



Academic Affairs Policy for the Assignment of Credit Hours and Course Modality
Definitions: Standards for Current and New Courses

Source: Lake Erie College's Educational Planning and Policy (EPP) Manual

Based on the order presented in the faculty handbook, EPP "make(s) recommendations to the Vice President for Academic Affairs regarding the addition or deletion of courses, curriculum requirements, programs, majors, or degrees." The formal process that leads to these recommendations is outlined below with respect to: 1) introduction of new academic programs, and 2) changes in existing academic programs.

This policy document is extracted from the EPP manual and should be considered in the following procedures (as found in the manual):

- Submissions of Proposals
- Review of Proposals
- EPP Recommendation Processes

This document is intended to illustrate the guidelines for the assignment of credit hours and to articulate the definitions for various modalities.

Contact the registrar's office for questions regarding the assignment of appropriate credit hours for courses under development or for current courses.

Standardization of Credit Hours & Course Requirements

The EPP "recommends revisions to the Vice President for Academic Affairs regarding the standardization of credit hours and course requirements." A brief description of the basic standards for 100- to 500-level courses is provided below. Proposals to standardize credit hours and/or course requirements should be submitted to EPP for consideration using either the Academic Program Introduction Form (API) or the Academic Program Modification (APM) form, as appropriate.

This information is provided to help clarify and standardize the general guidelines for the structure, organization, and level of difficulty/sophistication for 100-, 200-, 300-, 400-, and 500-level courses. There is no expectation for absolute uniformity with these guidelines, and the

specific needs of any given school/program will likely require some flexibility. Nevertheless, some basic assumptions and expectations are provided below.

- 100-level courses are those with introductory/basic difficulty. They have no prerequisites. They either define basic concepts and terminology of a discipline, or are general survey courses. It is assumed that students taking these courses will possess 1) writing skills sufficient to compose definitions, paragraphs, or essays where appropriate, and 2) reading skills sufficient to comprehend college-level material in textbook and monograph form. If these skills are not present, then completion of remedial work should be a prerequisite.
- 200-level courses are those with intermediate difficulty. They may have course prerequisites. They are specific to particular areas or fields within a discipline. It is assumed that students taking these courses 1) will have completed a course in expository writing, i.e., EN 101 or an equivalent; 2) will possess general college-level skills in reading, writing, and quantitative methods; 3) will be acquainted with the basic language, terminology, and methodology of the subject itself; and 4) will be at a stage of understanding, in the given subject, where they can progress towards some significant conclusions, experiments, or explorations. It is expected that students in these courses 1) can proceed at a reasonable pace without encountering basic difficulties or problems in comprehension; 2) can cope with assignments involving reading and comprehension of a specific amount of material, and can prepare organized papers; 3) will accomplish a substantial amount of work, e.g., study a number of books or work through a comprehensive textbook, write a number of papers, or demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of the material covered.
- 300-level courses are those with advanced difficulty. They may have direct or indirect 100- and 200-level courses prerequisites. They are taken by majors and upper-division students, are often considered to be courses "within the major", and are offered for students clearly interested and qualified in a subject. It is assumed that students taking these courses are at ease and comfortable in the field, and that they have acquired an adequate general knowledge in the area to pursue some study in depth with the proper methodological tools. It is expected that students taking these courses 1) have the ability to do research, and obtain relevant information in the field through the proper use of libraries; 2) are fluent in the language of the field and can both read and assimilate relevant information; 3) are able to combine the results of research into cohesive statements; and 4) are able to produce some substantial work, e.g., a paper of "term-paper" length, or a creative or experimental project.
- 400-level courses are those with advanced, upper-division difficulty. They have direct or indirect 100-, 200-, and 300-level prerequisites. They are often considered to be capstone courses of a major and are offered for students clearly interested and qualified in a subject, and also nearing completion of their degrees. It is assumed that students taking these courses 1) will have completed a substantial amount of previous work, including courses at the 300-level; and 2) will have the capacity to work independently under the

guidance/supervision of an instructor. It is expected that students taking these courses will complete a research project/paper.

- 500-level courses are graduate-level courses. It is necessary that students taking these courses 1) will have completed a bachelor's degree; 2) be admitted into one of the graduate programs at the College; and 3) have the capacity to work independently under the guidance/supervision of an instructor.

