

Credit Hour Practices and Procedures

At Danville Area Community College the unit of academic credit awarded to students upon successful completion of approved courses is a semester hour of credit. ([Board Policy 2003.0](#)) The unit of credit must meet the minimum requirements established by the Illinois Community College Board. Section 1501.309 of the [Illinois Community College Board's Administrative Rules](#) establishes the definition of a credit hour as an expected 45 hours of combined classroom/laboratory and study time for each semester hour. Various instruction methods are expected to follow the guidelines below:

- **Lecture Courses:** Courses with students participating in lecture/discussion oriented instruction shall be assigned one semester credit hour or equivalent for each 15 classroom contact hours, at a minimum, of instruction per semester or equivalent. It is assumed that two hours of outside study will be invested for each classroom contact hour.
- **Laboratory Courses:** Courses in which students participate in laboratory/clinical-laboratory oriented instruction shall be assigned one semester credit hour or equivalent for each 30-45 classroom contact hours, at a minimum, of instruction per semester or equivalent. It is assumed that one hour of outside study will be invested for each two laboratory contact hours.
- **Clinical Practicum Courses:** Courses in which students participate in clinical practical experiences shall receive one semester credit hour or equivalent each 30-60 contact hours, at a minimum, per semester or equivalent. It is expected that one hour of outside study time will be invested for each two clinical practicum contact hours.
- **Internship Courses:** Courses in which students participate in nonclinical internship, practicum, or on-the-job supervised instruction, shall receive one semester credit hour or equivalent for each 75-149 contact hours, at a minimum, per semester credit hour or equivalent.

The ICCB System Rules Manual clarifies that a *Contact Hour* means instructional time based on a 50-60 minute clock hour of instructional activity that may include classroom, online, laboratory, clinical or work-based instruction or any combination of those instructional methods.

The ICCB System Rules Manual further clarifies that a *Credit Hour* means 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:

- One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of 2 hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately 15 weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or 10 to 12 weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different period of time; or documented student learning outcomes and evidence of student achievement resulting from a program provided through an alternative delivery method that demonstrates equivalency to those competencies achieved through traditional classroom delivery; or
- At least an equivalent amount of student work as required to achieve intended learning outcomes or competencies as verified by evidence of student achievement for other

academic activities established by the institution, including prior learning assessment, laboratory work, internships, practical, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of each credit hour.

These guidelines adhere to the rules and guidelines established by the [U.S. Department of Education](#) and the [Higher Learning Commission](#).

Credit Hour Assignment

DACC follows the ICCB guidelines for the assignment of credit hours as illustrated in the chart below.

Contact Hours/Assumed Outside Study Hours per 1 Semester Credit Hour by Type of Instruction at Danville Area Community College

TYPE OF INSTRUCTION	CONTACT HOURS FOR SEMESTER	ASSUMED OUTSIDE HOURS OF STUDY FOR SEMESTER	SEMESTER CREDITS
LECTURE-DISCUSSION	15	30	1 semester credit
HYBRID (50/50)	7.5	37.5	1 semester
ONLINE DELIVERY		45	1 semester
LABORATORY/CLINICAL-LAB ORIENTED	30-45	15 outside for 30 lab	1 semester credit
CLINICAL PRACTICUM	30-60	15 outside for 30 lab	1 semester credit
NON-CLINICAL INTERNSHIPS, PRACTICUM, OR ON-THE-JOB INSTRUCTION	75-149		1 semester

In traditional face-to-face courses where direct instruction is the primary mode of learning, 15 hours (750 minutes) will be faculty directed in the classroom and 30 hours (1800 minutes) will be student preparation outside of the classroom for one semester credit hour.

An equivalent amount of work is required in hybrid and online courses where direct instruction is not the primary mode of learning. Direct instruction in hybrid classes varies. The work should be distributed depending upon the percentage of time that is faculty directed and the percentage of time that is student preparation outside of the classroom. For example, in hybrid classes that are approximately fifty percent direct instruction and fifty percent online, 7 ½ half hours (375 minutes) will be faculty directed in the classroom and 37.5 hours (2175 minutes) will be student preparation outside of the classroom for one semester credit hour.

In classes delivered by distance education only, up to 45 hours (2550 minutes) may be student preparation outside of the classroom for one semester credit hour. Credit in an asynchronous online course is based on the expectation that students enrolled in the course must achieve the same course objectives and produce an equivalent amount of work as represented in the definition of a credit hour.

Laboratory courses are assigned one semester credit hour for every 30-45 contact hours, with the expectation being students will invest one hour of outside study time for each two

laboratory contact hours. The minimum number of contact hours required for one semester credit of a course with a laboratory is 2250 for the lecture and 1500 for the laboratory, a total of 3750 direct contact hours.

Clinical practicums are assigned one semester credit hour for every 30-60 contact hours, with the expectation being students will invest one hour of outside study time for each contact hours.

Students who participate in nonclinical internship, practicum or on-the-job supervised instruction receive one semester credit hour for each 75-149 contact hours per semester.

