



## National University Credit Hour Policy

National University awards credit in quarter units. The academic year is divided into four 12-week quarters, each comprised of three 4-week classes. Under the current policy, 4.5 units of credit are awarded for courses.

### Onsite Courses

A unit of credit is based upon the hours of classroom instruction for each course and the hours that a typical student reasonably should expect to devote preparing for each hour of class.

#### *Undergraduate Courses (100-499)*

An undergraduate course awards 4.5 quarter units and requires 45 hours of classroom instruction. An undergraduate student is expected to devote two hours or more in outside preparation for each hour of class. Undergraduate courses typically are scheduled for a 4-week period, generally for 4.5 hours on two weekdays and 4.5 hours on two Saturdays during the month. Laboratory courses are designated for 1.5 hours of credit with contact hours calculated at a ratio of three to one.

#### Lecture

Quarter Units	Contact Hours	Time Out of Class
4.5	45	90
3.0	30	60

#### Laboratory/Workshop/Studio

Quarter Units	Contact Hours
1.5	45

#### *Graduate Courses (600-699)*

A graduate course that awards 4.5 quarter units requires 40 hours of classroom instruction and a graduate student is expected to devote a minimum of three hours of outside preparation for each hour of class. Graduate courses typically are scheduled for a 4-week period, generally 4.5 hours two weekday nights with a 4-hour session on one Saturday.

#### Lecture

Quarter Units	Contact Hours
4.5	40

#### Laboratory/Workshop

Quarter Units	Contact Hours
1.5	40

In courses designated as 500-level, students are expected to meet credit hours for the degree level of the program in which they are enrolled. For transition programs, 500-level courses are considered graduate-level and must meet the graduate-level credit hour policy.

### Distance Education Courses

Distance education means education that uses one or more of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (4) to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and

substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies may include--

- (1) The internet;
- (2) One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices;
- (3) Audioconferencing; or
- (4) Video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if the cassettes, DVDs, or CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (3).

(Department of Education - [https://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation\\_pg12.html](https://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg12.html))

Programs in which fifty percent (50%) or more of the coursework is delivered online shall meet the substantive change requirements related to distance education programs as established by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC).

The following activities are examples of contact hours in the online environment:

- Discussion boards – interactions with the instructor and classmates on relevant topics
- Presenting content – through online video presentations, oral reports, etc. synchronously or asynchronously
- Watching recorded lectures or other educational videos – developed by the instructor or utilizing open-source educational videos related to course learning outcomes
- Peer collaboration and evaluation – working in teams in the online environment to create material or solve problems; peer-review and feedback of other students' work based on a rubric or set of criteria

#### ***Undergraduate Distance Education Courses (100-499)***

An undergraduate course awards 4.5 quarter units and requires 45 hours of contact time with the above outlined activities in the online course shell. The student is expected to spend two hours or more out of class for each contact hour (completing assignments, readings, and preparing for in-course activities).

Quarter Units	Contact Hours	Time Out of Class
4.5	45	90

#### ***Graduate Distance Education Courses (600-699)***

A graduate course that awards 4.5 quarter units requires 40 hours of contact time with the above outlined activities in the online course shell. The student is expected to spend three hours or more out of class for each contact hour (completing assignments, readings, and preparing for in-course activities).

Quarter Units	Contact Hours	Time Out of Class
4.5	40	120

### **Hybrid 1 (50/50) Courses**

A hybrid program shall be defined as any WSCUC approved online program offered in a combination of online and onsite modalities. If the program is approved, then up to 50% of contact hours are onsite at an approved NU campus (or "approved offsite" location) and up to 50% of contact hours are in the online course shell. A hybrid course includes computer technologies and requires Broadband internet access to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously.

***Undergraduate Hybrid 1 Courses (100-499)***

An undergraduate course that awards 4.5 quarter units requires 22.5 hours of classroom instruction and 22.5 hours of interaction within the online course shell. An undergraduate student is expected to devote a minimum of 2 hours or more in outside preparation for each hour of classroom instruction and online course shell interaction (completing assignments, readings, and preparing for in-course activities).