Definitions

- 1) **Academic Program** – any combination of courses and/or requirements leading to a degree, major, minor, concentration, licensure, or certification.
- 2) **Degree** – an award to a student from the Lake Erie College Board of Directors, under the authority of both the Ohio Board of Regents and the Higher Learning Commission, and with recommendation of the Faculty Senate, as official recognition of the completion of a prescribed course of study following matriculation (e.g., Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Arts, etc.). Note: degree candidates must take 32 of their last 36 credit hours at Lake Erie College. Effective with the beginning of the 2015-16 academic year, the number of credit hours necessary for the award a degree from Lake Erie College is 120 hours, and.
- 3) **Major** – A cohesive combination of courses including introductory, intermediate, and advanced coursework that designates a student's primary area of undergraduate study (e.g., Business Administration, Mathematics, etc.). Note: within any major a maximum of 64 credit hours may be from any single subject designator, e.g., AT, BA, ED, MT, etc. Further, a minimum of 20 credit hours of the major field must be completed at Lake Erie College.
- 4) **Minor** – A coordinated grouping of courses beyond a student's major which provides a coherent body of knowledge in either a particular discipline or in an interdisciplinary cluster which might help the future graduate in terms of further postgraduate education and employment. Note: a minor requires 16 to 20 credit hours, and a minimum of 50% of the minor must be completed at Lake Erie College.
- 5) **Concentration** – A coordinated grouping of courses within a major representing a sub-specialization or emphasis within a major field available for students majoring in that discipline (e.g., Major: Biology, Concentration: Pre-Physical Therapy). Note: a concentration requires 16 to 20 credit hours forming a coherent body of knowledge in a particular discipline or interdisciplinary cluster, and a minimum of 50% of the concentration must be completed at Lake Erie College.
- 6) **Core Requirements** – A set of courses, or specific requirements, as defined by an individual school or the college, that are a required component of a student's academic program (e.g., General Education Requirements).
- 7) **Course** – a unique combination of title, course number, credit hours, and other course attributes that may include, but are not necessarily limited to, terms offered, cross-listed courses,

contact hours, pre- or co-requisites, credit type, and level (e.g., MT 211 - Calculus & Analytical Geometry II, 3SH).

8) **New Academic Component** – a program, degree, major, concentration, core requirement, or course, as defined above, which is not part of the current Lake Erie College Academic Catalog.

9) **Existing Academic Component** – a program, degree, major, concentration, core requirement, or course, as defined above, which is part of the current Lake Erie College Academic Catalog.

10) An **undergraduate certificate** program is offered for academic credit and provides a free-standing credential, preparation for professional licensure, or is supplementary to an academic major. The bachelor's level certificate may be constituted by new or existing courses as long as the program achieves among the following purposes:

- Provides specialized training in a reasonably brief time frame (usually in 1-2 years)
 - Provides a curriculum that complements an undergraduate degree program
 - Provides a curriculum that is more applied in nature
 - Provides training that leads to a license, licensure, or credential recognized by an outside agency

- An undergraduate certificate program will have the following characteristics:
 - It will consist of a minimum of 9 but no more than 18 credit hours
 - Has identifiable and specific learning outcomes and is assessed
 - Not be duplicative of any preexisting degree, minor, or concentration
 - Consists of courses that may apply toward the degree in addition to the certificate

Students completing an undergraduate certificate program will receive an appropriately worded certificate recognizing successful completion and a notation will be made on the student's transcript when a certificate has been awarded.

Course Modality

1) **In-Person Delivery (IP)**. In-person courses follow a regular schedule (date, time) and are mostly synchronous in modality and are face-to-face. Such courses might use electronic and digitally facilitated instructional resources in supplement to face-to-face instruction.

2) **HyFlex (HF)**: HyFlex courses Combine online and in-person instruction simultaneously into a single course section. Students are able to participate in various ways, such

as real-time via video streaming, asynchronously by accessing materials and recorded lectures outside of the regular class time, or in-person (physically present in the classroom). There is a degree of choice as to how students participate.

3) **Asynchronous Online (AO):** Online Courses are 100% online without any on-site face-to-face meetings required. Online course faculty may utilize a combination of group work, personalized assignments, online class meetings (i.e., Zoom or Google Meet), and various communication methods between students and faculty. The instructor and students all engage at different times and from different locations. Digitally facilitated meetings may be scheduled as per the instructors' discretion.

4) **Synchronous Online (SO):** Synchronous online courses are those where the instructor and students engage with each other simultaneously but from different locations. The course is delivered in real-time by live stream audio/video, Google Docs, or other digital means. Synchronous online courses do not require any in-person meetings.

