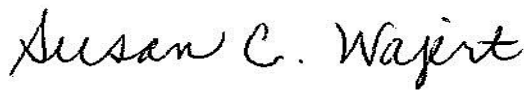


<b>SUPERSEDES: 9/2014</b>	<b>SECTION: Academic &amp; Student Services</b>
<b>POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL MERCY COLLEGE OF OHIO, TOLEDO, OHIO</b>    <hr/> Signature: Dr. Susan Wajert, President	<b>CODE NO. 512</b>
	<b>SUBJECT: Undergraduate Policy-Credit Hour Definition and Length of Semester</b>
	<b>DATE ORIGINATED: 11/2013</b>
	<b>DATE BOARD COMMITTEE APPROVED:</b>
	<b>DATE BOARD APPROVED: 08/25/2015</b>
	<b>DATE REVISED: 09/2014; 08/2015</b>
	<b>DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: Annually</b>

**Purpose:**

As required in the Higher Education Reauthorization Act of 2011, Mercy College of Ohio has adopted the following federal definition of a credit hour (Source: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2012-title34-vol3/xml/CFR-2012-title34-vol3-sec600-2.xml>):

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 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 laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

In addition, Mercy College of Ohio has adopted the credit hour guidelines, revised March, 2010, by the Ohio Department of Higher Education (formerly the Ohio Board of Regents), as specifically defined in the procedures that follow.

Mercy College of Ohio holds accreditation through the Higher Learning Commission and follows the rules and guidelines set forth by this agency and the United States Department of Education.

## PROCEDURE #512

### Credit Hour Definition

#### I. Assumptions:

1. Mercy College of Ohio operates two 16-week semesters (15 instructional weeks with one exam week) and one 12-week semester in the summer.
2. Actual course sections may be shorter than the sixteen weeks (4, 5, 6, 8 or 12 weeks, or other) as long as the total instructional hours equal the numbers as defined in the sections below.
3. The length of time for course sections longer than two hours may be adjusted to include a class break, as long as the total instructional time-not including the break maintains the length of time as set forth in the sections below.
4. Procedures for scheduling courses are available from the Registrar's Office.

#### II. Establishment of course credit hours:

1. The respective academic divisions (Deans in collaboration with faculty) establish credit hours for courses following the policies of the Ohio Department of Higher Education (formerly the Ohio Board of Regents) and the Higher Learning Commission.
2. The respective academic division, College Curriculum Committee, and Vice-President of Academic Affairs approve the courses.
3. A random sample of existing courses is audited once per year by the Vice-President of Academic Affairs to ensure the courses are consistent with policy. Courses found to be inconsistent are sent to the College Curriculum Committee for revision.

#### III. Classroom Instruction:

1. Classroom instruction is formalized instruction, conducted on or off campus, in which the instructor presents an educational experience to students, applying any combination of instructional methods. The types of instructional methods used are defined below.
  - a. **Land-Based (Face-to-Face):** Land-based courses deliver all instruction, communication and assignments through face-to-face class meetings with other support material (syllabus, lecture notes, check-offs, handouts, etc.) available online. All land-based courses are signified with an "O" in the course section number and/or have a specified campus location designated in the class schedule.
  - b. **Online (*Distance Education Offering*):** An online or distance education course uses primarily the internet to deliver instruction either synchronously or asynchronously. However, the use of other communication such as video or voice conferencing may be used to supplement the internet environment.

If the class meets at a specified time online, the instructor must list the day and time of the week in the class schedule. Exclusive online courses have no land-based instruction. However, some courses require a land-based service learning/practicum component with a clinical preceptor in attendance. Assessment (testing) of students may also require attendance at a proctored location.

Online courses or distance course are signified with a "W" in the course section number and/or have "online" as the location in the class schedule.

- c. **Hybrid (Distance Education Offering):** A hybrid course delivers instruction through land-based class meetings and the internet. A typical hybrid course is 50% land-based and 50% online. However, the online component may range from 40-99% of total class instruction. Hybrid methodology may include the use of both synchronous and asynchronous scheduled instruction. Scheduled instruction can be offered in a variety of formats, which include, but are not limited to weekly or every other week learning modules. All hybrid courses are signified with an “H” in the course section number and/or have “hybrid” as the location in the schedule.
- d. **Web-Enhanced/Web-Supported:** Web-Enhanced or Web-Supported courses deliver instruction primarily through land-based class meetings. Supplemental web-based tools are used to enhance a course, which can include online components and activities that consist of viewing syllabi, participating in discussions, viewing presentations, content links, handouts and testing. All web-enhanced courses are signified with an “O” in the course section number and/or have a specified campus location designated in the class schedule.

