

NEOMED ACADEMIC POLICY	POLICY NO: Policy No: 3349-AC-240
POLICY TITLE: Semester Credit Definition Policy: Guidelines for Assigning Credit Hours to Courses	EFFECTIVE DATE: May 31, 2017 REVISED DATE: June 1, 2020
RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: Academic Affairs: Office of the Registrar	APPROVAL AUTHORITY: Provost

(A) PURPOSE

The Semester Credit Definition Policy is designed to establish guidelines for assigning credit hours to courses. All NEOMED student transcripts record courses in credit hours.

(B) SCOPE

This policy applies to all courses provided by NEOMED and administered through the Office of the Registrar. Faculty and/or Curriculum Committees interested in proposing new courses or modifications to existing courses should consult this policy and/or the Office of the Registrar for confirmation of appropriate credit values.

(C) DEFINITIONS

- (1) "Contact Hour" refers to fifty (50) minutes of formalized, scheduled instruction presented to students, calculated into Semester Credit.
- (2) "Course Schedule Type" refers to the category a course is coded for in the Student Information System which can include purposes of identifying the main way Semester Credits are accounted for by the various instructional delivery methods. Course schedule types include:
 - (a) "Co-Scheduled" is a category for a course where two or more independent courses that have limited shared content and elect to meet together to capitalize on the delivery of common content only. Co-Scheduled courses are distinguished from Cross-Listed and Dual-Listed courses by the fact that only some portion of the academic experience is common between the classes, and credit hours and course identifiers do not have to be aligned.
 - (b) "Course Equivalent" is a category for courses designated as Cross-Listed or Dual-Listed and are considered equivalent and programmed as such in Ellucian's Banner Student Information System ("Banner") Courses that undergo revisions to titles, course number and/or subject codes, but retain the same content, are also coded in Banner as equivalent. Equivalencies have implications to repeat grade rules and use of credit towards fulfillment of graduation requirements.

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- (c) “Cross-Listed” is a category for a single course that is offered jointly by two or more colleges/departments to students at the same level and is identical in every aspect other than the course identifier.
 - (d) “Dual-Listed” is a category for a course offered at the professional student level and graduate student level; course content and credit value is identical with variations in expectations regarding course rigor, competencies, and or assessment measures that are applied to different student levels.
 - (e) “Interprofessional/Interdisciplinary” is a category for Clinical Experiences or courses designed for students from two or more health professions that include content and objectives that promote students learning with, from and about each other, within the occupational context, to improve collaboration, practice and the quality of health care from a health professions team perspective.
- (3) “Curriculum Committee” refers to the committee within each College that is responsible for review and decision-making regard the curricula of that College, including the Graduate Faculty Council for the College of Graduate Studies.
- (4) “Instructional/Delivery Methods/[Medbiquitous](#)” are specific methods of instruction used to deliver information taught to students by faculty; includes the purposes of identifying the main way Semester Credits are calculated. The methods include the following:
- (a) “Distance Learning” is a method in which educational experiences take place when the student and faculty are separated by geography but can engage in teaching/learning activities through use of online technology such as videoconference and the internet. Teaching/learning activities may be synchronous or asynchronous, but no in-person meetings take place.
 - (b) “Flipped Classroom” is a method that uses a pedagogical strategy in which the typical lecture and homework elements of a course are reversed. In a typical traditional classroom, students listen to lectures in class and complete most of their homework after class. In a flipped classroom, students listen or watch pre-recorded lectures before class and perform active learning activities such as exercises, projects, or discussions during class.

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- (c) “Independent Study” is a method in which a student requests or the Committee on Academic and Professional Progress (CAPP) recommends a course used for students on or off-track to complete course content independently.
- (d) “Internship” is a method in which a student has full-time, semester long work experiences that are integrated with academic instruction and relate to an individual student’s occupational goals. Students concurrently apply learned concepts to practical situations within an occupational field.
- (e) “Laboratory” is a method in which a student directly participates in conducting observations and experiments, perfecting skills or practicing procedures under the direction of the faculty/course instructor.
- (f) “Lecture” is a method of direct, formalized instruction of a student by the faculty/course instructor.
- (g) “Online” is a method that requires some degree of student-instructor interaction. Online learning works to supplement direct instructor guidance.
- (h) “Peer Instruction” is a method that uses interactive problem-solving learning sessions where concepts are tested and discussed, building upon required preparation time material, resulting in understanding and better application of concepts learned.
- (i) “Practicum” is a method in which a student has part-time field assignments that allow students to observe and document how working professionals perform their job duties. Learning goals are narrow but still integrated with an individual student’s occupational goals.
- (j) “Research” is a method in which a student initiates experiences to pursue an area of interest not otherwise covered by a regular course offering, with the guidance of a faculty member.
- (k) “Seminar” is a method in which students participate in a workshop-style course.

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(l) “Small Group Discussion” is a method in which cohorts are divided into groups smaller than the lecture or laboratory sessions for formalized discussion, either on- or off-campus.

(5) “Preparation/Independent Learning Time” is fifty (50) minutes of out-of-class or non-scheduled dedicated preparation time the typical student is expected to complete, but not calculated into Semester Credit in each course.