5) **Hybrid Courses (HB):** Courses offered in hybrid format (also known as blended) combines in-person instruction with web-based learning (e.g., video lectures, online discussions, or activities) that supplant one or more of the face-to-face sessions. This approach reduces the amount time in the classroom by offering a portion of the course delivery online at the discretion of the instructor.

It is important to note that all modalities must have clear learning objectives and align with rigor and contact time expectations. All courses, regardless of modality, have the same course objectives, learning outcomes and syllabus as their face-to-face counterpart. Contact time is accomplished by various approaches as delineated in each online course syllabus.

Standard Definitions of Instructional Arrangements and Guidelines for the Awarding of Academic Credit

Semester Hour of Credit - 820 minutes per semester of formalized instruction that typically requires students to work on out-of-class assignments an average of twice the amount of time of the formalized instruction

[820 minutes: 50 minutes per week per credit hour for 14 weeks plus 120 minute final exam block in week 15]

Credit hours may be calculated differently for the following types of instructional activities:

1) **Classroom:** Classroom instruction is formalized instruction, conducted on-or off-campus, in which the faculty member presents an educational experience to students, applying any combination of instructional methods.

This definition is applicable only when the course organization requires that the instructor bear the primary responsibility for the instructional activity and is directly involved with all students

in the class. Students will be expected to work at out-of-class assignments on a regular basis which, over the length of the course, would normally average two hours of out-of-class study for each hour of formal class activity. This out-of-class study shall not be counted as part of the classroom hour for credit. [50 minutes per week per credit hour]

2) **Laboratory:** Laboratory instruction is educational activity with students conducting experiments, perfecting skills, or practicing procedures under the direction of a Lake Erie College faculty member.

One hour of credit shall be awarded for a total of 2,220 minutes laboratory instructional time for a semester calendar. [150 minutes per week per credit hour, plus final exam week]

If laboratory instruction is supplemented by out-of-class assignments which would normally average one hour of out-of-class study preparing for or following-up the laboratory experience, then one hour of credit shall be awarded for a total of 1,520 minutes laboratory instructional time for a semester calendar. [100 minutes per week per credit hour plus final exam]

3) **Clinical laboratory:** Clinical laboratory instruction applies only to health technology programs during which students are assigned to laboratory sections which meet at a health-related agency rather than in on-campus laboratory facilities. Clinical laboratory sessions provide a realistic environment for student learning. These laboratory hours should be directly supervised by regular faculty members, full-time or part-time, of the college. Credit hours for the clinical laboratory experience will be awarded on the same basis as laboratory instruction.

4) **Clinical Rotation:** This definition applies primarily to programs in the health technologies, during which the student is assigned to practice experiences under constant supervision at an external agency. The student should receive individual instruction and critique in the performance of a particular function. Adjunct faculty or other health professionals identified by the faculty member coordinating the rotation, who may or may not be paid by the college, may be used for the direct supervision of students. Student time in a clinical rotation is subject to a 7-day week, starting on Monday and ending on Sunday, which may include weekdays, nights, or weekends.

The faculty member coordinating the clinical rotation is responsible for assigning the course grade.

One hour of credit shall be awarded for a total of 2,160 minutes of clinical rotation instructional time for a semester calendar. [144 minutes per week for 15 weeks per credit hour]

5) **Internship and Clinical Observation:** A cooperative work experience is on or off-campus paid *or* unpaid employment. The experience is coordinated by a faculty member of the college who visits the job site for a conference with the student and supervisor at least once during the semester. The faculty member assigns the course grade to the student after appropriate consultation with the supervisor/employer.

One hour of credit shall be awarded 50 hours of site experience.

6) **Field experience:** Field experience is planned, paid work activity that relates to an individual student's occupational objectives. With permission of a faculty advisor, the field experience replaces elective or required courses in a student's degree program. The experience is coordinated by a faculty member of the college who assists the student in planning the experience, visits the site of the experience for a conference with the student and his/her supervisor at least once during the semester and assigns the course grade to the student after appropriate consultation with the employer/supervisor.

One hour of credit shall be awarded for a total of 6720 minutes field experience instructional time for a semester calendar. [480 minutes per week per credit hour]

Field experience as assigned placement that relates to a student's licensure area (P-5th, AYA, MMIS). Pre-service teachers work with a cooperating teacher and campus supervisor. Pre-service teachers are assessed by their cooperating teacher and campus supervisor a minimum of four times per placement with a follow up conference and descriptive feedback for improvement. Pre-service teachers attend at least twelve seminars to guide their practice during their field placement.

