

Credit Hour Policy

Mount Aloysius College has adopted a variant of the traditional "Carnegie Unit" as a measure of academic credit. This unit is known in the College by the familiar term, "credit hour," and is the primary academic measure by which progress toward a degree is assessed. A credit hour is normally granted for satisfactory completion of one 50-minute session of classroom instruction per week for a semester of not less than fifteen weeks. This basic measure may be adjusted proportionately to reflect modified academic calendars and formats of study.

Mount Aloysius College bachelor degrees require that students complete a minimum of 120 semester credits. A student in a bachelor degree program will complete 45-46 credits in core course requirements, at least 30 credits of major specific course work, and at least 30 credits of upper level course work. An associate degree requires the completion of at least 60 semester hour credits. All graduate degree requires the completion of at least 36 semester credit hours.

Mount Aloysius College functions on an academic year which is divided into two semester, fall and spring, which are approximately 15 weeks in length. Credit hours may be earned in short sessions (summer sessions, intersessions, and sub-terms) proportionately to those earned for the same activity during a regular term of the institution.

The U.S. Department of Education 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 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, internship, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours."

Courses may be composed of any combination of elements described, such as a lecture course which also has required laboratory periods or a lecture course having an additional requirement for supervised independent study or tutorial activity.

Semester credit hours are granted for various types of instruction as follows:

I. Lecture, Discussion, and Theory

A credit hour is an academic unit earned for fifteen 50-minute sessions of classroom instruction with a normal expectation of two hours of outside study for each class session. Typically, a three credit hour course meets three 50-minute sessions per week for fifteen weeks for a total of 45 sessions or meets two 75-minute sessions per week for fifteen weeks for a total of 30 sessions.

One Hour of Classroom or Direct Faculty Instruction per Semester Credit

$$\frac{(50 \text{ minutes} \times 15 \text{ weeks})}{60 \text{ minutes in an hour}} = 12.5 \text{ hours of classroom or direct faculty instruction}$$

Two Hours of Student Work Out –of-Class per Semester Credit

Approved t $\frac{(2 \times 50 \text{ minutes} \times 15 \text{ weeks})}{60 \text{ minutes in an hour}} = 25 \text{ hours of out-of-class student work}$

12.5 hours of classroom or direct faculty instruction plus 25 hours of out-of-class or direct faculty instruction per semester equals 37.5 hours of instruction and student work per credit hour.

II. Laboratory & Group Studio

A credit hour is awarded for the equivalent of fifteen periods of such activity, where one laboratory credit represents 110 minutes (two hours) to 170 minutes (three hours) per week of scheduled supervised laboratory work and substantial student preparation time of two hours.

One hour of Lab Credit

$$\frac{(110 \text{ minutes} \times 15 \text{ weeks})}{60 \text{ minutes in an hour}} = 27.5 \text{ hours of laboratory instructional time}$$

Two Hours of Student Preparation for Laboratory Credit

$$\frac{(2 \times 50 \text{ minutes} \times 15 \text{ weeks})}{60 \text{ minutes in an hour}} = 25 \text{ hours of out-of-class student work}$$

27.5 hours of laboratory instructional time plus 25 hours of out-of-class preparation per semester equals 52.5 hours of instruction and student work per credit hour. A four credit course (three credits of lecture/one credit of lab) requires a total 165 hours of student work both inside and outside the classroom per semester.

III. Independent & Directed Study

One credit for independent or directed study (defined as study given initial guidance, criticism, review and final evaluation of student performance by a faculty member) will be awarded for the equivalent of forty-five 50-minute sessions of student academic activity. The formula for determining these types of educational experience follows the model provided for lecture, discussion, and theory semester credit.

IV. Internship/Field Experience/Experiential Learning/Clinical/Seminar/Practicum (Practice or Application Credit)

At its discretion, an institution may award credit hours for learning acquired outside the institution which is an integral part of a program of study. When life or work experience is to be credited as a concurrent portion of an academic program design, as in an internship, one semester credit hour will be awarded for each three hours of supervised academic activity that provides the learning per week which considered necessary to program study.

A Three Credit Student Internship

$$9 \text{ hours per week} \times 15 \text{ weeks} = 135 \text{ hours of internship experience}$$

V. Credit by Examination

At its discretion, an institution may award semester hour credits for mastery demonstrated through credit-by-examination. When such credit by examination is allowed, it may be used to satisfy degree requirements or to reduce the total number of remaining hours required for a degree.

VI. Variations

Courses which use different pedagogical approaches may present educational justification for departures from these policy provisions to the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, which will be responsible for their interpretation.

- i. **Online:** Courses at Mount Aloysius College will be considered online when the majority (51%) of the instruction is delivered online.
- ii. **Hybrid:** Courses at Mount Aloysius College will be considered hybrid when a course is a combination of face-to-face and distance education approaches. Online instruction may not exceed 50 percent of the combined online and in-classroom contact hours per enrollment period.
- iii. **Fulltime Independent Study for Clinical, Student Teaching, or Practicum:** If a student's academic activity is a fulltime pursuit (40 hours per week) for the academic semester, one semester credit hour may be awarded for each week of work for up to a total of twelve credits.

VII. Credit Hour Review Process

The Curriculum Committee and Academic Council review and any new proposed courses to ensure that the course meets the necessary guidelines. Changes in the College's curriculum are noted in the College Catalog which is updated each year in July and on the institutional website.