#### IV. Calculation of Credit Hours Awarded:

1. **Classroom Instruction:** One credit hour is awarded for each 750 minutes of classroom instruction in a 15-week semester for all online, hybrid, web-enhanced and land-based courses. *(Each credit hour is equivalent to one 50-minute class hour for every one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction, for approximately 15 weeks. i.e. 3 credit hours equal 45 class hours or  $15 \times 3 = 45$ )*
  - a. Each credit hour will require an average two 50-minute hours of out of class work for each week. This out of class study does not count as part of the classroom hour for credit.
  - b. Student learning outcomes and assignments are required to be consistent across the same course, despite the instructional method employed. Therefore, a reasonable assertion is made that credit awarded is the same regardless of the instructional delivery method used.

#### EXAMPLE CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION CREDIT HOUR CALCULATION

SEMESTER LENGTH (15 WEEKS PLUS 1 EXAM WEEK)	NUMBER OF CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS	CREDIT HOUR
15 weeks	One 50 minute session per week x 15 weeks = 750 instructional minutes* <i>Exam week not used in calculation</i>	1 sem. hr.
12 weeks	One 62.5 minute session per week x 12 weeks = 750 instructional minutes* <i>Exam final offered within 12 week period</i> <i>Exam week not used in calculation</i>	1 sem. hr.
8 weeks	One 100 minute session per week x 7.5 weeks = 750 instructional minutes*	1 sem. hr.

\*1,500 minutes out-of-class work required

- c. Other types of instructional delivery options are assigned credit hours based on a ratio of contact hours to credit hours, per the Ohio Department of Higher Education, formerly the Ohio Board of Regents.  
(<http://regents.ohio.gov/actions/documents/2010/Dir2010-016.pdf>)
2. **Laboratory Instruction:** Laboratory instruction is defined as educational activity with students conducting experiments, perfecting skills, or practicing procedures under the direction of a faculty member.
- a. One hour of credit shall be awarded for a total of 2,250 minutes laboratory instructional time for a semester calendar (three hours for every one hour of credit).
  - b. If laboratory instruction is supplemented by out-of-class assignments, which would normally, average one hour of out-of-class study preparing for or following-up the laboratory experience, then one hour of credit shall be awarded for a total of 1,500 minutes laboratory instructional time for a semester (two hours for every hour of credit)

**EXAMPLE LABORATORY INSTRUCTION CREDIT HOUR CALCULATION**

<b>SEMESTER LENGTH (15 WEEKS PLUS 1 EXAM WEEK)</b>	<b>NUMBER OF LABORATORY INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS (NO OUT OF CLASS ASSIGNMENTS)</b>	<b>CREDIT HOUR</b>
15 weeks	One 150 minute session per week x 15 weeks = 2,250 instructional minutes	1 sem. hr.
12 weeks	One 225 minute session (3.75 hrs.) per week x 12 weeks = 2,250 instructional minutes	1 sem. hr.
8 weeks	One 282.5 minute session (5.65 hrs.) per week x 12 weeks = 2,250 instructional minutes	1 sem. hr.

<b>SEMESTER LENGTH (15 WEEKS PLUS 1 EXAM WEEK)</b>	<b>NUMBER OF LABORATORY INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS (WITH OUT OF CLASS ASSIGNMENTS)</b>	<b>CREDIT HOUR</b>
15 weeks	One 100 minute session per week x 15 weeks = 1500 instructional minutes*	1 sem. hr.
12 weeks	One 125 minute session per week x 12 weeks = 1500 instructional minutes*	1 sem. hr.
8 weeks	One 187.5 minute session per week x 8 = 1500 instructional minutes*	1 sem. hr.

\*750 minutes out-of-class work required

3. **Clinical Laboratory Instruction:** Clinical laboratory instruction applies only to health programs during which students are assigned to laboratory sections, which meet at a health-related agency rather than an on-campus laboratory facility. Clinical laboratory sessions provide a realistic environment for student learning. These laboratory hours should be directly supervised by full-time or part-time faculty members or adjuncts, of the College.
- a. Credit hours for the clinical laboratory experience will be awarded on the same basis as laboratory hours.

