



Credit Hour Policy Policy Number: 1.1.1-A

The Credit Hour

The assignment and award of credit hours at Loras College conforms to commonly accepted practices in higher education and is consistent with policies established by the US Department of Education.

US Department of Education (34 CFR 600.2)

“...a credit hour is 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.”

Credit Hour Policy at Loras College

The definition of a credit hour at Loras College complies with federal expectations and provides consistency across programs at the College. The Loras College Credit hour policy is based on a standard 15 week semester and a 50-minute class hour. For both undergraduate and graduate course work:

- One credit is equivalent to a minimum of 1 hour of direct or classroom instruction and a minimum of 2 hours of out of class student work each week
- A typical 3-credit course will meet 150 minutes per week for 15 weeks with the expectation of a minimum of 37.5 hours of direct faculty instruction and 75 hours of outside of class student work.

An equivalent amount of work is required for courses that meet over a different amount of time (i.e. summer or January terms) and for course formats where direct faculty instruction is not the primary mode of learning (i.e. online/hybrid courses, laboratory, independent study, internships, practica, etc.).

Courses may exceed these minimums to ensure students meet course learning goals. In addition, specific programs or activities may, where appropriate, adjust the distribution of time to meet specific needs (i.e. increased proportion of direct instructional/interactional time for a laboratory course or a lower proportion of direct instructional/interactional for independent research).

Credit Hour Verification Procedures

The development of the course schedule for each academic term ensures that minimal credit hour requirements are met for all courses offered in a given term. Course scheduling occurs as follows:

1. The Academic Calendar is created by the registrar's office. Start and end dates for each term are selected to ensure that courses are able to meet for the minimum number of days/hours prescribed by the Credit Hour Policy.
2. The Academic Calendar is reviewed and approved by the Academic Council and the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Academic Dean.
3. The course schedule for each term is reviewed by the Division Chair/School Dean to ensure all course offerings are in compliance with the credit hour policy.
4. The course schedule is reviewed by the Registrar and Associate Dean for Instruction and Assessment for compliance with the credit hour policy.
5. The course schedule is reviewed and approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean for compliance with the credit hour policy.

In addition to verification of compliance at the time of scheduling, all courses approved by the Curriculum Committee are reviewed to ensure that new courses reflect expectations for student workload and student/faculty contact time consistent with the Credit Hour Policy. Courses offered via distance delivery undergo additional review by the Distance Education Advisory Group (undergraduate courses) or the appropriate Program Director (graduate courses) to ensure student/faculty contact hours and student workload are in compliance with this policy.