

## Credit Hour Policy

**Government Standard:** This policy defines credit hour at Concordia Theological Seminary in accordance with applicable federal and state regulations. The primary regulation governing this policy is the Federal Credit Hour Definition (34CFR 600.2 [11/1/2010]) which states the following:

**Credit hour:** Except as provided in 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (l), 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<sup>1</sup> of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen 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 1. of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including internships, practica, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

**Policy:** In the residential, online, and hybrid classrooms at Concordia Theological Seminary, credit hours are amassed in a course through student-to-instructor interaction, student-to-student interaction, MyClasses (Moodle) activities, contact with course-specific content, assignments, assigned videos, and other activities. No matter the length of the course meeting time in weeks or the amount of face-to-face instruction in the course, students can expect to devote at least 30 hours of effort for each credit hour earned.

Direct Instruction – One credit hour must involve the equivalent of ten hours of direct faculty instruction (in-class, face-to-face instruction or its equivalent).

Out of Class Student Work – In addition to the direct instruction standard defined, one credit hour must also involve at least twenty hours of student work accomplished outside of the classroom.

The following guidelines are provided as minimum thresholds for the various types of learning experiences that are a part of the CTSFW curriculum. The guidelines provided represent minimums and individual courses may require greater hourly requirements per credit hour. For those classes that involve traditional faculty directed instruction in a face-to-face scenario, one “hour” of instruction consists of the normal 55 minute sessions defined above. Direct faculty instruction can include alternate modalities to in-class, face-to-face instruction.

Residential Courses: One credit hour consists of the equivalent of 10 hours of direct faculty instruction and a minimum of 20 hours of out of class student work for a combined total of 30 hours during the instructional period. Direct faculty instruction can include alternate modalities to in-class, face-to-face.

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<sup>1</sup> One hour is not necessarily intended to represent 60 minutes of instruction in this context. This was noted in the Federal Register (Vol. 75, No. 209, p. 66846), “We believe that it is unnecessary to define one hour as either 50 minutes or one clock hour.”

Independent study, Thesis, Comprehensive Exam, and Dissertation courses: One credit hour consists of the equivalent of at least 30 hours of individual work, which may include direct instruction or student study during the instructional period.

Online courses: One credit hour consists of the equivalent of at least 30 hours of combined direct faculty interaction via instructor-led asynchronous or synchronous online learning activities and additional student to student, student to instructor, and individual learning activities during the instructional period. For existing traditional courses that are also taught online, the student learning outcomes and credit hours should be the same regardless of modality.

Hybrid courses: Are courses, which utilize a combination of two instructional modalities, namely face-to-face faculty instruction and online, instructor-led asynchronous or synchronous learning activities. In this case, one credit hour consists of the equivalent of at least 10 hours of direct faculty instruction via face-to-face and instructor-led asynchronous or synchronous online learning activities and a minimum of 20 hours of out of class student work for a combined total of 30 hours during the instructional period.

Deaconess Practicum courses: One credit hour consists of at least 30 hours of faculty interaction via instructor-led asynchronous or synchronous online learning activities and additional student to student, student to instructor, and individual learning activities, and supervised diakonal activities during the instructional period.

Vicarage and Internship courses: Typically consists of 12-months of supervised ministerial or diakonal activities that average 45 hours per week which far exceeds the minimum hours for the three credit hours awarded.

### **Assignment of Credit**

Every course syllabus will indicate the number of academic credit hours a student will earn upon successful completion of the course. Each academic credit hour requires a minimum of 30 hours of student work over the duration of the course. The number of credit hours assigned to a course correlates directly to the anticipated number of hours students are expected to devote to the course, including but not limited to: classroom attendance, time spent online for course content and discussion, reading, writing, research, preparation for course activities, final exams, and other appropriate elements related to achieving the goals of the course.

### **Notification to Students**

Each course syllabus shall contain a notification of the Credit Hour policy summary:

In the face-to-face, online, and hybrid classrooms at Concordia Theological Seminary, credit hours are amassed in a course through student-to-instructor interaction, student-to-student interaction, MyClasses (Moodle) activities, contact with course-specific content, assignments, assigned videos, and other activities. No matter the length of the course meeting time in weeks or the amount of face-to-face instruction in the course, students can expect to devote at least 30 hours of effort for each credit hour earned.