DEFINING UNIT OF CREDIT, CONTACT HOURS, AND COURSE WORKLOAD
Prepared by the UA Offices of Curricular Affairs and Digital Learning, October 2017

Unit of Credit

University or Arizona and ABOR policy require students to complete at least 45 hours of work for each unit of credit they earn. How many of these hours take place in the physical or virtual classroom environment (contact hours) and how many take place outside of the classroom environment (homework hours) is determined by course type as follows:

- At least 15 contact hours of recitation, lecture, discussion, seminar, or colloquium, plus a minimum of 30 hours of student homework are required for each unit of credit.
- Workshops require at least 15 through 45 contact hours plus an appropriate number of homework hours. One- unit workshop with no homework are expected to have at least 45 contact hours while one-unit workshops with 30 hours of homework are expected to have 15 contact hours and one- unit workshops with 15 hours of homework are expected to have 30 contact hours.
- Studios require at least 30 contact hours and at least 15 hours of homework for each unit of credit.
- Laboratory courses must maintain a minimum of 45 contact hours per unit of credit.
- Each unit of individualized study must require a minimum of 45 clock hours of work.

Courses with more than one course type should adjust the workload for each component accordingly. For example: CHEM 151 is a 4-unit integrated lecture-lab course—3 units of the workload are lecture and 1 unit is lab. The course requires 45 hours of lecture per semester and 45 hours of laboratory instruction per semester.

An hour is defined as ***fifty minutes for non-independent study courses*** and ***60 minutes for individual study courses*** (internship, independent study, etc.).

With the exception of summer sessions, a course must cover at least a one-week period for every unit of credit given. During the summer session, however, 6 units of credit might be given over a five-week period.

For more information, please see **http://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/credit-definitions** and **https://public.azregents.edu/Policy%20Manual/2-224-Academic%20Credit.pdf.**

Below is a table containing example of expected course workloads for regular 15-week courses. Note the UA has 15-weeks of instruction and 1 week of exams. Final exams do not count as contact or homework/outside work for course workload.   Accelerated courses are required to carry the same amount of workload as their 15-week counterparts. For example, a 3-unit lecture course that is scheduled for a 5-week course term is expected to hold 9 hours of lecture over a 5-week period and students are expected to complete 18 hours of homework/outside work for the 5 weeks.

UA Course Workload Chart

Unit Value	Instructional Contact Hours						Homework/Outside Work Hours			Total Work Hours per Course
	Lecture Hours per			Other Contact Hours per			Homework/Outside Work Hours per			
	Week	Semester	Contact Minutes	Week	Semester	Contact Minutes	Week	Semester	Minutes	
Recitation, Lecture, Discussion, Seminar, or Colloquium										
1	1	15	750				2	30	1800	45
2	2	30	1500				4	60	3600	90
3	3	45	2250				6	90	5400	135
Workshops										
1	1	15	750				2	30	1800	45
1	2	30	1500				1	15	900	45
1	3	45	2250				0	0	0	45
2	2	30	1500				4	60	3600	90
2	3	45	2250				3	45	2700	90
2	4	60	3000				1	30	1800	90
2	6	90	4500				0	0	0	90
3	3	45	2250				6	90	5400	135
3	4	60	3000				5	75	4500	135
3	5	75	3750				4	60	3600	135
3	6	90	4500				3	45	2700	135
3	7	105	5250				2	30	1800	135
3	9	135	6750				0	0	0	135
Studio										
1				2	30	1500	1	15	900	45
2				4	60	3000	2	30	1800	90
3				6	90	4500	3	45	2700	135
Laboratory ONLY										
1				3	45	2250				45
2				6	90	4500				90
3				9	135	6750				135
4				12	180	9000				180
5				15	225	11250				225

Definition of Contact Hours for Face-to-face, Online, and Hybrid Courses

All UA courses regardless of their mode of instruction are required to have contact hours. The University of Arizona defines contact hours for **_online and hybrid classes_** in the same manner as **_face-to-face classes_**.

Below is a chart developed by the Office of Digital Learning that translates contact hours in the face-to-face environment to the online environment.

Face-to-Face	_Online_
• Synchronous meetings held in a physical classroom, these sessions are usually not recorded for playback • Attendance is usually mandatory to help students keep on track of requirements and deadlines • Interactions with faculty and peers are usually face-to-face, both verbal and nonverbal, spontaneous	• Asynchronous and/or synchronous meetings recorded and distributed in a virtual environment • Students are responsible for accessing content and must be proactive, highly organized and self-disciplined • Interactions with faculty and peers are conducted in electronic environments including discussion forums, emails and private chats/messages allowing for thoughtful, reflective responses

Hybrid courses are expected to use a combination of face-to-face and online contact hour translations. Instructors should be explicit on their syllabi about their virtual contact hour expectations for students, whether there will be asynchronous or synchronous meetings, etc.

The following activities are examples of contact hours in the online environment**:**

- **_Watching recorded lectures_** – by instructor or experts in Panopto or other streaming services (YouTube), etc.
- **_Discussing topics_** – conversations on discussion boards or on visual discussion forum in VoiceThread, etc.
- **_Presenting content_** – oral reports or narrated slides in Panopto, VoiceThread, Adobe Connect, etc.
- **_Collaborating with peers_** – work together to solve problems or create material in online groups via D2L Groups, Adobe Collaborate, Google Docs or Drive, etc.
- **_Reviewing peers' work_** – evaluation of other students' work based upon a rubric or guidelines in VoiceThread or Dropbox, etc.
- **_Communicating with instructor_** – one-on-one conversations through online office hours, email, chats, etc.

The following activities are examples of homework in the online environment:

- **_Reading materials_** – physical, electronic, or interactive textbooks, PDF articles, etc.
- **_Writing assignments_** – essays, written reports in Dropbox or on external sites (Blogs, Wikis, etc.)
- **_Assessing learning_** – demonstration of knowledge through quizzes, exams, projects, or reports, etc.
- **_Participating in virtual labs or simulations_** – accessing commercial or in-house produced material