**EXAMPLE CLINICAL LABORATORY INSTRUCTION CREDIT HOUR CALCULATION**

<b>SEMESTER LENGTH (15 WEEKS PLUS 1 EXAM WEEK)</b>	<b>NUMBER OF CLINICAL LABORATORY INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS (NO OUT OF CLASS ASSIGNMENTS)</b>	<b>CREDIT HOUR</b>
15 weeks	One 150 minute session per week x 15 weeks = 2,250 instructional minutes	1 sem. hr.
12 weeks	One 187.5 minute session per week x 12 weeks = 2,250 instructional minutes	1 sem. hr.
8 weeks	One 281.25 minute session per week x 12 weeks = 2,250 instructional minutes	1 sem. hr.

<b>SEMESTER LENGTH (15 WEEKS PLUS 1 EXAM WEEK)</b>	<b>NUMBER OF CLINICAL LABORATORY INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS (OUT OF CLASS ASSIGNMENTS)</b>	<b>CREDIT HOUR</b>
15 weeks	One 100 minute session per week x 15 weeks = 1500 instructional minutes*	1 sem. hr.
12 weeks	One 125 minute session per week x 12 weeks = 1500 instructional minutes*	1 sem. hr.
8 weeks	One 187.5 minute session per week x 8 = 1500 instructional minutes*	1 sem. hr.

\*750 minutes out-of-class work required

4. **Directed Practice Instruction:** This definition applies primarily to programs in the health areas during which the student is assigned to practice experiences under constant supervision at an external agency. The student should receive individual instruction and critique in the performance of a particular function. Adjunct faculty may be used for the direct supervision of students, and for the delivery of part of the didactic phase of the experience.

The faculty member coordinating the directed practice conducts at least one lecture session each week for participating students, provides the final grade for each student, and visits students at least once a week.

- a. One credit (quarter or semester) shall be awarded for a minimum of five clock hours of directed practice in a week.

**EXAMPLE DIRECTED PRACTICE INSTRUCTION CREDIT HOUR CALCULATION**

<b>SEMESTER LENGTH (15 WEEKS PLUS 1 EXAM WEEK)</b>	<b>NUMBER OF DIRECTED PRACTICE INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS</b>	<b>CREDIT HOUR</b>
15 weeks	One 300 minute session per week x 15 weeks = 4500 instructional minutes	1 sem. hr.
12 weeks	One 375 minute session per week x 12 weeks = 4500 instructional minutes	1 sem. hr.
8 weeks	One 562.5 minute session per week x 8 = 4500 instructional minutes	1 sem. hr.

- 5. Practicum Instruction:** Practicum instruction is an on- or off-campus work experience, integrated with academic instruction. Students concurrently apply theoretical concepts to practical situations within an occupational field. To assure proper coordination of the experience, the practicum is coordinated by a faculty member who visits the student at least once biweekly, provides the final grade, and teaches at least one course on the campus.

Each student who is enrolled in a practicum shall also be enrolled in an on-campus seminar.

- a. A maximum of nine semester credit hours may be earned in a practicum, or any combination of practicum cooperative work experience, during the program.
- b. One hour of credit shall be awarded for 6,300 minutes of practicum instructional time for a semester.

**EXAMPLE PRACTICUM INSTRUCTION CREDIT HOUR CALCULATION**

<b>SEMESTER LENGTH (15 WEEKS PLUS 1 EXAM WEEK)</b>	<b>NUMBER OF PRACTICUM INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS</b>	<b>CREDIT HOUR</b>
15 weeks	One 420 minute session per week x 15 weeks = 6300 instructional minutes	1 sem. hr.
12 weeks	One 525 minute session per week x 12 weeks = 6300 instructional minutes	1 sem. hr.
8 weeks	One 787.5 minute session per week x 8 = 6300 instructional minutes	1 sem. hr.

- 6. Seminar Instruction:** A seminar is a less formal educational experience than a classroom/lecture/discussion class. A relatively small number of students engage in discussions directed by a faculty member.
- a. Credit is awarded for seminar hours on the same basis as that for the classroom hour discussed above.

**EXAMPLE SEMINAR INSTRUCTION CREDIT HOUR CALCULATION**

<b>SEMESTER LENGTH (15 WEEKS PLUS 1 EXAM WEEK)</b>	<b>NUMBER OF SEMINAR INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS</b>	<b>CREDIT HOUR</b>
15 weeks	One 50 minute session per week x 15 weeks = 750 instructional minutes* <i>Exam week not used in calculation</i>	1 sem. hr.
12 weeks	One 62.5 minute session per week x 12 weeks = 750 instructional minutes* <i>Exam final offered within 12 week period</i> <i>Exam week not used in calculation</i>	1 sem. hr.
8 weeks	One 100 minute session per week x 7.5 weeks = 750 instructional minutes *	1 sem. hr.

\*750 minutes out-of-class work required