One hour of credit shall be awarded for a total of 4200 minutes field experience instructional time for a semester calendar. [300 minutes per week per credit hour]

7) **Field Observation:** Observation occurs when students participate in an educational experience as observers of practitioners representative of the occupational area. Students may participate at times in the actual work activity. Observation hours are coordinated by faculty members who receive reports from the students of their observational experiences and provide assessments of students' progress toward the achievement of the objectives of the experience.

One hour of credit shall be awarded for a total of 13,500 minutes observation instructional time for a semester calendar. Specific academic programs may have individual course requirements with different totals in observation minutes in accordance with accreditation or licensing requirements/practices. Variations will be documented by area dean. [900 minutes per week per credit hour]

8) **Student Teaching:** Teacher candidates complete a minimum of 40 hours per week in the site classrooms for 14 weeks, plus an on-campus seminar portion of 75 minutes for 12 of those weeks. Teacher candidates are assigned to cooperating teachers and campus supervisors and complete a minimum of six assessments with a follow up conference and descriptive feedback for improvement. In addition, candidates complete and submit a nationally scored Teacher Performance Assessment. Twelve credit hours awarded for a semester for 575 hours in student teaching

9) **Seminar:** A seminar is a formal educational experience which is run in conjunction with field experience and student teaching. The seminars provide information, teaching strategies, updates on the teaching profession, and opportunities to discuss and practice activities/initiatives being implemented in their classroom placements.

Credit is awarded for seminar hours on the same basis as that for the classroom hour discussed above.

10) **Applied Music Courses:** Applied music courses are those for which extended periods of concentrated practice are required of the student subsequent to sessions of individualized instruction. Instructors who teach such courses have primary responsibility for assigning the work activity or skills objectives to the student and personally provide whatever instruction is required. In addition, the instructor periodically assesses the student's progress, and assigns the final grade.

One hour of credit shall be awarded for a total of 1800 minutes of applied music for group courses, such as choir or ensemble. Credit may include a required performance. [120 minutes per week per credit hour for 15 weeks]

One hour of credit shall be awarded for a total of 450 minutes of applied private lessons, such as voice or instrument. Credit may include a required performance. [30 minutes per week per credit hour for 15 weeks]

11) **Studio Course:** One hour of credit shall be awarded for a total of 1520 minutes instructional time for a studio course with little or no out-of-class study for a semester calendar. [100 minutes per week per credit hour plus final exam]

If supplemented by out-of-class assignments which would normally average one hour of out-of-class study preparing for or following-up the studio experience, one hour of credit shall be awarded for a total of 1058 minutes instructional time for a studio course for a semester calendar. [67 minutes per week per credit hour plus final exam]

12) **Equestrian Riding Courses:** Riding instruction is educational activity with students perfecting skills or practicing procedures under the direction of a faculty member.

One hour of credit shall be awarded for a total of 2,220 minutes riding instructional time for a semester calendar. [150 minutes per week per credit hour plus final exam]

13) **Online Learning Courses:** Courses that are 100% online without any on-site face-to-face meetings required. These courses have the same course objectives, learning outcomes and same syllabus of its on-site face to face counterpart course except utilizing an online delivery format. Contact time is accomplished by various approaches as delineated in each online course syllabus. Online course faculty utilize a combination of some of these examples: collaboration, group work, personalized assignments, group discussions, online class meetings, and various communication methods between students and faculty. In all cases the online courses meet instructional time and projected student engagement time. The course content, objectives and outcomes are the same as for Classroom courses. Note: Please refer to definitions regarding modalities.

15) **Hybrid Courses:** Courses offered in a blended format are those with one or more on-site face to face class meetings and at least one or more online course sessions. Both approaches include direct interaction with a faculty member. Contact time is assessed using both on-site face

to face definitions (for the on-site face to face portion) and online definitions as above (for the online portion). All hybrid courses must meet the total amount of instructional and student work time as the examples above regardless if the course is delivered in the online or the on-site face to face format. The course content, objectives and outcomes are the same as for Classroom courses.

16) **Independent Study, Individual Investigation and Directed Study Courses:** Shall follow the guidelines specific to the type of course for which these designators are being utilized. In the event that the courses will not have regular weekly meeting times face to face, faculty should use the RICE calculator to demonstrate contact time equivalence.