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	Walsh Credit Hour Policy and Credit Hour Policy Guidelines	8/24/20

Purpose: Ensures compliance with U.S. Department of Education federal credit hour definitions and the Higher Learning Assumed Practices.

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Policy:

Credit Hour Definition


The U.S. Department of Education (DOE) defines the 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 15 hours of instruction for each credit hour plus an additional two hours of out-of-class student work for each credit hour. In addition, an equivalent amount of work is required for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Walsh’s credit hour policy complies with this DOE requirement for both undergraduate and graduate programs:

- For every credit awarded, Walsh requires 15 hours of direct faculty instruction (plus an additional 30 hours of homework or out-of-class study).
 - As an example, three credit courses will have 45 hours of direct faculty instruction (plus 90 hours of out-of-class study or homework)
 - For a three credit course offered in an 11-week semester, 4-5 hours of direct faculty instruction are required each week, regardless of delivery method
 - Walsh assumes that direct faculty instruction time may include breaks of up to 10-minutes per hour
- On campus or live synchronous courses (via Zoom, for example) will be scheduled for the required amount of time
- Online courses or online content will include the required amount of equivalent direct instructional time, as established by Walsh’s “Workload Calculator”
- Blended or hybrid courses will combine the direct faculty instruction time for both on-campus or live synchronous content together with online equivalent content as needed to meet the total number of credit hour required

"Direct faculty instruction" is defined as the amount of time the faculty member is personally interacting with students within the context of the classroom. These are activities the instructor would need to be a part of or present for in some way. Examples include: Lectures, group or class discussions, Q&A sessions, a quiz or exam, and explaining instructions or expectations.

"Homework" or out-of-class study is defined as any activity an instructor would not conduct during in-class time. Students are expected to do these activities independent of the instructor and regular class meeting time. Examples include textbook or outside readings, working on assignments, writing papers, research, practice quizzes, homework problems, or independent project construction.

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Walsh's **"workload calculator"** is used to verify online instructional parity to parallel on-ground instruction and ensure content meets quality standards of delivery, as follows:

1. In class / screen time activities:
 - a. Lectures – calculate approximately 15 minutes per Word page-length lecture.
 - b. Videos, Voice-over PPT, Camtasia – add the run time and multiply by 2.
(Example: a 5-minute video = 10 minutes of screen/seat time, or 5 minutes times 2 = 10 minutes)
 - c. Activities included in the weekly modules – test them out and determine length of time.
 - d. Quizzes – add in the amount of time allotted for any quizzes. Approximately 1.5 – 2 minutes per question, based on a multiple choice delivery. However, this may be longer for quantitative and qualitative type exams. (Professor and ID should discuss).
 - e. Discussions – The instructor will need to determine how long he/she expects a student to spend on the discussion board each week and clearly communicate this information to students. "It is expected that to succeed on the discussion board you will spend a minimum of x-hours (i.e., one hour) interacting with your peers....etc."
 - f. Web conferences / online chats – The professor will need to provide guidance as to the length of chat.
 - g. Other activities as determined.