CREDIT HOURS AND CREDIT LOAD

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges has established rules for how community and technical colleges determine course credit hours. These rules are based on the type of instructor contact hours and the ratio of those hours to the number of weeks in a quarter. "Credit hours" are defined as the unit by which an institution measures its course work. The number of credit hours assigned to a course is defined by the number of hours per week in class and the number of hours per week in out of class preparation. Clark College uses these rules to establish credit hours assigned to each course offered by the College. Credit loads are determined based on the credit hours for which a student enrolls.

Faculty members are charged with assessing student learning outcomes associated with course credit.

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 fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different time; or
2. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in the above paragraph for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practical's, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

The following definitions have been established to guide instructional practice, with each definition equating to a minimum of three weekly hours of student's effort per credit.

Credit hours for three categories of instruction are:

- **Theory:** Students are engaged with faculty and class members in learning theoretical material and/or engaging in activities to apply the theory leading to mastery of course outcomes. Modes of instructional delivery could include but are not limited to: lecture, small group discussion, guided conversation, demonstration, case studies, role-playing, problem based inquiry, and collaborative activities. Instruction may be a mix of presentation, facilitation, and guided activities evidenced by frequent ongoing communication between instructor and students. Such activities could take place in a variety of instructional modalities. One credit is generated by one weekly contact hour of instruction or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time. Generally requires out-of-class student effort, typically two hours per class hour.
- **Guided Practice:** Students are actively engaged in practicing and mastering skills under the supervision of the instructor. This category of instruction could include but are not limited to labs, studios, shops, clinical experiences, computer-mediated learning, hands-on projects, or other skill building activities. Instruction may be individualized or group-focused and include skills assessment. Such activities could take place in a variety of instructional modalities. One credit is generated by two weekly contact hours of instruction or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time. May also include out-of-class student effort, typically one hour per two class hours.
- **Field-Based Experience:** Students are engaged in autonomous study or related work activity under the intermittent supervision of the instructor. This mode includes working with or under the direction of professional practitioners and may include preceptorships, co-ops, internships, seminars, or service learning activities. Verification of learning outcomes is documented by college faculty in collaboration with professional practitioners. One credit is generated by a minimum of three weekly contact hours of supervised learning experience. Programs may determine that additional hours are needed for the student learning needs. However, only one credit will be generated for enrollment counting purposes.

All instructional modalities use the credit hour determination provided above. Credit hours for all instructional modalities are determined based on the equivalence of credit hours to the Clark College's traditional face-to-face courses. Listed below are all instructional modalities Clark College provides, including modalities Clark aims to provide:

Contact hours in online, hybrid and competency-based classes may vary from more traditional face-to-face classes. Students should demonstrate equivalent learning outcomes regardless of instructional modality.

Traditional (face-to-face) classes

Students and instructors meet together for a certain number of hours, in a classroom and on a regular weekly schedule.

Remote classes

Online classes consist entirely of online elements with a set time for digital interaction and/or engagement Some remote classes require students to interact with each other, the faculty, and content at specific times, while others are entirely self-paced. The number of credits/units offered in an remote course is based on equivalency of learning outcomes of face-to-face modality.

Online classes

Online classes consist entirely of online elements with no face-to-face component. Some online classes require students to interact with each other, the faculty, and content at specific times, while others are entirely self-paced. The number of credits/units offered in an online course is based on equivalency of learning outcomes of face-to-face modality.

Hybrid classes

Hybrid classes combine face-to-face classroom time with online instruction. Students in a hybrid class come to campus at scheduled times and meet face-to-face with instructors and students. Many class

activities are conducted online, including class work assignments, discussions and group projects. The number of credits/units offered within a hybrid course is based on equivalency of learning outcomes of face-to-face modality.

Flipped classes

The flipped classroom reverses the traditional educational arrangement by delivering instructional content outside of the classroom, often online. Students spend classroom time actively engaging in concepts to clarify and apply the knowledge, under the guidance of the instructor. Credits/Units are awarded based on learning outcomes earned equal to those offered within face-to-face modality.

Competency-based education

Competency-based education (CBE) allows students to earn credit based on their proven mastery of a subject rather than classroom time. The number of credits/units offered within a CBE course is based on equivalency of learning outcomes of face-to-face modality. CBE courses are offered within the quarter system. A week of instruction within the CBE courses are any seven-day period in which the institution makes available to the students enrolled in the CBE program the instructional materials and faculty support to enable the student to engage in an educational activity. CBE courses are faculty led with weekly consultations with faculty members to discuss academic course content in addition to assessments of learning.

Exceptions are noted in the quarterly schedule (some classes are not scheduled in the usual College class periods.)

This policy will be reviewed by Executive Cabinet according to the program review policy schedule.