Policy

Minnesota State Mankato’s definition of a credit hour is based on the federal definition (34CFR 600.2; 11/1/2010) of a credit hour listed below:

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 out-of-class student work each week for approximately 15 weeks for one semester 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 activities as established by an institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading toward the award of credit hours.

Alternative Course Formats
Any course not fitting the traditional one hour per week for each credit in a face-to-face classroom. This includes but is not limited to:

1. Accelerated courses defined as courses with the normal number of seat-time hours but in a more compressed time than a traditional semester length.
2. Hybrid courses defined as reduced seat time with an online component with the same outcomes as the traditional in-seat class.
3. Online courses defined as completely presented in an online environment with the same outcomes as the traditional in-seat class.
4. Internships defined as similar hours as a traditional course per credit.
5. Clinical rotations defined as a minimum of similar hours as a traditional course per credit with specific identified outcomes. Time frames may be dictated by an accrediting agency.
6. Individual study or research. The scope of the study or research to require the average student to work an average of three hours a week per credit for 15 weeks.

Alternative Delivery Formats
Student work will equal a minimum of one hour of class and two hours of out-of-class work per week over a semester for each semester hour.

1. Other methods may serve as instructional time including instructional how-to videos, tutorials, small group activities, virtual labs, required participation in live or online discussion (e.g. review sessions, Blackboard chat, case discussions), or other instructor-driven self-guided activity delivered live or by electronic media.
2. Faculty may also consider field experiences, cultural events, group projects, increased course content, research and information literacy, service learning and civic engagement, individual or group conferences, oral presentations, or other methodology that contains rationale for demonstration of active student engagement.
Procedure

Course credit hours are assigned by the program from which a course originates in accordance with this policy and reviewed by the Undergraduate Curriculum and Academic Policy Committee and/or the Graduate Curriculum and Academic Policy Committee.

The University Registrar reviews all curriculum changes and ensures adherence to the credit hour policy.

Rationale

In compliance with Higher Learning Commission Policy FDCR.A.10.020 – Assignment of Credit, Program Length, and Tuition the institution shall be able to equate its learning experiences with semester credit hours using practices common to institutions of higher education.