Danville Area Community College follows the standard academic calendar with 30 weeks of instruction for the academic year, 15 weeks in the fall and 15 weeks in the spring, with one additional week each semester for final examinations. The college also offers accelerated sessions (8 and 12 weeks) within the regular fall and spring semesters, 3-week sessions between fall and spring and between spring and summer sessions, and summer sessions that vary from as few as 5 weeks up to 12 weeks in length.

Regardless of the number of weeks a course meets, the content and learning outcomes are the same. Courses must meet the required contact time if they are face-to-face classes (15 hours/750 minutes per credit hour) and the students are expected to put in the same amount of time as they would for the same class offered in the same format during the regular 15-week semester format (i.e. 30 hours/1800 minutes per credit hour in a face-to-face class). Students are expected to invest 37.5 hours/2175 minutes per credit hour in a hybrid class that is 50 percent direct instruction and 50 percent online, and 45 hours/2550 minutes per credit hour in an online only class.

Danville Area Community College offers classes on its main campus, at the Danville Correctional Center, at the Hoopeston Higher Learning Center, and on various high school campuses throughout the college district. Regardless of the location where the course is offered, it must adhere to the same content and learning outcomes as the course offered in the face-to-face, 15 week format on the campus.

The college assures that all sections of a course bearing the same state prefix, number, and title adhere to the same content and learning outcomes, no matter where, when, how or how long they meet. This is accomplished by requiring a common syllabus for all sections of a course. ([Course Syllabus Template](#)). Faculty are also required to use a standardized course outline ([Course Outline Template](#)) that incorporates the learning outcomes from the required syllabus. They are also required to complete credit hour verification worksheets for the courses they teach to assure that each course meets the requirements for the number of credit hours awarded for that class. These forms are discussed below.

Credit Hour Verification

Under the supervision of the Academic Deans and the Executive Vice President of Instruction & Student Services, the faculty develop, maintain, and revise the curriculum, with the President having final approval of the curriculum. Assignment of credit hours for courses is based on the amount of time it is anticipated a student will have to invest to achieve the learning outcomes for that course as well as best practice.

Existing courses are routinely evaluated for adherence to the federal credit hour regulations during the ICCB Program Review (completed on a five-year rotation). All new courses, regardless of the delivery method, are developed by faculty. The Academic Deans take new course development proposals to the Academic Affairs Committee and the Office of Instruction for approval.

Academic Affairs is charged with following the policy on credit hours in their review and recommendation of all courses and curricula and in certifying that the expected student learning for the course meets the credit hour standard. Final approval of all courses, new or revised, rests with the Executive Vice President of Instruction & Student Services.

Approved courses are sent to the Institutional Effectiveness Office for submission to the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). Once approval has been granted by ICCB, the Institutional Effectiveness Office disseminates the information to update the College Catalog and student information systems. The Transfer Articulation Coordinator submits transfer courses to four year institutions for their review and also to IAI (Illinois Articulation Initiative) when appropriate.

To verify that courses meet the same credit hour assignment regardless of where, when, how, or how long the course is offered, the college reviews the direct contact and assumed outside hours of study for all courses, as well as the assigned seat time for face-to-face classes offered for varying numbers of weeks.

In Fall 2017 the college implemented a process using a form to assure all courses require the appropriate levels of direct instruction and/or assumed outside hours of study to meet the credit hours assigned to them, no matter where, when, how, or how long they are offered. Faculty are required to fill out a [Credit Hour Verification Form](#) for every course they teach. The form is fillable and calculates the number of hours of direct instruction and the number of assumed outside hours of study. They are provided a link to the [Rice Course Workload Estimator](#). This tool provides guidelines on what is an appropriate amount of time to attach to a variety of activities, such as reading, studying for a test, researching, and preparing a presentation.

Faculty must review each mode of delivery (face-to-face, online, hybrid) and every time-frame offered (15-week, 12-week, 3-week, etc.). Faculty can quickly identify any courses that may need additional instruction or activities, or courses that may require more than is appropriate for the number of credit hours awarded for them. [Examples of completed forms](#)

The Academic Deans review the Credit Hour Verification Forms and address any issues or concerns that arise as a result of the information provided. The forms are kept on file in the Dean's offices.

To view it another way, here are examples for a 3 credit hour course that is offered in a traditional 15 week face-to-face format, a compressed 3 week face-to-face format, and an online format that could be offered for any number of weeks. Regardless of the format, the students are held to the same standard in terms of the time they are expected to be engaged in activities that will lead to their being able to achieve the learning outcomes for that course.

A Traditional Course Example:

A 15 week face-to-face, 3 credit course meets for 3 hours per week giving 45 hours of direct instruction. A typical student spends 6 hours per week for 15 weeks outside of class doing a variety of things, such as studying for tests, completing homework, reviewing class notes, and conducting research for a paper, project or presentation totaling 90 hours. Combined there are 135 hours of learning time for the course, the minimal threshold for a 3 credit hour course.

