

Policy

I. Purpose

The Art Academy of Cincinnati (AAC) establishes and maintains credit hour definitions and requirements to:

1. Ensure compliance with applicable federal regulations and accreditation standards;
2. Ensure compliance with the credit hour definition established by the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE); and
3. Provide consistent and transparent standards for the assignment, delivery, and calculation of academic credit throughout the College.

The AAC credit hour policy applies to all courses and academic activities for which academic credit is awarded for all undergraduate and graduate coursework.

II. Definition of a Credit Hour

In accordance with 34 CFR 600, “[o]ne 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.” In its 2011 December Meeting report, the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity noted that a “semester hour approximates one hour (or 50 minutes) of classroom time and two hours of out-of-class student work each week in a 15-week semester or its equivalent.”

The federal definition also recognizes that equivalent amounts of academic work may be established for other forms of academic activity, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic experiences leading to the award of academic credit. Institutions may account for differences in delivery methods, measures of student work, academic calendars, disciplines, and degree levels when determining the amount of work associated with a credit hour.

For purposes of institutional implementation, AAC uses the semester credit hour standard established by ODHE. ODHE defines a semester credit hour as a minimum of **750 minutes of formalized instruction**. Formalized instruction may be delivered through a variety of instructional modes.

Accordingly, one semester credit hour at AAC must represent an appropriate combination of instructional activity and student academic work that is consistent with federal requirements, ODHE requirements, and commonly accepted practices in postsecondary education.

During a regular academic year semester and a summer session, each faculty member who is the instructor of record for one or more courses shall be available for consultation through a minimum of one office hour per week, either in person or electronically. The faculty member shall notify each class of the hours during which the faculty member is available for consultation by inclusion on the course syllabus.

III. Standard Course Modalities

AAC offers two primary instructional modalities:

- **Liberal Arts (LA):** Traditional academic courses emphasizing classroom-based instruction, reading, writing, discussion, and related academic work.
- **Studio Arts (SA):** Laboratory/workshop-style courses emphasizing studio practice, supervised making, demonstration, critique, and related experiential learning.

AAC also recognizes two specialized categories of academic credit:

- **Cross-Curricular (CR):** Courses combining Liberal Arts and Studio Arts instruction.
- **Internship:** Supervised experiential learning undertaken in a professional or field-based setting.

Unless otherwise approved through established institutional processes, all Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) and Master of Arts in Art Education (MAAE) courses are three-credit-hour courses.

IV. Contact Hour Standards

AAC's standard contact hour requirements are based on the instructional modality of the course.

For purposes of this policy:

- A **three-credit Liberal Arts course** requires one contact hour per credit hour.
- A **three-credit Studio Arts course** requires two contact hours per credit hour.

These standards reflect AAC's established institutional practice and are intended to ensure consistency in course scheduling and credit hour assignment.

V. Liberal Arts Courses

A three-credit Liberal Arts course shall provide instructional activity and student work consistent with the following minimum standards during a standard 15-week semester:

- **Formalized instruction:** 160 minutes per week, or 2.66 hours per week, for a total of 2,400 minutes (40 hours) per semester;
- **Independent student work:** A minimum of 360 minutes per week, or 6 hours per week, for a total of 5,400 minutes (90 hours) per semester.

VI. Studio Arts Courses

A three-credit Studio Arts course shall provide instructional activity and student work consistent with the following minimum standards during a standard 15-week semester:

- **Formalized instruction:** 340 minutes per week, or 5.66 hours per week, for a total of 5,100 minutes (85 hours) per semester;
- **Independent student work:** A minimum of 120 minutes per week, or 2 hours per week, for a total of 1,800 minutes (30 hours) per semester.

VII. Cross-Curricular Courses

Cross-Curricular (CR) courses combine Liberal Arts and Studio Arts instructional activities. The credit hour requirements for these courses shall represent an appropriate balance between the instructional and independent-work requirements established for the two modalities.

Consistent with the AAC Academic Catalog, "Cross Disciplinary courses may fulfill Liberal Arts or Studio Arts Elective requirements as elected by the student and advisor. With 4.5 contact hours per week, students earn three credit hours in coursework divided between academic classroom and studio learning. Intensive reading, writing, and studio activity are required for each course."

During a standard 15-week semester, a three-credit Cross-Curricular course shall provide:

- **Formalized instruction:** 270 minutes per week, or 4.5 hours per week, for a total of 4,050 minutes (67.5 hours) per semester;
- **Independent student work:** A minimum of 300 minutes per week, or 5 hours per week, for a total of 4,500 minutes (75 hours) per semester.

