

## CREDIT HOURS

### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to define how Western Dakota Technical College (WDTA) calculates credit hours and establishes rules for credit hours.

### **II. General Statement of Policy**

- A. WDTA is to provide access to quality post-secondary education at affordable rates. The following credit hour parameters will help WDTA achieve this goal.
  1. The number of credits required within a 16-week fall or spring semester will not exceed 18 credits, except for unusual circumstances. The 8-week summer semester will not exceed 9 credits, and the extended summer semester will not exceed 12 credits, except for unusual circumstances.
  2. Certificate programs are categorized as short-term or long-term.
    - i. Short-term certificate programs will not exceed 8 credits and are not required to include general education courses.
    - ii. Long-term certificate programs must have a minimum of 9 credits and will be limited to a maximum of 29 credits. Long-term certificate programs are not required to include general education courses.
  3. Diploma programs must have a minimum of 30 credits and will be limited to a maximum of 45 credits. Diploma programs must include a minimum of 6 credit hours of general education courses from a minimum of two of the following categories: communications, social sciences, mathematics, computers, arts and humanities, and natural sciences.
  4. Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees must have a minimum of 60 credits and will be limited to a maximum of 72 credits. Exceptions to the maximum may be made if a programmatic accrediting body requires a higher number of credits to meet the associate degree level standards. AAS programs must include a minimum of 15 credit hours of general education courses from a minimum of 4 of the following categories: communications, social sciences, mathematics, computers, arts and humanities, and natural sciences. AAS degrees must have a minimum of 50% of credit hours in technical education.
  5. WDTA establishes college credits/credit hours using the Carnegie Credit Model. Credit hours are calculated based on measuring the amount of time it should take a typical student to demonstrate proficiency in or mastery of a subject.

Credits are not earned solely on time, but a combination of time and student mastery of a subject must be achieved.

6. Credit hours for courses delivered in an online or hybrid format are based upon competencies or student learning outcomes acquired through coursework that are equivalent to students who are in a classroom environment. Generally, 48 hours of work are required per Credit.

### **III. Definitions**

- A. Carnegie Credit Hour (referred to as Credit) represents an investment of time by the average student of not fewer than 48 Hours in or outside of class during a 16-week semester (on average 3 Hours per week over a 16-week semester), or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time.
- B. Hours are used to calculate Carnegie Credit Hours (Credits); 48 Hours per semester equals one (1) Credit; One (1) Hour equals 50 minutes of Clock Time.
- C. Clock Time is used to measure how much actual time, based on minutes and/or clock hours, an average student dedicates to earn Credit.
- D. Course record means WDTC Master Syllabi which are permanent course records that match the breakdown of contact hours (Hours) to the assigned credit hours (Credits).

### **IV. Reporting Procedures**

- A. Credits for individual programs and courses are recorded in the Course Catalog. The Curriculum Committee must approve all changes in program and course credits. The Course Catalog is available on the WDTC website.
- B. Master Syllabi are the official record of the course and approved through the Curriculum Committee. Master Syllabi are created and maintained for each course in accordance with departmental numbers assigned by the Registrar's Office. All approved modifications are documented by the Curriculum Committee and updated in the Course Catalog. All Master Syllabi are saved on the WDTC shared drive.

### **V. Dissemination of Policy and Training**

- A. This policy shall appear on the WDTC website on the policy webpage.
- B. The College will share information regarding this policy in the Curriculum Guidebook.

Legal References: SD Administrative Rule 24:59:01:05, 24:59:01:06 and 24:59:01:07

Other References: SD Board of Technical Education Policy 301.1

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