

Title: Determination of Credit Hours for Courses

Policy Abstract: This policy addresses determining the awarding of academic credit for courses in compliance with the SACSCOC Credit Hours Policy Statement and Federal Regulations.

Responsible Office: Provost's Office

Official: Provost

Contacts(s): Interim Provost-VPAA, Laura Stultz, 226-4660 lstultz@bsc.edu
Interim Associate Provost & SACSCOC Liaison, Kent Andersen, 226-4679,
kanderse@bsc.edu

Applies to: Faculty and the awarding of academic credit for courses, contracts, internships, teaching experiences

Effective Date: February 1, 2014

Revision Date(s): January 20, 2019; August 11, 2023

Introduction and Background: Birmingham-Southern College adopted the unit as its standard for academic credit in 1968. A unit is the equivalent of four-semester hours or six-quarter hours. Explanations of the unit system and the amount of credit awarded for specific courses are recorded in the *College Catalog* and on student transcripts. Determining the amount of credit awarded for courses and individual learning contracts falls under the purview of the faculty.

Purpose: The policy ensures integrity and consistency in awarding academic credit for courses at the College and compliance with SACSCOC *Principles of Accreditation*.

Definitions: The basic measure of academic credit at Birmingham-Southern College is the "unit," which reflects time spent in the classroom, lab, field, and/or studio, and time for completing course-related assignments. A unit is the equivalent of four semester hours or six quarter hours. Each one-unit course requires a minimum of 180 academic hours (a minimum of 150 clock hours or 9,000 minutes) of estimated student work.

Per federal regulations, a credit hour is equivalent to a minimum of one hour in-class (defined as at least 50 minutes of instruction) and a minimum of two hours outside of class for a period of fifteen weeks, or the equivalent of a minimum of 2,250 minutes per credit hour, or 9,000 minutes minimum for a unit (four credit hours).

Applicable Regulations:

SACSCOC Policy on Credit Hours

SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation Standards (2018):

Standard 9.2 Program Length

Standard 10.4 Academic Governance

Standard 10.7 Policies for Awarding Credit

Standard 10.8 Evaluating and Awarding Academic Credit

Standard 10.9 Cooperative Academic Arrangements

Details: All courses or projects awarded credit are subject to review by the appropriate faculty committee or qualified personnel. While course lengths and meeting times vary, all courses, internships, or projects awarded credit require an appropriate minimum amount of time to fulfill the designated amount of credit (e.g., 1 unit equals 9,000 minutes of work). Fall and spring terms are thirteen weeks; January term is four weeks; summer terms run four to eight weeks.

The Curriculum and Standards Committee reviews courses offered during the fall, spring, or summer terms. The Contract Learning Committee reviews for-credit individualized student learning contracts for all terms. The Exploration Term and Study Travel committee reviews projects awarded credit during the January Exploration Term. Credit equivalence for on-line or hybrid courses follows the same procedure as for face-to-face courses.

In all cases, faculty instructors complete the Academic Course Credit Verification Form that indicates the equivalence of 9,000 minutes of work for the course (150 clock hours or the equivalent of 180 academic hours). Transfer and transient courses are converted into units and overseen by the Degree Audit Specialist, the Provost, Division Chairs, and program coordinators.

References:

BSC College Catalogs, [BSC College Catalogs](#)

Contract Learning & January Exploration Term Proposal Forms: [Forms \(bsc.edu\)](#)

Course Credit Verification Form below and available at: [Academic Course Credit Verification Form](#) (requires login to Curriculum and Standards Moodle Page, [Curriculum-and-Standards-Committee: Forms for New Course/Major/Minor and Changes to Existing Course/Major/Minor \(bsc.edu\)](#))

SACSCOC, Principles of Accreditation 2018, [2018PrinciplesOfAccreditation.pdf \(sacscoc.org\)](#)

SACSCOC, Credit Hour Statement Policy [Institutional Degrees and Credits \(sacscoc.org\)](#)

Birmingham-Southern College Course Credit Policy and Verification Form

Please make sure that all projects, readings, and other assignments are listed here and on the syllabus. Please verify that your course meets the unit calculation equivalence below:

1 Unit course requires a minimum of 9,000 minutes (150 clock hours; 180 academic hours)

.5 Unit course requires a minimum of 4,500 minutes (75 clock hours; 90 academic hours)

.25 Unit course requires a minimum of 2,250 minutes (37.5 clock hours; 45 academic hours)

Unit Credit Hour Calculator

Course Prefix, Number, and Title

Date Submitted:

Course Unit:

Direct Interaction

*List the scheduled minutes for direct interaction. Example: 60-minute class, 3 days week has 41 sessions which 2460 minutes. *Do not use a comma when entering minute totals.*

All scheduled class minutes

All scheduled lab/studio minutes

All scheduled finals

Other required direct interaction (such as field trips)

Direct Interaction Subtotal

Major Projects

Description and estimated completion time for average student (in minutes). Do not use a comma in subtotal.

List Major Projects in this course and average completion time:

Projects Subtotal

Need help? [Click here to use the writing estimator tool.](#)

Reading Assignments

Describe the type of assignment and the estimated completion time for the average student. Do not use a comma in subtotal.

List reading assignments in this course and estimated completion time for average student in minutes:

Reading Assignment Subtotal

Need help? [Click here to use the reading estimator tool.](#)

Other Activities

Provide a description for other course activities (e.g., exam prep) and the estimated completion time for the average student in minutes. Do not use a comma in subtotal.

List other activities in this course:

Other Activities Subtotal

Course Totals

Confirm subtotals and course totals from previous sections.

Direct Interaction _____

Major Projects _____

Reading Assignments _____

Other Activities _____

TOTAL FOR COURSE _____

Academic Course Credit Declaration

Certify that this course meets the requirements for one unit of academic credit (or the appropriate partial unit equivalency) as outlined in the attached Unite Credit Hour Calculator.

Please note the Exploration Term projects and contracted courses and academic experiences already record the minimum required hours of student learning engagement in either the E-Term proposal or the contract.

Course Prefix, Number, and Title

Faculty Name

Email

Date

Approved by: (To be completed by department chair/ program coordinator only)

Date: