

PROCEDURE: 300.14.01

SECTION: Academic Affairs	
TOPIC: Course Credit Matrix	
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INTENT:

The purpose of the Course Credit Matrix is to provide clear expectations for students, faculty, and instructional designers regarding the relationship between workload hours for course coursework, the contact hours between faculty and students, and the credit weighting of courses.

SCOPE:

The Course Credit Matrix applies to all undergraduate programming.

DEFINITIONS:

Course credit: The credit a student will receive for successfully achieving the declared course learning outcomes.

Contact hours: The minimum number of scheduled classroom or studio hours that a student will be receiving instruction from an instructor in the process of achieving the declared course learning outcomes.

Course weight: The total number of credits that a course is attributed with based on the magnitude of the learning outcomes that students are intended to achieve in the course. Magnitude of learning outcomes is assessed based on the sophistication, the complexity, the level of required higher order thinking, and the number of learning outcomes intended for students to achieve. Courses deemed to have greater magnitude of learning outcomes intend to go beyond student attainment of knowledge, skills, or attributes, so to deepen learner capacities through the professional dimensions of social, autonomous, and commercial. The sophistication of the learning is demonstrated through the work itself, its curation, and its publication. Magnitude is not defined by requiring students to complete more assignments, more readings, or put in more independent learning time, however these types of activities when used, must be structured to encourage a greater magnitude of learning.

Semester: A typical ACAD Fall or Winter semester is 14 weeks in duration, with the 14th week being reserved for final course assessment events. ACAD courses are framed on a provincial standard of 120 hours of study (in-class and independent learning) for three credits. Typically, the contact hours are adjusted according to the credit weight, thus a 1.5 credit course would require a total 60 hours of study. In instances in which the total required course hours remain at 120, of which 58.5 are class contact hours, and the course credit is increased (eg. 4.5 credits), the magnitude of the learning outcomes must be rationalized in the course outline.

Acceptable Student Workload: The amount of reasonable time a student is expected to spend on enhancing their studies outside of the instructional contact time. While it is difficult to define a consistent measure of reasonable time given the diversity of student ability and the diversity of subject matter, reasonableness can be examined from three perspectives:

1. Fairness: does the amount of workload for a particular course place full-time students in jeopardy of not succeeding in their other courses?
2. Just: is the amount of workload defensible by the subject matter learning outcomes?
3. Coherency: is the amount of workload higher than other courses that have similar learning outcomes?

PROCEDURE:

Course Credit Matrix – Revised (2016)

The following matrix describes the credit, expected contact hours, and allowable student workload consistent with Campus Alberta requirements and compliant with NASAD Standards.

Course Type	Per Week				Per Semester (14 week)		
	Course Credit	Required Contact Hours ¹	NASAD Guideline (Total Hours)	Acceptable Student Workload	Class Contact Hours (a)	Assessment Contact Hours (b)	Total Req. Credit Hours ²
General Studies	1.5	1.5	4.5	3.0	19.5	1.5	60
Studio	1.5	2.25	4.5	2.25	29.25	2.25	60.75
General Studies	3.0	3.0	9.0	6.0	39	3	120
Studio T	3.0	4.5	9.0	4.5 ⁴	58.5	4.5	121.5
Studio O ³	4.5	4.5	9.0 – 13.5	6.75 ⁴	58.5	3+	121.5
Studio T	4.5	6.75	13.5	6.75	87.75	6.75	182.25
Studio T	6.0	9.0	18.0	9.0	117	9.0	243
Studio T	9.0	13.5	27.0	13.5	175.5	13.5	364.5
Modules ⁵	Per Week (when spread across Semester)				Per Semester (14 weeks)		
General Studies	1	1		2	13	1	40
Studio	1	1.5		1.5	19.5	1.5	40.5

O = Outcomes Weighted, T = Contact Time Weighted

Notes:

¹ Required contact hours refers minimum number of scheduled classroom or studio hours that a student will be receiving instruction from an instructor in the process of achieving the declared course learning outcomes

² Total required credit hours are defined by Campus Alberta and the institution as part of the degree accreditation process and program approval process. 120 credit hours for 3 credits is established as a required benchmark from which to work all other configurations of credit and credit hours.

³ Studio O (Outcomes) refers to a 4.5 credit studio in which the magnitude of the outcomes warrants additional weighting.

⁴ The acceptable student workload to achieve success will vary and may reach a ratio of 4.5 : 6.75 on average. The assessment contact hours will likely not be less than 3 hours, and may be more as necessary to ensure quality assessment practices.

⁵ Modules are definable units of study that when combined create a course or program of study.

REFERENCE:

Campus Alberta Handbook Definitions.