

## Life Pacific College Credit Hour Policy

Life Pacific College operates under a semester credit hour system of approximately 15 weeks each semester in the academic year, or its equivalent. A class hour in a face-to-face class is defined as 50 minutes. The College's credit hour policy is guided by the following principles:

- Determination of the amount of student learning that occurs needs to focus on student achievement of learning outcomes rather than amount of seat time or assigned work.
- Differences between students' pace of learning, particularly between traditional and adult learners, means that different students may produce equivalent amounts of work over different lengths of time.
- Assignment of greater amounts of work does not necessarily result in increased learning.

The credit hour is the basic unit of measurement for college credit. A credit hour is an amount of work measured by verifiable student achievement of learning outcomes of sufficient depth and breadth to reasonably approximate no less than the 37.5 hours of student work (including 12.5 hours of class-time) per unit of semester credit traditionally expected in a fifteen week face-to-face academic setting. An equivalent expectation of student achievement of learning outcomes shall be established for non-traditional forms of education. The College will determine assignment of credit hours by considering both the amount of work a typical student is expected to complete within a specified amount of academically engaged time, and on the basis of documented student learning aligned to that amount of academically engaged time for a typical student.

While the amount of work (the average amount of time a student will engage in the learning activities to achieve the stated learning outcomes) provides a baseline for assigning credit hours, the focus must be student achievement of the learning outcomes. For non-traditional courses, achievement of equivalent outcomes, not equivalent volume of work, is the primary concern.

LPC offers a variety of non-traditional forms of education for credit:

- Online and Hybrid courses

In an online environment, academically engaged time is viewed as the time needed to engage in learning activities including student-content, student-instructor, and student-student interaction mediated through technology. Estimation of amount of work in an online or hybrid course is monitored to ensure equivalency with the credit hour standard and informed by the following:

- The actual time spent in live instruction. Live instruction may be synchronous instructor-led online time and/or residential learning in the classroom that occurs in hybrid courses.

- The time required to consume instructional content that promotes academic engagement (e.g., PowerPoint presentations, audio/video recordings, and articles in electronic formats). The run-time for required media learning assets is calculated on a 1:1 ratio to instructional time; however, estimations for expected multiple viewings should be considered as well.
- Out-of-class work hours are based on the approximate time required for an average student to complete assignments (e.g., reading textbooks, writing papers, and completing projects).

- Accelerated Adult Degree Completion courses

Research on adult learning supports the conclusion that adults are able to process information and apply concepts more quickly than traditional-aged students. Based upon this research, LPC's Adult Degree Completion courses are designed to lead to verifiable student achievement of learning outcomes equivalent to traditional semester-based courses with the same credit hour assignment, and in accordance with the mode of instruction used for course delivery.

- Face-to-Face Intensive courses

Face-to-Face Intensives require a minimum of 36 hours of instructional time as well as pre and post-course work that is equivalent to a traditional semester-based course.

- Independent study courses

Independent study courses are designed so that students will achieve equivalent learning outcomes as the course as taught on campus. Course design is guided by the standard that a credit hour is assigned to a range of 30 to 40 hours of work for a typical student. This is partly based on the conclusion self-directed learning activities merit more than a 1 to 1 ratio when replacing class-time (often lecture).

- Directed study

Directed Study courses are designed so that students achieve equivalent learning outcomes as the traditional version of the course. Each course requires not less than 37.5 hours of student work per semester unit.

- Internships

Internships involve extended times of service learning. As such one internship unit involves 75 hours of student work under the supervision of an internship director. These hours include all the time necessary to serve within the internship environment, complete required assignments, and meet with internship director.

- Labs

One laboratory credit is defined as a minimum of 3 class hours of work each week in a laboratory under the supervision of a lab supervisor/instructor and an expectation of 1 class hour of additional out-of-class student work each week.

- Identification of Credit for Prior Learning

Credit for prior learning is evaluated through a portfolio process. The student (with support from an advisor) proposes a specific amount of credit based on experiential learning. The faculty evaluator determines the amount of credit to grant for prior learning based on achievement of learning outcomes documented through the portfolio.

## MASL

Life Pacific College's graduate program enrolls in-service adult students. The College distinguishes between credit assignment for graduate and undergraduate courses primarily through the expectation of student achievement of higher level learning outcomes rather than increased amount of time or volume of work.

## **Procedure for Review**

The College reviews the accuracy of credit hour assignments through

- The APCR or appropriate academic committee review of new courses
- The Academic Office's semesterly review of course outlines for current courses
- Each Program Review's analysis of courses specific to that program to ensure alignment with the credit hour policy