VIII. Internship Courses

Internship courses constitute supervised experiential learning and may fulfill the Professional Component requirement or a Studio elective requirement. Internship courses award three credit hours.

To receive credit for an internship, a student must complete the minimum supervised internship experience and associated academic requirements established by AAC in the Internship Experience Packet.

For a three-credit internship:

- The student shall complete a minimum of **120 verified contact hours** at the internship site;
- The internship supervisor shall verify the student's completion of the required contact hours; and
- The student shall complete a minimum of **9 hours of independent academic work**, including reflection, writing, documentation, and required internship paperwork.

Independent academic work associated with an internship may occur according to the schedule and operational requirements of the internship placement and hosting institution. When practicable, these requirements should be completed within the standard 15-week academic term.

IX. Summer Term and Alternative Academic Calendars

Courses offered during a summer term or on an academic calendar other than the standard 15-week semester shall provide an equivalent amount of instructional activity and student academic work required for the assigned credit hours.

The length or scheduling pattern of an academic term may be accelerated or otherwise modified; however, the total amount of academic work associated with each credit hour shall remain reasonably equivalent to the applicable federal and ODHE standards.

Course schedules, instructional minutes, supervised activity, and independent student work shall be appropriately adjusted to account for the duration and delivery format of the term.

X. Credit Hour Calculation Standards

For institutional planning and scheduling purposes, AAC recognizes the following standard credit hour calculations for its primary course modalities:

Course Type	Contact Hours per Credit Hour	Independent Student Work per Credit Hour
Liberal Arts	13.33 hours	30 hours
Studio Arts	28.33 hours	10 hours
Cross-Curricular	22.5 hours	25 hours
Internship	40 hours	3 hours

These calculations are intended to represent the total instructional and student-work expectations associated with three-credit courses.

XI. Course and Curriculum Oversight

AAC shall periodically review its credit hour standards to ensure continued alignment with:

1. Applicable federal regulations;
2. Ohio Department of Higher Education requirements;
3. Institutional accreditation standards;
4. AAC academic policies and curricular practices; and
5. Commonly accepted practices in postsecondary education.

Any proposed change to credit hour definitions, instructional requirements, or methods of calculating academic credit shall be reviewed and approved through the College's established academic and governance processes before implementation.

XII. Regulatory Authority

This policy is based upon and shall be administered in accordance with applicable federal and state requirements, including:

- **34 CFR 600**, which defines a credit hour and establishes requirements for determining the amount of academic work associated with a credit hour; and
- **Ohio Administrative Code Rule 3333-1-02**, which defines a semester credit hour as a minimum of 750 minutes of formalized instruction, typically accompanied by an average of twice that amount of out-of-class student work.

Where applicable federal or state requirements are amended, AAC shall interpret and administer this policy consistent with the revised requirements and shall revise the policy through the appropriate institutional process.

XIII. References

Credit hour: Except as provided in 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (l), a credit hour is an amount of student work defined by an institution, as approved by the institution's accrediting agency or State approval agency, that is consistent with commonly accepted practice in postsecondary education and that—

1. Reasonably approximates not less than—
 - i. 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 hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different period of time; or
 - ii. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1)(i) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours; and
2. Permits an institution, in determining the amount of work associated with a credit hour, to take into account a variety of delivery methods, measurements of student work, academic calendars, disciplines, and degree levels.

Source: 59 FR 22336, Apr. 29, 1994; Code of Federal Regulations

Rule 3333-1-02 | Definition of headcount enrollment and full-time equivalent enrollment, and requirements for higher education data reporting.

(13) "Semester credit hour" means a minimum of seven hundred fifty minutes of formalized instruction that typically requires students to work at out-of-class assignments an average of twice the amount of time as the amount of formalized instruction (one thousand five hundred minutes), or credit earned through competency-based education. It is acknowledged that formalized instruction may take place in a variety of modes.

Procedure**1. Credit Hour Verification**

Faculty propose the credit hours for scheduled courses based on the approved curriculum and course requirements. The Registrar and Executive Director of Enrollment and Student Success verifies that the scheduled credit hours correspond with the approved course and curriculum and approves the final course schedule. Documentation of the verification is maintained through the approved course schedule, course catalog, curriculum records, and approval records.

2. Academic Calendar Verification

The Registrar prepares the academic calendar in accordance with the institution's required academic-period length and applicable academic requirements. The proposed calendar is reviewed by appropriate administrative/executive personnel to verify that the academic periods, instructional days, and scheduled breaks meet institutional requirements. Faculty review and approve the final academic calendar before publication. Documentation of the process is maintained through the proposed and approved academic calendars and records of the required reviews and approvals.