A Compressed Course Example:

A 3 week face-to-face, 3 credit hour course meets for 15 hours per week giving 45 hours of direct instruction. A typical student spends 30 hours per week for 3 weeks outside of class doing a variety of things, such as studying for tests, completing homework, reviewing class notes, and conducting research for a paper, project, or presentation totaling 90 hours. Combined there are 135 hours of learning time for the course, the minimal threshold for a 3 credit hour course.

An Online Course Example:

A student in a 3 credit hour course taught online, no matter how long the course meets, is expected to engage with the course material a minimum of 135 hours. In the example that follows, there are 136 hours of learning time for the course, which meets the minimal threshold for a 3 credit hour course.

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Measurement of Learning Time</i>	<i>Total Time</i>
<i>Reading</i>	800 pages @ 10 pages/hour	80 hours
<i>Online Videos</i>	14 videos @ 30 min/video	7 hours
<i>Discussion Posts</i>	14 posts @ 30 min/post	7 hours
<i>Discussion Responses</i>	12 posts @ 5 min/response	2 hour
<i>Research</i>	14 hours research, 5 hours writing, 1 hour in Writing Center or online	20 hours
<i>Paper/Presentation</i>	tutoring	
<i>Studying for Tests</i>	2 tests @ 5 hours each	10 hours
<i>Quizzes</i>	12 quizzes @ 30 min/quiz	6 hours
<i>Tests</i>	2 tests @ 2 hour/test	4 hours
TOTAL TIME =		136 hours

The 136 hours of expected learning time exceeds slightly the threshold for a credit hour course.

To verify that face-to-face courses meet the required seat time for the credit hour assigned, no matter how long the class meets (15-week, 5-week, etc.), the Academic Deans review the class schedules prior to the start of each semester to ensure that all classes are scheduled for the number of minutes that correspond to the credits assigned, a minimum of 750 minutes (or 12.5 hours) for one semester credit hour, or the minimum minutes for a laboratory or clinical format. For example, a three credit hour lecture class will meet for 2250 minutes per semester. A four credit hour class with a lab will meet for 3750 minutes per semester. The Registrar conducts a final review and approval of the class schedules.

Example of a 3 Credit Hour Course Offered a Varied Number of Weeks and Times per Week*

Number of Weeks and Minutes per Week	Number of Class Meetings and Minutes Per Meeting	Meeting Times	Meeting Days
15 weeks (150 minutes per week)	3 times per week/50 minutes per meeting	10:00 am-10:50 am	MWF
	2 times per week/75 minutes per meeting	10:00 am-11:15 am	TTH
	1 time per week/150 minutes per meeting	6:00 pm-8:40 pm	T
12 weeks (187.50 minutes per week)	3 times per week/62.50 minutes per meeting	10:00 am-11:05 am	MWF
	2 times per week/93.75 minutes per meeting	10:00 am -11:35 am	TTH
	1 time per week/187.50 minutes per meeting	6:00 pm -9:20 pm	T
10 weeks (225 minutes per week)	3 times per week/75 minutes per meeting	10:00 am -11:15 am	MWF
	2 times per week/112.50 minutes per meeting	10:00 am -11:55 am	TTH
	1 time per week/225 minutes per meeting	6:00 pm-9:45 pm	T
8 weeks (282 minutes per week)	3 times per week/95 minutes per meeting	10:00 am-11:35 am	MWF
	2 times per week/141 minutes per meeting	10:00 am- 12:25 pm	TTH
	1 time per week/282 minutes per meeting	5:00 pm-9:45 pm	T
7 weeks (321 minutes per week)	3 times per week/107 minutes per meeting	10:00 am-11:50 am	MWF
	2 times per week/161 minutes per meeting	10:00 am-12:45 pm	TTH
	1 time per week/321 minutes per meeting	8:30 am – 3:00 pm (70 min lunch & breaks)	T
3 weeks (750 minutes per week)	5 times per week/150 minutes per meeting	8:30 am – 11:30am	MTWTHF
	2 times per week/375 minutes per meeting	8:00 am-3:00 pm (45 min lunch & breaks)	TTH

**Minimum of 2250 minutes of direct instruction required for 3 credit hour classes meeting face-to-face*

Example of a 4 Credit Hour Course with Lab Offered a Varied Number of Weeks*

Number of Weeks and Minutes per Week	Number of Lecture and Lab Meetings and Minutes per Meeting	Meeting Times	Meeting Days
15 weeks (250 minutes per week)	3 lectures per week/50 minutes per lecture	9:00 am-9:50 am	MWF
	1 lab per week/100 minutes per lab	11:00 am-12:50 pm	T
12 weeks (315 minutes per week)	2 lectures per week/100 minutes per lecture	9:00 am-10:40 am	TTH
	1 lab per week/160 minutes per lab	9:00 am -11:40 am	M
7 weeks (540 minutes per week)	2 lectures per week/180 minutes per lecture	8:00 am-10:30 am	TTH
	2 labs per week/110 minutes per lab	11:30 am- 1:20 pm	TTH

**Minimum of 3750 hours of direct instruction required for 4 credit hour classes with a lab meeting face-to-face*