

NDU-AA Instruction 5.14

NDU Policy on Credit Hours

Credit Hour Policy and Guidelines for Awarding Credit Hours

Context

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) issued a Credit Hour Policy effective August 23, 2012. The MSCHE policy was revised on October 30, 2012 and released via the MSCHE website in November of 2012. This policy supersedes the credit hour sections of the MSCHE guidelines on Degrees and Credits, June 26, 2009. This revision incorporates the MSCHE changes into the NDU Credit Hour Policy approved in February of 2012. This policy is effective upon signature by the Provost.

Purpose

National Defense University recognizes that in order to be a degree-granting institution, it must ensure that its programs and courses are of appropriate content, rigor and length and provides evidence of student learning. The University follows standards set by the Middle States Commission Higher Education (MSCHE) and complies with applicable Federal policies, regulations, and requirements. (U.S. Department of Education Office of Post-Secondary Education, "Guidance to Institutions and Accrediting Agencies Regarding a Credit Hour as Defined in the Final Regulations Published on October 29, 2010." This policy also reflects regulations specified in 34 CFR §600.2, §602.24 and §668.8)

Applicability

This policy and guidelines applies to all courses and activities that award academic credit on a National Defense University transcript. Courses and activities are reviewed by the Office of Academic Affairs, and approved and certified by the University Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (VP-AA) for inclusion in the University's programs, offerings and catalog, and for the award of credit on official university transcripts.

Credit Definitions

Federal Definitions

The following federal definitions are incorporated by reference in the Middle States Commission for Higher Education Credit Hour Policy effective 30 October 2012 (<http://www.msche.org/documents/CreditHourPolicyRev112012.pdf>).

Credit Hour (34 CFR §600.2):

Credit or credit hour: A unit of measure representing the equivalent of one hour of instruction per week and two hours of student preparation per week over a fifteen week term. It is applied toward the total number of credit hours needed for completing the requirements of a degree, diploma, certificate, or other award. For example, a three credit hour course requires 45 hours of instructional time and 90 hours of student preparation time during the term. Except as provided in 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (l), 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 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.

Clock Hour (34 CFR §600.2):

A period of time consisting of—

- 1) A 50- to 60-minute class, lecture, or recitation in a 60-minute period;
- 2) A 50- to 60-minute faculty-supervised laboratory, shop training, or internship in a 60-minute period; or
- 3) Sixty minutes of preparation in a correspondence course.

Credit Hour Policy Review

The Credit Hour Policy will be reviewed on a periodic basis to for compliance with accreditation standards and Federal regulations. NDU will conduct reviews of the application of the Credit Hour Policy during the Curriculum Review process to ensure the reliability and accuracy of the institution's assignment of credit hours.

Awarding Credit Hours

The Office of Academic Affairs is responsible for ensuring that all courses offered by the institution meet standards of appropriate content, rigor and length and provides evidence of student learning. The Office of Academic Affairs will make the final determination of credit-bearing or non-credit bearing status for courses offered at the institution. For a course deemed to be credit-bearing, the Office of Academic Affairs will assign credit hour values based on the Federal definition for a credit hour incorporated in the MSCHE Policy.

Credit Requests

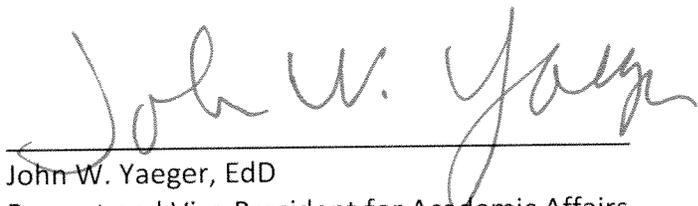
Each College or Component must provide a documentation to support request for a course offering. The request must include the content, length, rigor, student learning outcomes/assessments, and time distribution for the course. To request approval to award credit hours or to modify existing credit hours the following documents must be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs:

- 1) Course syllabus including:
 - a) Course content appropriate to the course level
 - b) Course length appropriate to the course level
 - c) Course rigor appropriate to the course level
 - d) Course requirements appropriate to the course level
 - e) Course student learning outcomes appropriate to the course level
 - f) Course student learning assessments appropriate to the course level (Copy of student learning assessment—e.g., metrics exam, paper requirements— or full description thereof).

- 2) Time Distribution: A breakdown of the instructional time, other in-class time and the expected out-of-class time successful completion of the course.
- 3) Course Function:
 - 1) Degree, diploma, or graduate certificate Program requirement
 - 2) Degree, diploma, or graduate certificate Elective
 - 3) Non-degree offering

Posting Credit Hours

The Office of Academic Affairs is responsible for posting credit on University transcripts.



John W. Yaeger, EdD
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

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