Credit Hour Policy

The following credit hour policy was established by St. Ambrose University to guide the institution in its assignment and review of awarding credits as set forth by federal regulations. (Federal Register, Vol. 75, No. 209, p. 66486)

Federal Definition of the Credit Hour

For purposes of the application of this policy and in accordance with federal regulations, 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:

1. Not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours 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 outlined in item 1 above 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.

St. Ambrose University defines a semester credit (also known as a credit hour) as one 50-minute period per week for one semester (or its equivalent) with appropriate student work outside of the period. A semester at St. Ambrose University is defined as not less than 15 weeks. Courses offered in shorter timeframes or alternative formats must have an equivalent number of hours dedicated to instruction and student work as that spent in a semester-based class. An equivalent amount of work (a minimum of 37.5 hours per 1 credit hour) must be represented for credits assigned to experiential learning including 1) laboratory, 2) practica/field work/internships, 3) independent study, and 4) international travel. An equivalent amount of work (a minimum of three hours per week for a semester or its equivalent of combined direct instruction and outside of class student work) must be represented for a semester credit in other academic activities including accelerated format, distance education, and hybrid format courses.