



NOTRE DAME  
OF MARYLAND  
UNIVERSITY

## UNIVERSITY CREDIT-HOUR POLICY

**Effective Date: August 1, 2016**

### **Purpose:**

This policy confirms the University's commitment to quality learner experiences as well as compliance with regulations put forth by the Department of Education (DOE), Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), and Maryland discipline specific standards for all academic courses offered at Notre Dame of Maryland University, including those offered through the Women's College, College of Adult Undergraduate Study, and the Graduate School.

### **Policy:**

NDMU awards academic credit to students who demonstrate that they have met the learning objectives and outcomes specified in a course syllabus during the term of the course. Assurance that academic courses fulfill the workload expectations outlined in this policy, is the responsibility of the faculty course developers and the chair or dean to whom the faculty reports.

### **Definitions:**

#### **Credit-Hour**

A credit-hour is an amount of work represented in the 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.

Notre Dame follows the Carnegie unit of measure for assigning credits to undergraduate and graduate academic courses: One hour of 'faculty-directed instruction' (instruction provided by a faculty member, may be live or online) is no less than 50 minutes long. To earn one "credit-

hour” in a traditional 15-week semester, an NDMU student must receive at least 50 minutes of direct instruction and spend 100 minutes preparing for each session of direct instruction, per week for 15 weeks.

An equivalent amount of work is required in accelerated or compressed-term courses and other academic activities where classroom instruction is not the primary mode of learning, including online courses, hybrid courses, laboratory work, independent study, internships, practica, and studio work. See Table 1.

Table 1

Credits	Minimum student engagement/ prep. Time	
	Hours	Hours
1	12.5	25
2	25	50
3	37.5	75
4	50	100
5	62.5	125
6	75	150

### Faculty-Directed Instruction

Direct instruction is defined as faculty lead or assigned activities that lead to student learning. This may include but is not limited to traditional lecture, facilitating seminars, giving feedback on individual or group projects, reflection/feedback of student work, feedback on group work, individual or group project feedback/facilitation, reviewing drafts of papers or projects and other activities that engage the students in learning the material. This description will be noted in the course syllabus.

### Student Preparation Time

Students are expected to prepare for faculty instruction at a ratio of two hours per every one hour of instruction as noted above in Table 1. This expectation will be noted in the course syllabus. This is any activity the student does to prepare for engagement and assessment of the course. Activities include reading, researching and writing for papers, developing projects, practicing techniques and skills, and other activities that engage the students in learning the material.

### Application:

#### How NDMU Applies Federal Credit-Hour Policy to Various Forms of Instruction

Student learning outcome equivalencies reflect differences in delivery methods, levels of interaction, degree of supervision, measurements of student work, academic disciplines, and

degree levels. Differences in requirements based on federal, state regulations, or accrediting bodies such as laboratory, internships, and practica are reflected in the course syllabus.

Sources:

34 CFR 600.2 defines a credit-hour for purposes of various Federal programs, and so that accrediting agencies (such as the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, MSCHE) can assess how institutions measure student work, 34 CFR 602.24(f) requires this definition for purposes of Title IV student financial assistance programs. Exceptions to this definition are stated in 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (l). The state of Maryland has further interpreted federal guidelines in Maryland Higher Education Commission COMAR 13B.