

Credit Hour Policy

The College has adopted the following United States Department of Education definition of a credit hour: 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 sixteen 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 one of this definition for other activities as established by an institution, including independent study, laboratory work, internships, practicum, studio work, and other academic work leading toward the award of credit hours.

Every course meeting specific academic learning objectives determines proof of fulfillment of academic credit. These objectives are developed to reflect course content and the number of academic credits awarded. Assignments are developed based on academic learning objectives for the course and are assessed according to assessment methods used at Missouri Valley College. The intended learning outcomes and assessments showing evidence of achievement are annotated and explained for each course on a standardized syllabus. All courses, whether face-to-face, online, intersession, 8, 12, or 15-week formats must adhere to the learning objectives spelled out on the course syllabus. In order to earn the credit for the course, students are required to meet the learning objectives.

Regardless of the length of the course (e.g. full semester, 8- or 12-week session, intersession) and regardless of the modality in which the course is offered (face-to-face, online, hybrid, etc.) there must be a minimum of 37.5 hours of estimated learning time associated with each semester hour credit that is assigned to the class. This is an estimate of the amount of time that a reasonably prepared college student will need to successfully complete the course.

Estimated learning time is gauged by the time spent with learning activities such as the following:

- Attending face-to-face classes
- Participating in other relevant class-based learning activities (e.g. lab work, field trips, etc.)
- Completing class assignments (e.g. working on assignments, papers, projects, presentations, performances)
- Posting material in the college's learning management system (e.g. participation in online discussion forums)
- Reading and viewing assigned materials and materials relating to course content.
- Rehearsing or practicing performance skills
- Preparing for and taking course assessments.