Quarter Units	Contact Hours (onsite)	Contact Hours (online)	Time Out of Class
4.5	22.5	22.5	90

***Graduate Hybrid 1 Courses (600-699)***

A graduate course that awards 4.5 quarter units requires 40 hours of classroom instruction and a graduate student is expected to devote a minimum of three hours of outside preparation for each hour of class (completing assignments, readings, and preparing for in-course activities).

Quarter Units	Contact Hours (onsite)	Contact Hours (online)	Time Out of Class
4.5	20	20	120

**Hybrid 2 (80/20) Courses**

Onsite programs may offer courses where up to 80% of contact hours are onsite at an approved NU campus (or “approved offsite” location) and up to 20% of contact hours are in the online course shell. A Hybrid 2 course includes computer technologies and requires Broadband internet access to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously.

***Undergraduate Hybrid 2 Courses (100-499)***

An undergraduate course that awards 4.5 quarter units requires 36 hours of classroom instruction and 9 hours of online interaction. An undergraduate student is expected to devote two hours or more in outside preparation for each hour of class or online interaction.

Quarter Units	Contact Hours (onsite)	Contact Hours (online)	Time Out of Class
4.5	36	9	90

***Graduate Hybrid 2 Courses (600-699)***

A graduate course that awards 4.5 quarter units requires 32 hours of classroom instruction and 8 hours of online interaction. A graduate student is expected to devote a minimum of three hours of outside preparation for each hour of class or online interaction.

Quarter Units	Contact Hours (onsite)	Contact Hours (online)	Time Out of Class
4.5	32	8	120

**Summer Intensive Courses**

A course offered in a term of less than 4 weeks shall contain the same contact hours, preparation time, content, and requirements as the same course offered over a 4-week term. The approval of the Department Chair, School Dean, and Provost shall be required to schedule all short-term courses.

**Fieldwork, Internship, and Practica Courses**

One unit of credit hour is typically assigned to at least 40 hours of internship work throughout the course of one term. However, depending on the academic program, the number of required hours may be governed or regulated by that particular program’s board of accreditation (e.g. American Bar Association, American

Psychological Association, Board of Registered Nursing, Department of Education, Radiation Therapy, etc.). Practical training courses may take the form of internship, practica, or residencies, depending on the academic discipline in which a student is enrolled. This training may be accomplished in University facilities, or approved off-campus locations, depending on the specialty being pursued. Practical training experiences require significantly more time than a regular course.

### **Nursing Clinical Courses**

Nursing Clinical courses may be scheduled for 8 weeks to accommodate concurrent scheduling of the theory course and the clinical course. A clinical course requires 3 times the contact hours. A 3.5 quarter unit nursing clinical courses require 105 contact hours. A 4.5 quarter unit nursing clinical course requires 135 contact hours.

### **Independent or Guided Study Courses**

One unit of credit hour is assigned to a minimum of 30 hours of work for an undergraduate course and 36 hours for a graduate course, including, discussion with a faculty, time studying and doing homework or research per week throughout a four-week term. The academic reasons justifying why the subject must be pursued in a course of Independent Study must be approved by the faculty lead, the department chair and the dean.

Students in guided study courses work independently under the guidance of an instructor and units vary based on individualized course work. Guided study courses that are listed for variable units must specify how unit value will be assigned. Requirements should be clearly delineated for each unit value offered.

### **Other Academic Activities (e.g. labs, studio)**

One unit credit hour is assigned for 10 or more of laboratory work per week for the duration for the course.

### **Maximum Allotment of Units**

Courses should not award more than 4.5 quarter units. Exceptions are limited. Review by the graduate council or undergraduate council is required and approval of the Provost is required.

### **Periodic Review of Standard Courses and Other Academic Activities**

A number of processes under the purview of the Office of the Provost contribute to the periodic review of the of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable:

- Course development (and re-development) checklist – a review of the credit hour policy against course syllabi and online course shells in Blackboard (when in the online or hybrid format) is completed as part of the course development and re-development process.
- Syllabi – course master syllabi contain a general statement of student expectations based on the degree-level and modality of the course. Each term, instructors include a table on the syllabi defining the activities to be completed during the period of the course, and the specific time allocations associated with each.
- Five-Year Program Review – built into the Five-Year Review is a review of all course syllabi against the credit hour policy to ensure accuracy and reliability.