(6) “Self-Directed Study Time” refers to when students take initiative for their own learning. This time is not calculated into Semester Credit hours in each course.

(7) “Semester Credit” refers to credit which is awarded for a minimum of 750 minutes of formalized instruction or Peer Instruction time. A Semester Credit typically requires students to engage an average of twice the amount of preparation/independent learning time as the amount of formalized instruction (1,500 minutes). Typically, a three-Semester Credit hour course meets for three (3) Contact Hours (three 50-minute sessions or two 75-minute sessions) per week for 15 to 16 weeks of a semester. In total, the three-Semester Credit hour course meets for 45 to 48 Contact Hours.

(8) “Student Information System” or “SIS” refers to a comprehensive software system that processes and stores courses, the schedule of courses, student registration and student grades earned. NEOMED uses Banner.

(D) POLICY STATEMENT

(1) NEOMED awards Semester Credit based on an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement.

(2) NEOMED operates on a sixteen (16)-week semester calendar, inclusive of examinations and assessments, however, examinations and assessments are not calculated in credit hour calculations for courses. Dedicated Preparation/Independent Learning and Self-Directed Study time is also not calculated in credit hour calculations for courses.

(3) Instructional Methods and credits hours are calculated as follows:

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- (a) Lecture, Laboratory, Seminar, Small Group Discussion, Flipped Classroom with Peer Instruction, Independent Study, and Research courses
 - (i) Involves formalized instruction, conducted on- or off-campus in which the instructor(s) present an educational experience to students, applying any combination of instructional methods.
 - (a) This is applicable when the faculty/instructor(s) bears the primary responsibility for instructional activity and is directly involved with each student in the class.
 - (b) One (1) Semester Credit is awarded for each fifteen (15) contact hours of formalized instruction and anticipates an additional thirty (30) hours of Preparation/Independent Learning Time or Self-Directed Study Time.
- (b) Internship and Practicum
 - (i) Involves an experience coordinated by NEOMED faculty, who assists the student in planning the experience and assigns the course grade in consultation with the supervisor/employer.
 - (a) One (1) Semester Credit is awarded for each week (five (5) days) or 40 to 45 hours of on-task activity in any combination of formalized instruction and student independent learning/research activities.
- (c) Clerkship, Clinical Rotation, Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experience (IPPE), Advance Pharmacy Practice Experience (APPE)
 - (i) Applies only to the Medical and Pharmacy programs during which students are required to participate in clinical sciences, patient care and/or pharmacy practice experiences. These experiences expose students to all facets of medicine and pharmacy practice in a variety of clinical and/or practical settings.

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- (ii) Exposes students to diagnostic and therapeutic skills, with experiences in patient management and examine the ethical dilemmas of contemporary medicine.
- (iii) Requires faculty to regularly provide special teaching sessions appropriate to the learning level of Medicine and Pharmacy students.
 - (a) One (1) Semester Credit is awarded for each week (5 days) or 40 to 45 hours of on-task activity in any combination of formalized instruction and student independent learning/research activities.
- (d) Distance Learning
 - (i) Provides teaching/learning activities which may be synchronous or asynchronous and may be a hybrid of delivery modes; specific online activities may be required.
 - (ii) Calculates Semester Credit hours as the equivalent amount of instruction and student effort leading to equivalent learning outcomes as required for on-campus instructional delivery as defined above (see 3 a).
- (e) Guidelines for Calculating Semester Credit
 - (i) Bases student learning outcome equivalencies on documented qualitative and quantitative expectations for:
 - (a) Time required of students to complete assigned learning activities;
 - (b) Time required of students to read and understand content developed by faculty/course instructor, excluding time required to read assignments in a course syllabus;
 - (c) Time required of faculty/course instructor to respond to student questions received through electronic mediums (e.g., email, online classroom, discussion boards, chat rooms); and

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- (d) Time required of faculty/instructor and students to participate in online conference activities.
- (ii) Awards Semester Credit in half (.50) credit increments utilizing the following rounding guidelines:

Semester Credit Fraction	Semester Credit Rounding Guideline
.1 through .3	Round down to 0
.4 through .7	Round to .5
.8 through .99	Round to 1.0

- (iii) Reviews of course proposals and schedules should be made by Curriculum Committee(s) to ensure appropriate contact time for credit value proposed and/or awarded.
- (iv) Requires the Office of the Registrar to ensure that appropriate credit values are recorded to student transcripts based on courses approved by the Curriculum Committees of each college for each program offered.

(E) REVIEW OF POLICY AND PROCEDURE STATEMENTS

- (1) Periodic review of the Policy and its application by Academic Affairs, the Office of the Registrar and each Curriculum Committee are required to comply with Semester Credit calculations for federal financial aid/Title IV funding and for compliance with each of our accreditation bodies.
- (2) The Office of the Registrar will assign a review date and primary reviewer. The responsibility of the primary reviewer is to invite comments or proposed revisions to the policy from relevant stakeholders. The Policy will be reviewed and revised as necessary at least every five (5) years and concurrently with accreditation review cycles.