Policy:	E.1.3 (Policy) Core Curriculum and Degrees E.1.4 (Policy) Student Course Loads and Schedules E.1.6 (Policy) Program and Course Offerings E.1.9 (Policy) Online Learning
Relevant SACSCOC Documents:	10.6 – Distance and Correspondence Education 10.7 – Policies for Awarding Credit
Originating Unit:	Academic Success
Maintenance Unit:	Academic Success
Implementation Date:	May 17, 2021
Revision Date:	